

# *The* PETERSBURG EXCHANGE BUILDING

## *A Historic Structure Report*



*24 November 2021*



**PREPARED FOR:**  
*Historic Petersburg Foundation*

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Adequate funding of the project was essential to its success. The efforts put forth by Chip Mann, Dean McCray and the PPTF board to secure the financial commitments necessary to match the Save America's Treasures grant funds were essential to the project's success. Thanks are due to Todd Graham and the Cameron Foundation along with Mayor Sam Parham and the Petersburg City Council for providing the matching funds necessary to secure the Save America's Treasures Grant, without which this critical research would not have been possible.

We are grateful for the support of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources and the National Park Service for their role in advising our process and helping to secure the Save America's Treasures funding.

And finally, we are grateful for the input we have received from our learned local community including Dulaney Ward, Sergei Troubetzkoy, officer Tom Ratliffe and many others who have given of their time and expertise to help illuminate the story of the Exchange Building for us as we work to better understand the importance of this building and its place in both the Petersburg and the American story.



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

StudioAmmons was asked to provide Historic Petersburg Foundation with the following items as part of a comprehensive study of the Exchange Building and its History. These take the form of an Historic Structure Report which contains the following items:

1. A detailed history of the structure, its uses and a chronology of construction including a description of all changes to the building made over time.
2. A description and evaluation of the existing conditions of the building as of the undertaking of this analysis. This section will be informed by a systematic accounting of all features, materials and space according to age, significance and condition.
3. A listing of preservation needs and a recommended ranking of the priority order in which they should be addressed. The assessment of preservation needs shall be governed by the intent of the owner to continue the use of the building as a public space capable of safely welcoming and informing visitors as well as housing artifacts and displays significant to the history of the city and its citizens.
4. Provide a recommended schedule of cyclical and preventative maintenance for the systems and fabric of the structure to ensure its ongoing preservation.

The Petersburg Exchange Building is an 1839-41 Greek Revival building located at 15-19 West Bank Street in downtown Petersburg, Virginia. It was one of the first generation of buildings to be nominated to the National Register of Historic Places. The builder for the Exchange, is believed to have been a Mr. Berrian, who was known to have worked for the New York architect Calvin Pollard. The design of both the Petersburg Hustings Courthouse and St. Paul's Episcopal Church (originally on Sycamore Street), are attributed to Pollard and recent research by Sergei Troubetzkoy points to Pollard as the architect of the Exchange Building also.

The Exchange Building was constructed in the immediate years following the market crash of 1837. In contrast to most city markets at that time, it was a private development organized by a group of prominent Petersburg merchants. Its Greek Revival design followed the traditions and trends of its time taking cues from other monumental market buildings such as Quincy Hall in Boston and from the temple form of its contemporary, the Charleston Market Hall which was being constructed at approximately the same time.

The south-facing five-bay building has two stories set on a ground story with a basement below grade. The building is constructed of brick with granite trim and a scored stucco front elevation to simulate ashlar masonry. The metal-sheathed hip roof has a ten-sided cupola at its apex relating to a domed rotunda on the interior. The salient feature of the front is a monumental Doric portico on a high base with granite steps. Other major exterior features include Doric entablature across the front, corner pilasters, tall round-arched Italianate windows on the side elevations, and a late-twentieth-century Modernist elevator tower on the rear elevation.

The building was initially constructed as a commodity exchange while also providing meeting space for organizations and as an auction venue. Within its first decade, the Exchange system fell out of popularity among merchants and the enterprise began to fall on hard times. By 1856 the building failed to secure the minimum bid at auction leading one local paper to suggest that it become the new public library. In 1858, it was ultimately purchased by the tobacco manufacturer Rueben Ragland who leased it to the newly formed Bank of Petersburg in 1860 until it failed in 1865 along with the collapse of the Confederacy.

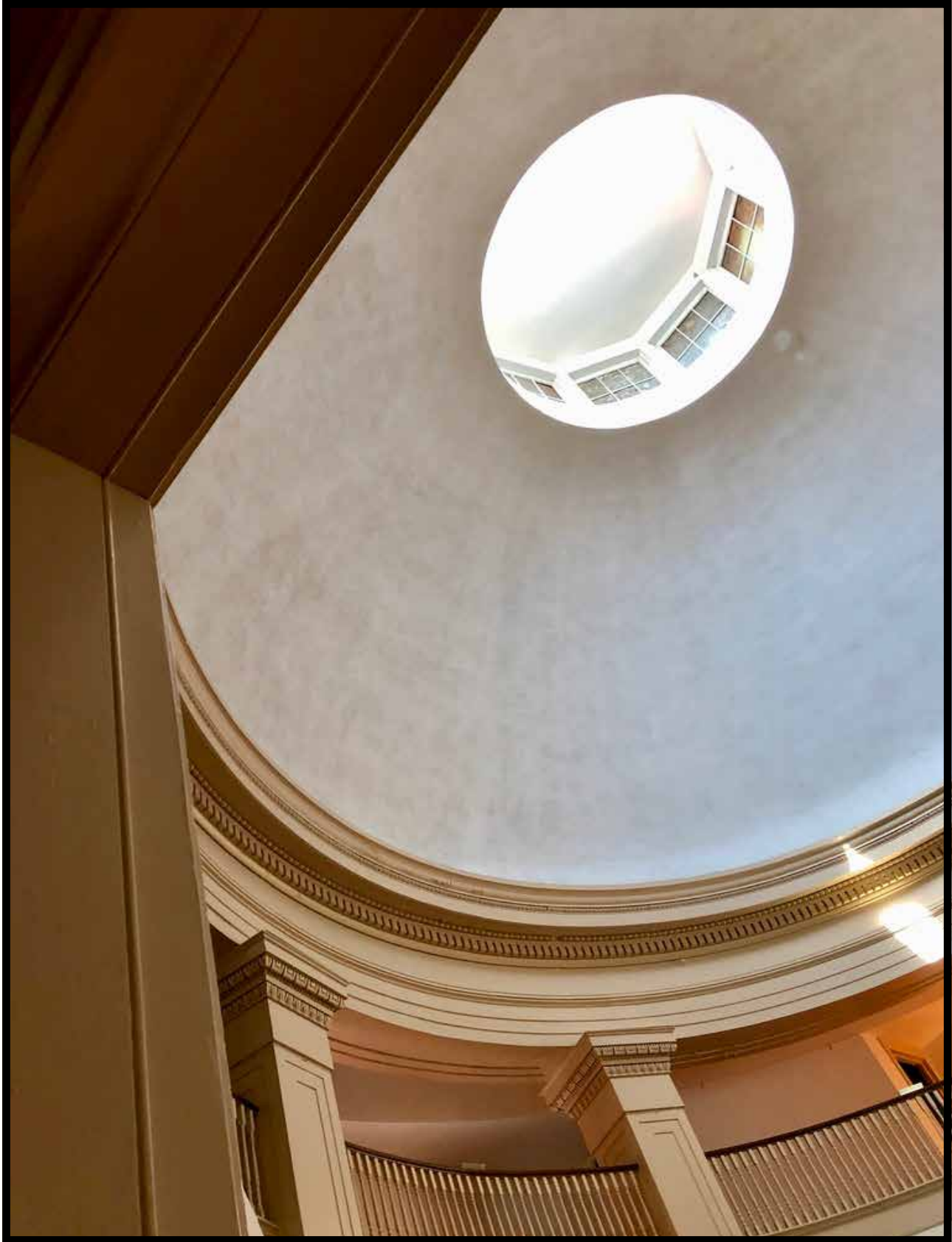
## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY - cont'd

For the next 70 years, the Exchange Building was occupied for a variety of office and commercial uses, including “Heinemann’s Exchange” until it was purchased, in 1927, by the City of Petersburg and turned into the city’s new Police Headquarters. The building remained the Police Headquarters until 1973 when it was fully renovated for use as the Siege Museum focused on life in the city during the nine-month Siege of Petersburg leading to the end of the Civil War. The building has been open to the public as a museum and meeting space since that time and remains so today with limited public access and volunteer staffing.

The current set of recommendations include short-term and long-term recommendations as well as the framework of a strategic vision for the restoration of the Exchange Building, beginning with the current Save America’s Treasures grant scope of work. Short term recommendations are focused on remediation of water infiltration (roof, windows, exterior finishes, and site drainage) along with some limited structural issues including flooring repairs at the second floor and limited repairs to the dome framing and in the north basement area. Long term recommendations include the majority of interior restoration work and systems upgrades along with upgrades for the building’s ongoing public use as a visitor center, museum, and meeting facility.



*Former Governor and current State Senator Mark Warner speaks in the Exchange Building rotunda to kick-off the Save America’s Treasures grant work*





*1*

# I. BACKGROUND: THE MARKET BUILDING



## *The Public Market*

For centuries, markets have been created as appointed places of exchange established at defined locations marked by physical boundaries or landmarks. The act of buying and selling food and commodities, from services to goods, has gone hand-in-hand with the growth and development of towns and cities, defining the relationship and dependencies between rural and urban culture. Early in its development, the market was typically located in the civic center—often a large open square used for a range of public functions. As a neutral space the market/civic center or “agora” to the ancient Greeks, served not only as a location for trade and commerce, but also as the community’s center for administrative, legislative, judicial, social, and religious activities. The market was not always located on public lands but it developed with public purpose and ultimately created a recognized public space — neutral territory where the rules for exchange and distribution were understood.

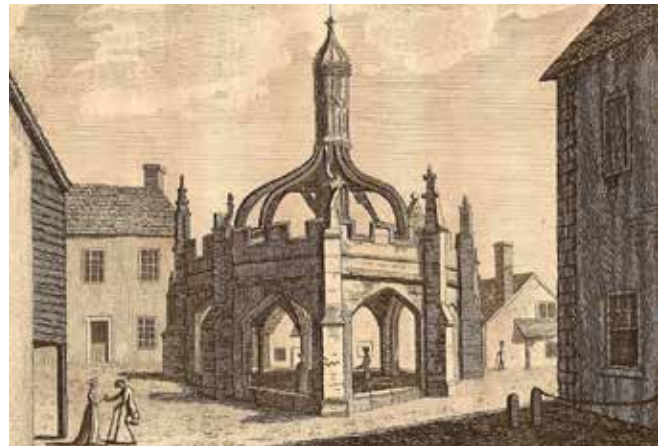
From its beginning, the market was a landmark, its location sometimes defined by a single stone, a “market cross” or a particular feature of the land or adjacent waterway. As the importance of the market grew, the use of a simple cross or physical marker was often replaced by a more elaborate structure sometimes taking the form of a gateway or pavilion or introducing an urban feature like a fountain or clock tower. As local populations increased so did demand for market space with stalls filling up streets and alleys and spilling into the adjoining streets (another type of public space), ultimately creating what would come to be the “market square” in a designated “commercial district” in a town or city. Europe’s grand piazzas and squares developed from the original form and function of the market square.



## I. BACKGROUND: THE MARKET BUILDING - cont'd



*Market Cross at Stowe-on-the-Wold - many small town markets were located at a triangular or irregular shaped space in the center of town.*



*Engraving of Malmsbury Market Cross with the cross incorporated into a more substantial pavilion structure.*



*The Market Fountain, Carlsbad, Bohemia*



## I. BACKGROUND: THE MARKET BUILDING - cont'd

### *The Mixed-Use Market Hall*

The mixed-use market and Town Hall building (market hall) is the earliest form of European government building most often represented by a single building with an enclosed meeting room set over an open, or arcaded, ground floor and situated, in the center of, or adjacent to, a public open space or “square.” Formalizing the organization of the market helped reduce clutter on the street and while facilitating the enforcement of the market’s collections tools, weights, measures, and other market fees, which were, in turn, used to pay for the construction of other municipal buildings. As Carl Lounsbury has observed: “the most basic function and one integral to towns of a certain size and economic diversity is the marketing of goods, particularly foodstuffs such as meat, poultry, cheese, eggs, butter, and vegetables. . . . At the heart of any town’s prosperity was market day where tradesmen and itinerant hagglers retailed their wares in the open market place. . . . The local market was not a free-wheeling, open-ended emporium of petty capitalists, although there was a strong push to make it so in many English and American towns in the eighteenth century, rather it was a highly-regulated system watched over by the clerk of the market in concert with other corporate officials” [Carl Lounsbury, *The Williamsburg Market House: Where’s the Beef?* 1990, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation Library Research Report Series 245]. Medieval traditions of market laws continued in the colonies functioning to protect citizens from profiteering, fraud, and cheating, while provided a ready supply of high-quality produce to townspeople, and guaranteed the “market peace,” a safe and orderly place for both sellers and buyers.



*Market hall — Ross-on-Wye, England*



*Market Hall — Chipping Campden, England*



## I. BACKGROUND: THE MARKET BUILDING - cont'd

### *The Market Hall in America*

**I**t is this English and European tradition of the mixed-use market and Town Hall building that comes to the colonies in the 18th century and continues to dominate as the favored approach to the design of market/civic buildings, evolving throughout the next two centuries as towns and city's grow and prosper.

In the colonies, market halls begin showing up by the end of the 17th or early 18th centuries, first as small open frame structures or market pavilions followed by more permanent buildings set in central, urban locations. The American market hall of the 18th century often contained the city hall and jail as well as official scales and timepieces. Courts and lock-ups were held there, public records stored and both public punishment and announcements took place at the market.



*Reconstruction of the 18th c. Market Hall, Williamsburg, VA.  
— photo courtesy of Willie Graham*

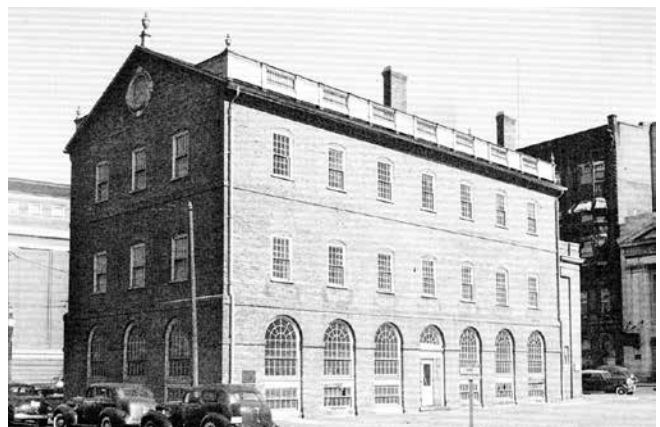


*Early market hall pavilion — Louisville, GA*

The Boston Town Hall was an early market hall building constructed in 1657 and stood in the center of State Street. By 1713 it had been replaced by the new brick State House, following the example of the English market hall with a merchant exchange on the ground floor and the government meeting space above. Boston's Faneuil Hall was constructed by 1742, also following the English market hall form and likely became the precedent for other later market halls in growing colonial cities such as the Brick Market in Newport, and the Market House in Providence, Rhode Island.



*Faneuil Hall — Boston, MA*



*Market Hall — Providence, RI*

## I. BACKGROUND: THE MARKET BUILDING - cont'd

In the English market hall the design and detailing of the ground floor arcade is a direct expression of the power and affluence of the local government. As this building type is brought to the colonies, the arcade continues to be a civic symbol, a foundational part of both core market hall functions — in its traditional role as an organizer of commerce, and reinterpreted as the loggia or arcaded portico (the “piazza”) on early colonial courthouses. The arcaded loggia is typically fronted by, or connected to, a public “green” or “square,” another reference to the market hall’s position in the traditional English market square. This adaptation represents one way government and market functions begin to separate from each other while still reflecting the architectural precedents inherent in the traditional market hall building type.



*Old Market Hall — Shrewsbury, England*



*Hanover Courthouse — Hanover County, VA*

In addition to the mixed-use market hall building type, other representative elements of the traditional European market found their way into the design of the American market or town square including the fountain, bell tower, clock tower and civic monument, often serving a similar role as the early market cross or boundary stones by marking an important civic place, but also serving as a symbol of order and control over commerce, time, and messaging.



*Market Hall with clock tower — Fayetteville, NC*



*Market Hall Head House used as Fire House — South Second Street Market, Philadelphia, PA*

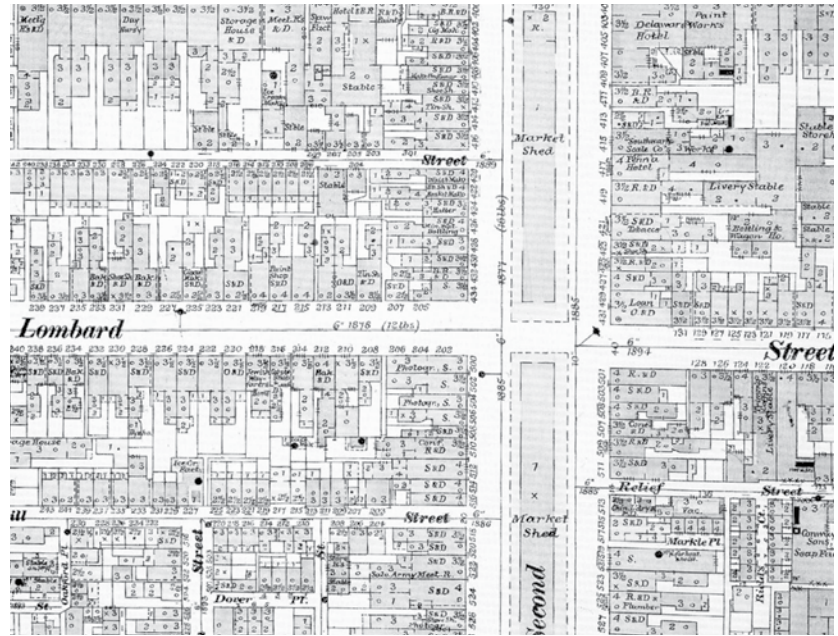


## I. BACKGROUND: THE MARKET BUILDING - cont'd

The market hall building form remained in use through the late-19th century until the demands of both the growing urban population and the increased requirements of civic administration fostered the development of separate, more distinct building types. Functions that often shared space and use of the market hall, such as the town hall, fire departments, armories, and theaters were now being located in their own, purpose-built buildings with the market hall shifting to a central location in a market square often flanked by market streets or alleys or centered in a widened street, effectively turning the street into the market square and facilitating better through-traffic access.



*Market Hall / Fire House — Georgetown, SC*



*Plan of South Second Street Market in Philadelphia located in the center of an enlarged street and extending for multiple blocks*

During the latter half of the 19th century, many towns and cities replaced their open market sheds with fully enclosed market buildings in hopes of cleaning up downtown streets and facilitating more efficient traffic flow. These enclosed market buildings sought to mimic some of the features of earlier market halls or sheds through the use of interior streets lined with vendor stalls and clerestory windows bringing light and air into the building. The enclosed market house could be open year-round and offer a more upscale experience for consumers.

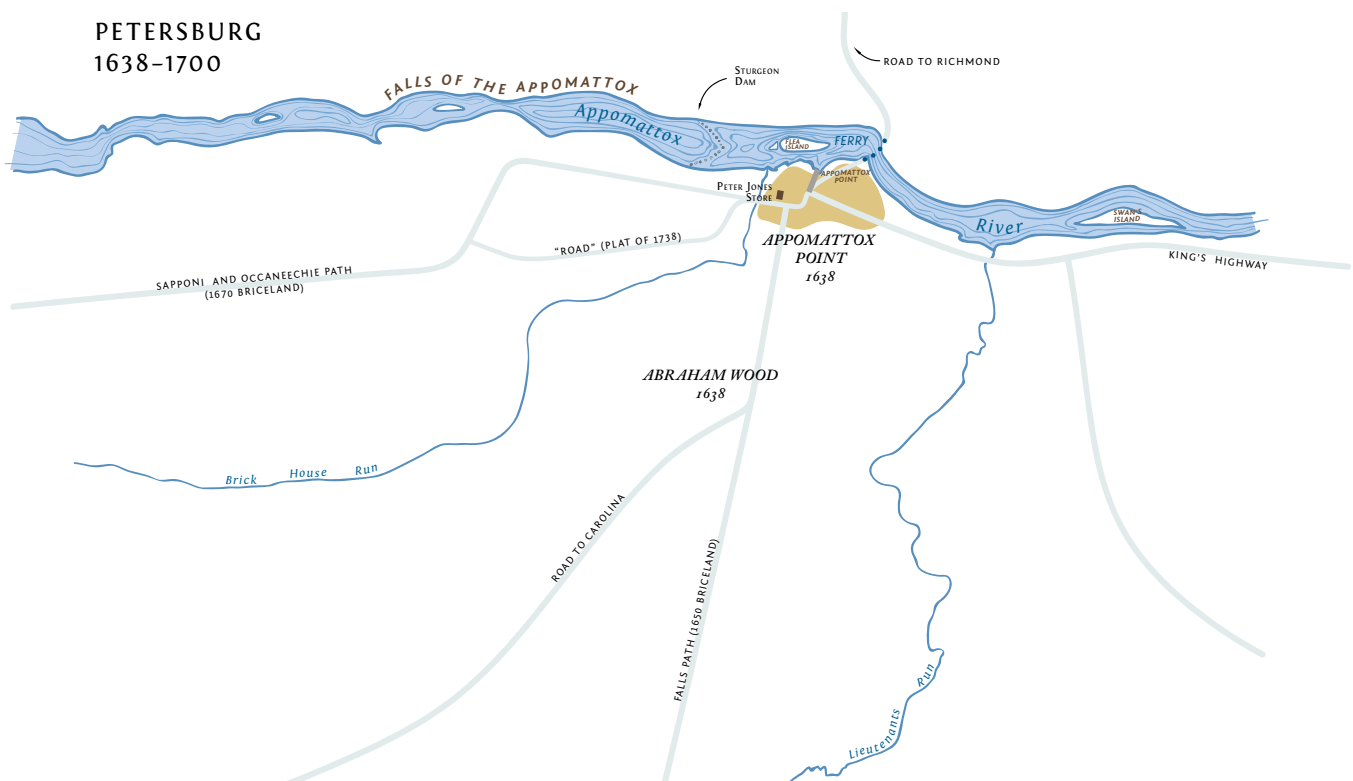


## II. PETERSBURG — A MARKET TOWN

Petersburg was founded at the upper most reach of the navigable portion of what is today known as the Appomattox River. Prior to European settlement in the area, it was already a hub of Native American trade — a significant point where trading paths that led deep inland through the Piedmont of Virginia and North Carolina first met navigable water below the Fall Line. As a trading center, both for the Appomattoc Indians and early European settlers, this early colonial outpost grew into one of the most prosperous commercial centers in the region by the middle of the eighteenth century.

Petersburg was established as a town in 1748 and by the time of the American Revolution, Petersburg had seven tobacco inspectors and numerous tobacco merchants. During the nineteenth century, the city became renowned as a commercial and industrial center for processing and sale of cotton, tobacco, and metal, and shipping products out of the region. The forced labor of enslaved African Americans generated much of these commodities and the ensuing wealth enjoyed by white slave owners.

On into the 19th century, until its economy collapsed after the nine-month siege it endured at the close of the American Civil War, Petersburg grew as a center of distribution and trade for the Southside Virginia and North Carolina regions with its regional road system and five railroads converging in the city. It had become the terminus for the Upper Appomattox River Canal which brought goods from Virginia's Piedmont region, and its harbor, on the Appomattox River in Old Town, shipped cotton, tobacco, and other goods to ports around the world.



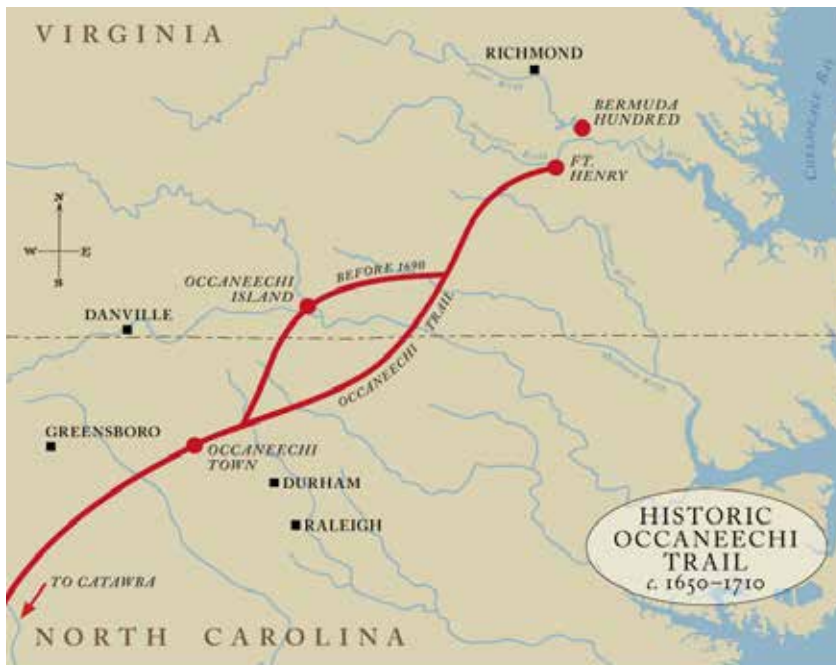
*Petersburg before 1730, showing the original route of the Sapponi and Occaneechie Paths through Abraham Wood's land, corresponding to Old Street (today's Grove Avenue). The "Fall Line Road" described by Alan V. Briceland corresponded to today's Sycamore and Halifax streets*  
— Map by StudioAmmons



## II. PETERSBURG — A MARKET TOWN - cont'd

### *Appomattox Point & the Indian Trade*

In the 1600s, just north of Petersburg's Old Town, the Appomattox River took a sharp turn around a horn of land known as Appomattox Point. The Quaker Indian traders Robert Hix and John Evans set up a trading post there in the late seventeenth century. They were later joined by Richard Jones, the son of Peter Jones who established the trading post near Short Market and Old Streets. Jones inherited this land from his grandfather, Abraham Wood, the commander of Fort Henry. Wood had a monopoly on the Indian trade until Bacon's Rebellion in 1676, and during that time had led or dispatched from Fort Henry the most important seventeenth-century explorations in British North America. Fort Henry and Appomattox Point anchored the northern end of the trading path that led southward to the Nottoway, Meherrin, and Tuscarora Indians, and connected just to the west to the trading path that led southwestward to Hillsborough, North Carolina, home of the Cherokees and the Catawbas. In the early 18th century, as increased settlement pushed the colonial frontier westward and southward, trade with the Indians followed this movement away from Petersburg.



*Approximate route of the Occaneechi Trail connecting Fort Henry to the interior of North Carolina — map by StudioAmmons*

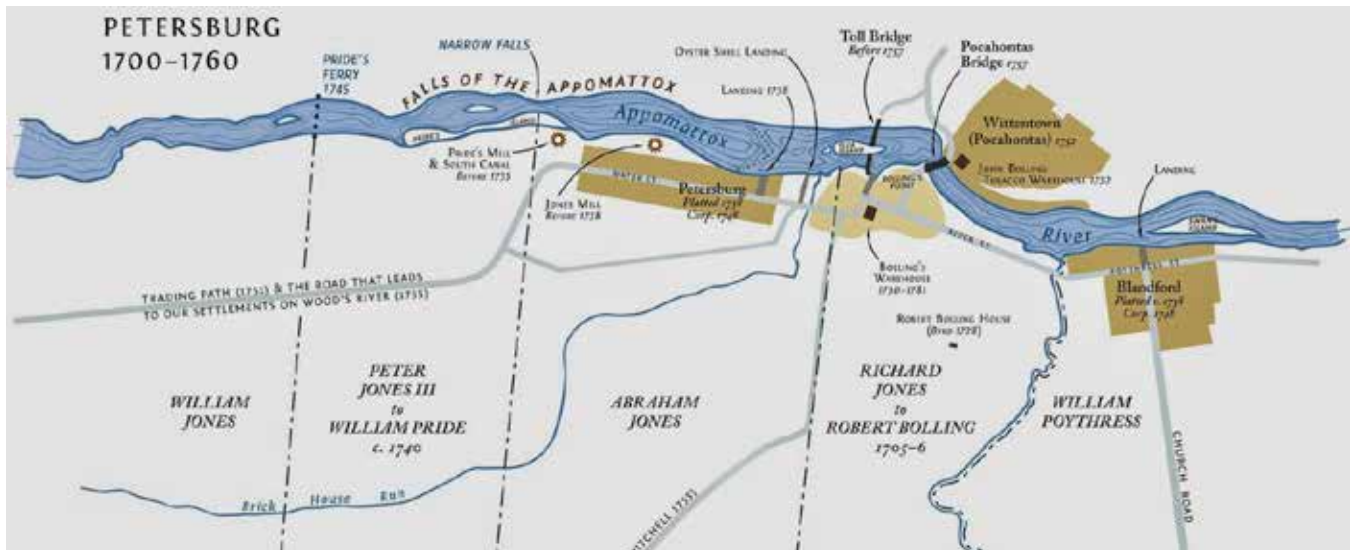


*Stone building at Short Market Street (currently a ruin) thought to be the location of Peter Jones' Trading Post which may have stood adjacent to the site of Fort Henry where the Brickhouse Run passes under the current Carriage House Apartment building*

### *Tobacco Inspections*

In 1705, Richard Jones sold the land at Appomattox Point to the well-placed and ambitious Robert Bolling, who, around 1716, constructed, on what is still described today as market square, a “rolling house” (a tobacco warehouse to which huge hogsheads of tobacco were literally rolled, often for forty to sixty miles). In 1730, the Virginia General Assembly passed legislation ordering that all tobacco intended for export had to be inspected at official inspections (owned by private individuals but manned by inspectors employed by the colony). Bolling's Appomattox Point Inspection (later known as Bolling's Point) was among the first designated colonial inspections. The opening of Southside Virginia and northern North Carolina to settlement in the early-to-mid-18th century made the Petersburg area the center of the North American tobacco trade. There were six others within a half mile, but Appomattox Point became the best-known inspection in all of Virginia. Its store of tobacco was burned by the British during the American Revolution in 1781, and it was eventually closed after a second fire in 1783.

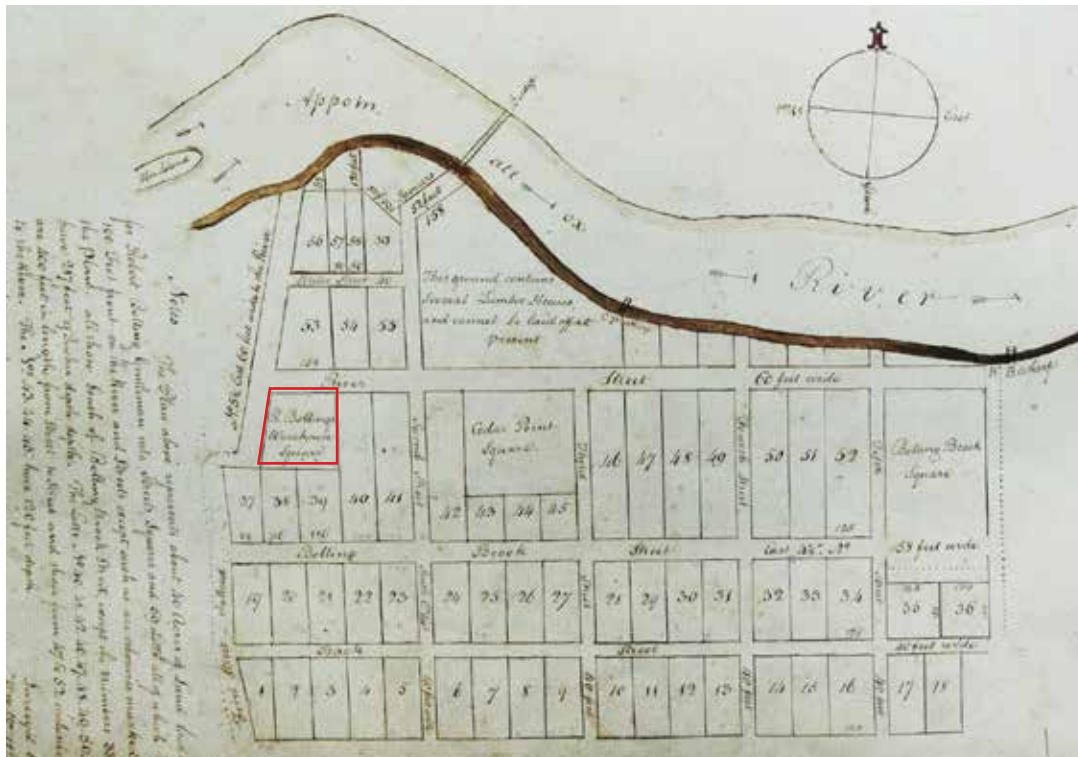
## II. PETERSBURG – A MARKET TOWN - cont'd



*Settlement in the Petersburg area in the 18th century prior to the American Revolution. The three communities of Petersburg, Winttownton, and Blandford would eventually be incorporated into the town of Petersburg in 1748. —Map by StudioAmmons*

## Old Market Square

The location of Bolling's warehouse had probably seen informal use as a market, when in 1791, Robert Bolling and the City agreed that it was to be used, "in perpetuity," as a market free of charge to the vendor, or it would revert to Bolling ownership. The first market building, on the site, was destroyed in the Great Fire of 1815, which burned it, and most of downtown around it.



*1783 Plat of Robert Bolling's Bollingbrook development showing the "Bolling Warehouse Square" which was later to become the city's Old Market Square. In the second decade of the 21st century, the City of Petersburg sold the Old Market Square to a private developer who has redeveloped the market building into a restaurant. It is not known if the Bolling's reversion clause is still in effect.*



## II. PETERSBURG — A MARKET TOWN - cont'd

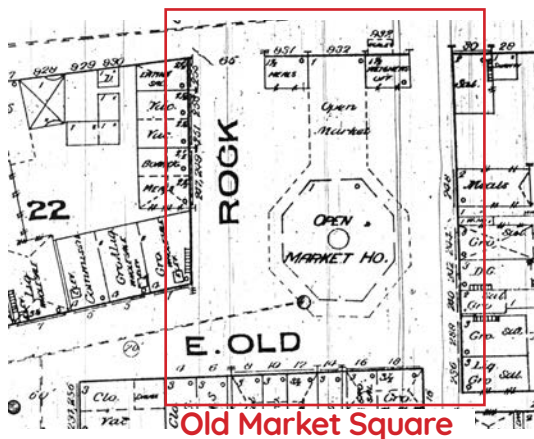


Detail of the 1877 Beers Map of Petersburg showing Old Market Square and the area known as "Appomattox Point" and later "Bolling's Point." The 1878 octagonal Farmers Market building has not been built yet.

The Square was defined in 1808, when Cockade Alley was laid out on the eastern edge, and in 1815, when the new market buildings were pulled back to the north, allowing the extension of Old Street eastward to Cockade Alley. Rock Street and River Street were ancient roads. Soon the periphery of the square was entirely surrounded by brick buildings with market-related stores and shops below and dwellings above. In 1854, the South Side Depot replaced the buildings on the northern periphery, and most of the remaining buildings were removed in the third quarter of the twentieth century.



Mid-20th c. view of the brick buildings surrounding Old Market Square. The Farmers Market building's canopy can be seen on the left. The buildings on the right would have stood along Old Street where the City parking lot is today.



Above: The present market building is the fourth market building to occupy the site. It was built in 1878–79, and was originally known as the Farm Market Center. It was designed by the Baltimore-trained carpenter B.J. Black, a captain of one of Petersburg's volunteer companies during the Civil War. Generally, meats were sold inside and produce outside.

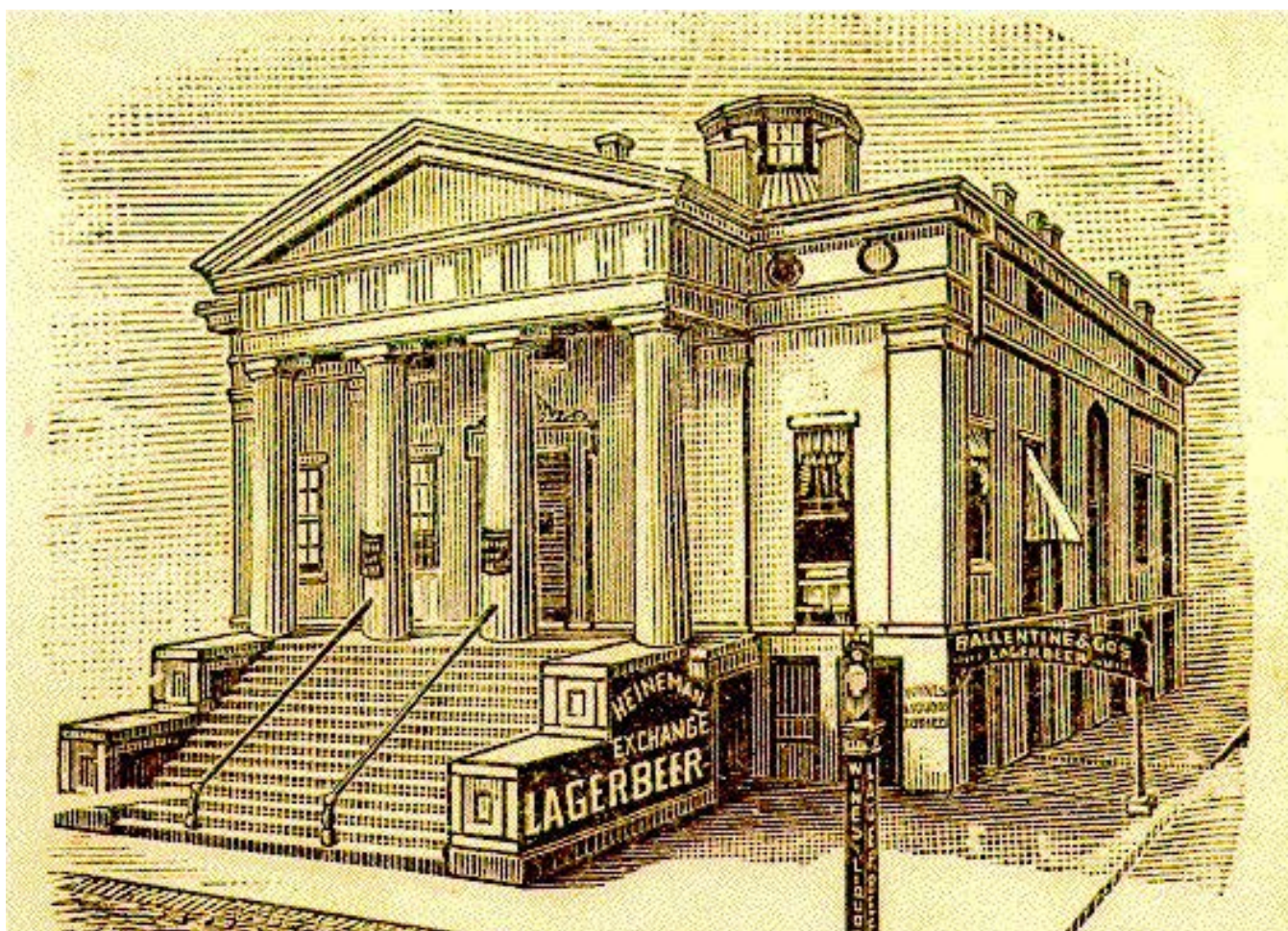
Left: Sanborn Insurance map from 1885 showing the build-out of Old Market Square and the recently constructed octagonal Farmers Market building



## II. PETERSBURG — A MARKET TOWN - cont'd

### *The Petersburg Exchange*

The Petersburg Exchange Building was constructed just after the great crash of 1837 and may have been a way for its founding group of Petersburg businessmen to quickly establish credibility and confidence after the recent financial turmoil that swept the nation. Although the Petersburg Exchange was a private venture, the Exchange Building was constructed in the style and fashion of a public market hall with market bays flanking both alley sides of the Ground Floor and a meeting/trading room above, on the First Floor. It is likely that its operations were evolving as it was being developed since the concept of trading commodity shares was taking hold in many larger cities in the United States at this time. This group of Petersburg merchants and businessmen may have been looking to follow this trend by operating a hybrid model that included both the trading of goods and services with the trading of commodity stocks. The Exchange Building ceased to operate as an exchange within the first decade of its existence. Just prior to the outbreak of the Civil War, the building was occupied by the Bank of Petersburg. After the war, the building was marketed as premium commercial space and was occupied by a variety of businesses until it, ultimately, becomes a public building in 1927 when it was purchased by the city for use as their police headquarters. One might say that the building was more of a monument to its founding shareholders since as an exchange, it appears to have been a business failure.



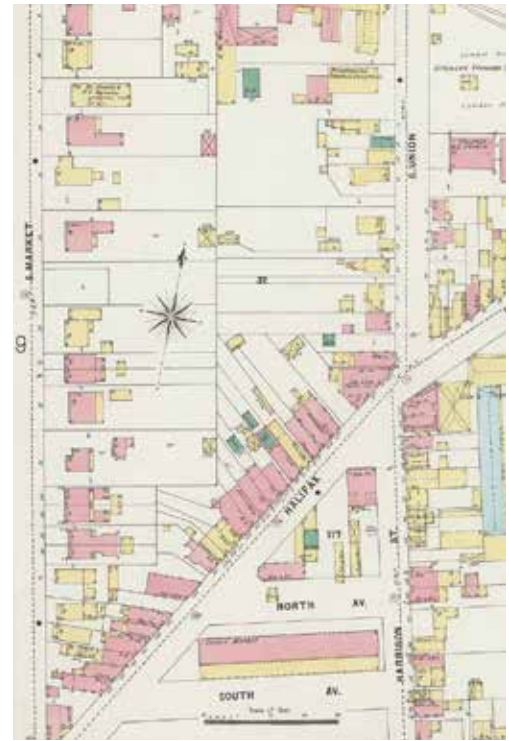
*Image from the Petersburg Directory advertising for Heinman's Exchange — note that the alley openings are still full openings*



## II. PETERSBURG — A MARKET TOWN - cont'd

### *The Triangle — New Market (Center Market)*

In 1850, the City of Petersburg purchased a triangle of land at the intersection of Halifax and Harrison Streets for use as a public market. A thriving market evolved on "The Triangle" as it was the location where Boydton Plank Road (Halifax Street) came into the city connecting farmers and merchants from throughout Southside Virginia with the mills, ports and commercial operations in Petersburg. Municipal scales were located on The Triangle at the Center Market building where produce and other goods were officially weighed and recorded. The Triangle was an integrated city market from its inception but in the 1870's, with the end of Reconstruction, as conservative, white leadership took back control in the state legislature, many African American business owners, from the adjacent neighborhoods of Gillfield and Ravenscroft, began to concentrate in the area of the market resulting in the growth of a strong African American commercial district in and around The Triangle. In 1885 The "New Market" building replaced the Center Market on The Triangle and in conjunction with the many other groceries, bakeries, restaurants, and stores set on the surrounding blocks, served as an important place for residents to exchange goods and services, mingle, socialize, and keep up with the news and current events, continuously operating black-owned business in Virginia.



*1897 Sanborn Map showing The Triangle*



*Postcard looking north on Halifax Street showing the New Market (right) in the early 20th century*

2

## II. NOTES on BANK STREET



*Early 20th c. view from High Street looking east down West Bank Street with May's Row on the left. Note the Academy of Music (center right) with the three-building "Garden Row" in the center with the Paul Nash Store and Dwelling on its right (demolished by the city in 2019). The Baine's Bottling Works can be seen on the south side of the street. (Far right)*

### *Bank Street — An Introduction*

The following chronology will form a loose timeline for the development of Bank Street in the context of the development of this part of Downtown Petersburg through the early to mid nineteenth century. Bank Street's development as a location for banks, lawyers, and newspaper publishing made it one of Petersburg's premier, upscale, commercial streets and a prime location for the construction of the Exchange Building, not as a public market, but appropriating the form of the public market hall in a monumental expression of the power and ambition of a select group of Petersburg's elite business leaders.

The following accounting of the development of Bank Street and the urban context of the Exchange Building is based on conversations with Dulaney Ward and follows his research into the people and events that shaped this early phase in Petersburg's history as a leader in regional, national, and international trade. We have used overlays on the 1877 Beers Map to help illustrate the growth and development of Bank Street. Other early map sources are represented where they can help provide context for the development of this part of Downtown.





## II. BANK STREET - cont'd

### *Bank Street Chronology*

#### By 1720

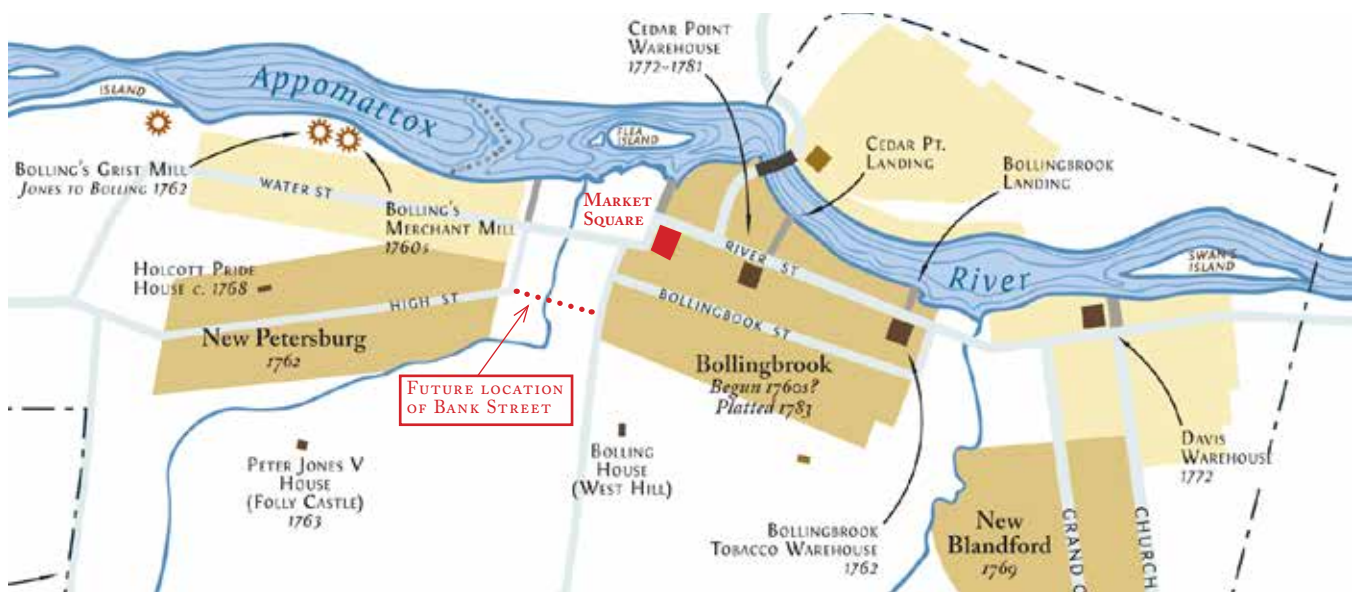
High Street and Sycamore Street (known as Halifax then) start out as trading paths and eventually become rolling roads for the transport of hogsheads of Tobacco. At this time, High Street curved gently down to Old Street (through the area that would become May's/Smith's Row) and down to the Trading Post (Peter Jones' Trading Post). It split near the bend towards the river with a second road leading to Old Street to a point approximately where the Carriage House Apartments entrance is today and just east of the Brickhouse Run (one probable site of Fort Henry) before leading to Oyster Shell Landing. This path takes it close to the Brickhouse Run which, at the time was an open creek emptying into the Appomattox River at Flea Island. As early as 1703, The crossing of the river was made via a toll bridge built using Flea Island and run by Edmund Browder, who lived on the island.

#### 1720

Peter Jones sold 10 acres on the east side of the Brickhouse Run to Sycamore Street to Thomas Ravenscroft who lived in Williamsburg and was the sheriff of James City County. Ravenscroft was the builder/carpenter who constructed Blandford Church later, around 1737. By 1745, with the additional purchases made by his son John, the Ravenscrofts owned from the river to the bend in the Brickhouse Run (today at the rear of the Leonard Hardware or District 19 property). and (from the bend in High Street to Sycamore Street.?)

#### 1760 (?)

Richard Hanson, owner and operator of the Golden Ball Tavern, purchases 7 acres to the south to Brickhouse Run (possibly from Peter Jones Jr.). The western edge of the Golden Ball property is either the curb-line along Market Street or the face of the west wall of the one story building still remaining on the northeast corner of Market and West Bank Streets.) What would become Bank Street now crosses two property owners, Ravenscroft and Hanson.



Map of Petersburg 1760s - 1780s showing the Water Street connection across the Brickhouse Run but Bank Street (now East Bank Street) had not been laid out yet and High Street turned towards the landing at the river (note Bolling's Market Square is shown in the center in red).

## II. BANK STREET - cont'd

High Street still veers to the north to the Trading Post (center of the Carriage House Apartment building).

1774

John Tabb purchases Ravenscroft's lot but the deed was left in limbo due to the Revolutionary War as John Ravenscroft was in Edinborough, Scotland during the war.

1784

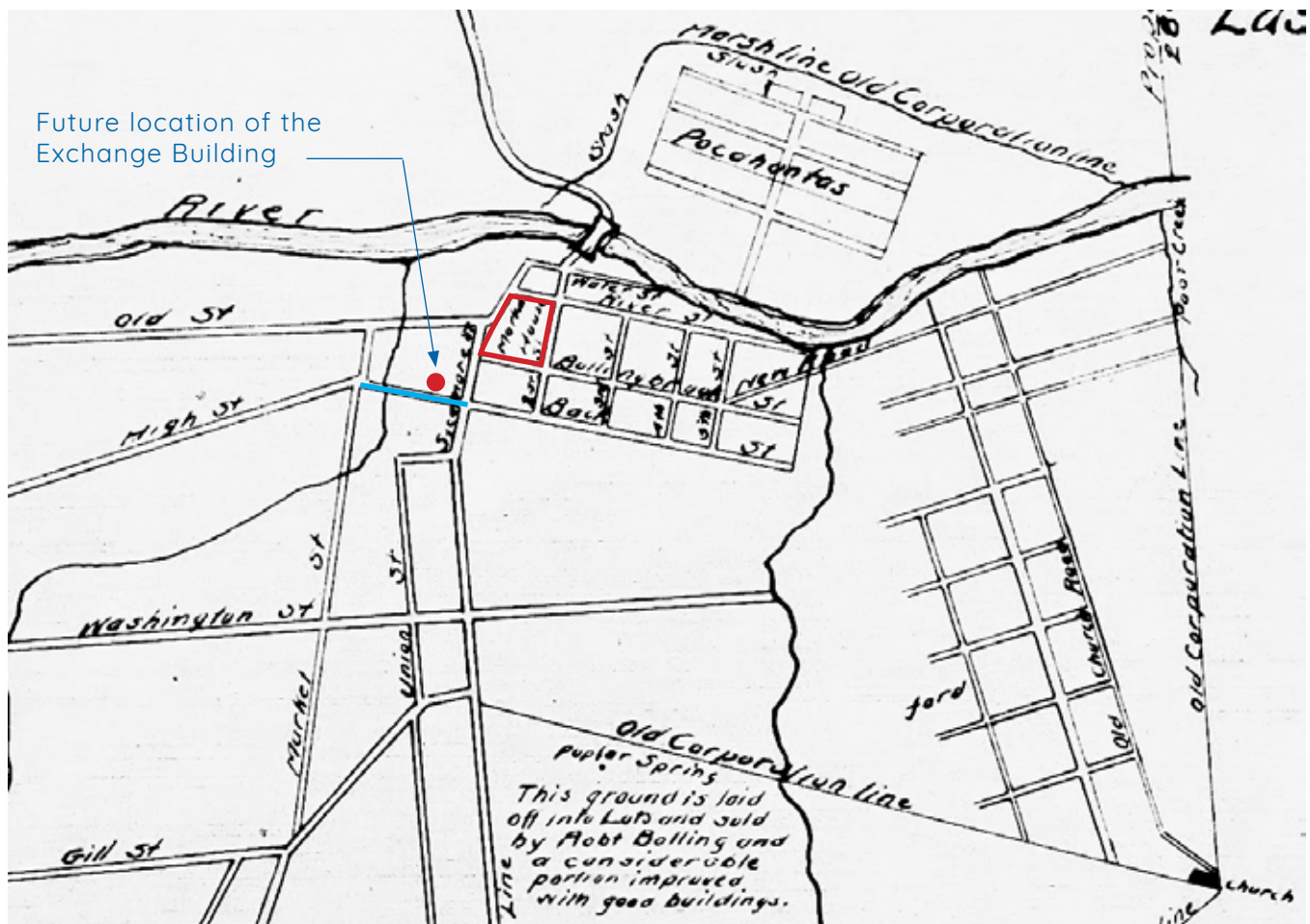
Petersburg is incorporated as a town. The first public works project was the laying out of streets. At this time instructions were given to create an "elbow" at the foot of High Street in order to connect with Back Street (Later Lombard Street and today's East Bank Street which had already been laid out by Robert Bolling in the Bollingbrook development in 1783).

1787

Market Street is created.

Hanson puts up "600 feet palling fence" along Market Street.

Thomas Ravenscroft dies with the deed (to John Tabb which had been in limbo during the War due to Ravenscroft's absence) still unresolved, continuing to leave the property in limbo.



Detail of an 1815 plan showing the Bollingbrook development. This is the first map showing the "laying out" of what is today West Bank Street (shown blue). What is East Bank Street today is shown as "Back Street" and on later maps as "Lombard Street." The future location of the Exchange Building is shown as well as Bolling's original Warehouse Square which had been turned over to the City for use as a "free" market by this time.

## II. BANK STREET - cont'd

### 1800

David Buchannon buys the Golden Ball property from Richard Hanson and then sells the property to Robert Pollock who took over Buchannon's business in Petersburg when Buchannon went back to Scotland. Buchannon and the Dunlops were two of the most important and wealthy families in Glasgow, having made their money on Virginia tobacco. (Buchannon's father owned two country houses, one named Mount Vernon, and the other Virginia House on Virginia Street in Glasgow. The street still remains there today.

Allan Pollock, the brother of Robert Pollock, took over Buchannon's Richmond operations and built "Tree Hill" overlooking the James River at Richmond. This is where Arron Burr stayed when he was on trial.

### 1805

Law suit over Ravenscroft's property is not settled (until 1810). Due to the delay, the City asks the General Assembly to create the new street (the future Bank Street).

### 1808

John Baird Jr. builds a number of commercial buildings in this same time period, including the building currently housing **The Upholstery Workshop** (1808), on the south side of West Bank Street today, and **Gowan's Row**, on the west side of Short Market Street (the right side of the double building is still there today). Both are extraordinary vernacular buildings, reaching apparently for the picturesque. Baird constructed the Upholstery Workshop building for himself. Originally gable-fronted and somewhat taller than it was broad, it followed the tradition of gable-fronted eighteenth-century stores. Today, it is much changed, especially the façade, which now wears an entirely reworked face from ca. 1900, featuring an elaborated parapet that hides the gable. The east wall is extraordinary, constructed entirely in English bond. **The Upholstery Workshop** is the oldest surviving building on Bank Street.

### 1810

The law suit is settled over the Ravenscroft property. John Ravenscroft's son "Mad Jack" Ravenscroft (as he was known at William and Mary and went on to become the first Episcopal Bishop of North Carolina) was instructed to transfer the title to John Tabb when he became 21. (This may have been originally done in 1792 after John Ravenscroft's death). Then Tabb died, without a will, putting the property in limbo again. Tabb had built his house on what is now Tabb Street where the Petersburg Hotel stands. (John Gracie later lived in the Tabb house - Gracie was the builder of the Gracie Mansion in New York City where the mayors of New York still live.)

In the Ravenscroft/Tabb property settlement the alley on the east side of the Exchange was created. It was sometimes called Gowan's Alley. Gowan (who owned the previously mentioned "**Gowan's Row**" on Short Market Street) constructed the first frame buildings on what was the east side of the Exchange Building lot.

Sycamore Street was originally straight with properties laid out orthogonally. Richard Bolling and the Tabb families lay out the development of this eastern portion bordering on Sycamore Street.

Construction likely begins on "**Garden Row**." A three building brick row on the north side of Bank Street between Market and St. Paul's Alley (then Federal Street). The easternmost of the three would become the **Paul Nash Store and Dwelling**.



## II. BANK STREET - cont'd

### By 1810

John Baird Jr.'s first building on Bank Street (today's Upholstery Workshop) was occupied as the offices of an investment business.

**The Bank of Virginia** began on the south side of Bank Street but soon moved across the street to the east corner of Federal Street (St. Paul's Alley today) to the vacant lot across from where the **Paul Nash Store and Dwelling** was being constructed

The **Farmers Bank of Virginia** was located in an early wooden building on the south side of the street until it moved, in 1814, to a new brick building on Bollingbrook Street just before the 1815 fire.

### 1810-1815 "Bank Street"

Bank Street's early development is spurred on by the sales of the original Golden Ball lots by Robert Pollock who was working for, and ultimately purchased the lots from, Richard Buchannon.

The earliest commercial structures were laid out on the south side of the street between Market Street and today's Bartow Alley (St. Paul's or Cox's alley in earlier times). These included the **Bank of Virginia** and the **Farmers Bank of Virginia** both west of Bartow alley initially. Up to this time, "Bank Street" was just one of the names used for this new street but ultimately the name Bank Street prevailed over "New" or "Back" Street.

### 1811

**The Paul Nash Store and Dwelling** was constructed for import/export merchant Paul Nash in 1811, as part of a row of three buildings. The row was constructed in the garden lot of the seven-acre property known as the Golden Ball property (referred to by Dulaney Ward as "Garden Row"), although its original and long-term use was for the residence and business operations of Richard Hanson, David Buchanan, Robert Pollok, and others, all extremely important tobacco merchants. The development of this row had been made possible by the construction of (West) Bank Street a few years earlier, together with the stone bridge over Brick House Run, the stone walls to contain the run, and a good deal of fill to bring the land up to the level of the bridge. Paul Nash, the first owner and occupant of this building (the easternmost of the three), was Mayor of Petersburg at the time of the Great Fire of 1815. He led the community in the first stages of its Phoenix-like rebirth after the fire. The alley beside the Nash building was originally called "Federal Street," but because of Paul Nash's late-in-life sanctimoniousness the alley came to be known as "Saint Paul's Alley." Federal Street was laid out to be 20' wide whereas most alleys were laid out at 10' at that time. William Ransom Johnson, the "Napoleon of the Turf," purchased the building around 1819, occupied it for at least several years, and maintained ownership of it for decades. He likely used the elegant dwelling upstairs as his townhouse, especially during horse-racing seasons and when tending to business in Petersburg. He was one of the nation's most important thoroughbred racehorse owners, racing his horses up and down the East Coast and in Kentucky, and maintaining racehorse breeding and training facilities at Oakland, on the Appomattox west of Petersburg, at the New Market Race Course, just east of Petersburg, and in Kentucky.

Just before Christmas of 2019 the city of Petersburg allowed the building to be demolished after a failed attempt by the community to raise the money for its stabilization. The building was architecturally remarkable for several reasons. To begin with, the building was the oldest in Petersburg of its type, that is, three-story brick side-passage store/dwellings with gables to the side, a type of building that came to dominate

## II. BANK STREET - cont'd

downtown Petersburg after the Great Fire of 1815. Secondly, the brickwork was the finest Federal Flemish-bond brickwork in Petersburg, with its extremely deep rubbed-brick jack arches over the openings, and closers at the corners. The dwelling above was remarkable for its woodwork, especially the very large arched opening between the double parlors, the oldest double parlors known in the South, a bit older than those in the Governor's Mansion in Richmond. In fact, one wonders who the architect/builder might have been. It could perhaps have been John Baird, Jr., who had just completed several elegant houses along High Street, and who was about to build scores of those three-story brick structures after the fire in 1815. But could it possibly have been one of the craftsmen engaged in constructing the Governor's Mansion and the Wickham House in Richmond in the same period?



*Paul Nash Store and Dwelling (1811 - 2019). Photo taken in December 2019, just before its demolition by the City of Petersburg.*



*View of W Bank Street today showing two of the earliest brick structures built on the street — the 1808 John Baird Jr. building with its late 19th c facade with arched windows and raised parapet, can be seen in the center of the block.*



*View of "Gowan's Alley" or the east alley alongside the Exchange Building looking towards West Bank Street.*



*View of "Gowan's Alley" or the east alley alongside the Exchange Building looking from West Bank Street to the rear of the Exchange Building site.*

## II. BANK STREET - cont'd

### 1810-14

Upscale dwellings are being built along the east side of Market Street (today at 235 North Market Street property)

### 1812-14

The alley on the west side of the Exchange Building property was created by John Baird Jr. and a partner. In the second decade of the nineteenth century, Baird was especially busy. It is known, for example, that he constructed the building on the north side of West Bank Street, just west of the Exchange Building, know today as the **Plaza or Exchange Hotel** (1814). Originally a three-story row of two brick buildings, it was entirely transformed in the late nineteenth century into a single building housing a hotel. Any doubt that this was the same building was removed several years ago when structural failure induced by removal of chimneys and weakening of bearing walls led to removal of the ground floor ceiling, revealing Baird's original joists and floorboards. Baird built this complex for himself, but rented the front row and its dependencies, a pair of detached kitchens and a pair of lumber houses. (The latter, remarkably are still standing, though faced by glass walls, and occupied by an apartment upstairs and an office down. Baird, moreover, lived on this property, in a house he built along the alley to the rear of the lumber houses,



*View of "Exchange Alley" or the west alley alongside the Exchange Building looking from West Bank Street. This alley was laid out by John Baird Jr. in 1814.*



*Hiram Haines' Row.*

which has not survived (Baird probably lived there until about 1820 or so). There are several other brick rows still surviving on West Bank Street, which survived the Great Fire of July 1815, which destroyed some 600 structures. It is likely that Baird had a hand in the construction of a good number of them.

A note on alleys: At this time, alleys were not really different than streets. Alleys are unusual in Petersburg with Bank Street having an abundance of alleys where few exist elsewhere Downtown. The Bollingbrook development contained no alleys in its layout.

### 1814

**Hiram Haines' Row**, 1st phase of the current Leonard Hardware and the pool supply company are built.

**The Peniston Buildings**, and **Alexanders Buildings** built.



## II. BANK STREET - cont'd



*View of the Peniston Buildings (left) and the Plaza Hotel (right).*



*View of Alexanders Row.*

### 1815 - The Great Fire of Petersburg

The Great Fire of Petersburg only destroyed two buildings on Bank Street — the two buildings on the Exchange Building lot owned by Gowan. Nothing would be built there until the Exchange Building in 1839. These were the two buildings on the east side of the alley (Gowan's Alley) which were probably brick buildings. It's likely that Gowan had Baird build the two buildings (behind today's Longstreet's building and facing Bank Street) just after the 1810 property settlement that made development on Bank Street east of the Brickhouse Run possible. Sycamore Street is still a straight line, at this time, with the boundary between the Jones/Tabb and Bolling properties creating two triangles. Tabb and Richard Bolling began to build out the property on the west side of Sycamore but all burned in the fire. The two buildings north of today's **The Trading Post** building were under construction at the time. The two corner buildings, today's Longstreet's and the building to its north, were not built at that time. These two buildings were constructed shortly after the fire.

### 1816

Completion of the walling of Brickhouse Run through downtown connecting with the previously built stone bridges at Old, Bank, and Market Streets.



*View of the stone bridge across the Brickhouse Run at 109 W. Bank Street. This bridge was not visible until the tornado of 1993 destroyed the 1850's building that was constructed over the creek.*



*View of the arched stone bridge over the Brickhouse Run at Market Street.*

## II. BANK STREET - cont'd

1819

Market crash hits Petersburg hard but maybe not so hard.

By 1820

Bank Street is mostly built-up. By 1820 little had been built in Richmond while Petersburg was being developed rapidly.

1827-8

The **Bowers Building** is constructed at the corner of Sycamore and Bank streets facing Sycamore but with fashionable wrought-iron balconies along the Bank Street side. Soon after, buildings up and down Bank Street would install iron balconies. The Bowers Building's balconies were salvaged from its 20th c. demolition and have been stored in the basement of the Farmers Bank Building on Bollingbrook Street.



*HABS photo of the original West Bank Street facade of the Bowers Building, one of Petersburg's finest and most elegant commercial buildings until its demolition in the 1980s.*



*A later HABS photo showing the West Bank Street Facade of the Bowers Building — note that the parapet has been taken down to the gable roof line.*

1810-1840

The street is fully built-out with many earlier wooden buildings being re-built or replaced with brick buildings during this time.



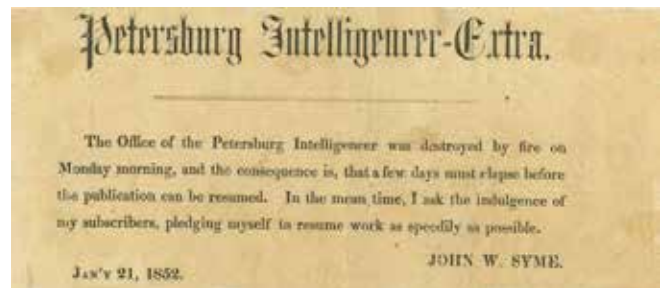
## II. BANK STREET - cont'd

1836

**109 Bank Street, The Petersburg Intelligencer Building** was built on the stone foundation of an earlier structure. From 1840-1856 it was the location of the "**Petersburg Intelligencer and Tri-Weekly Advertiser**", a leading Whig newspaper that was previously Virginia's first daily paper, the Virginia Gazette. It was one of three papers being published on Bank Street during this time period. The paper's editor was John W. Syme. Syme was born in Petersburg in 1811 and was the only child of the Reverend Andrew Syme, rector of St. Paul's Church, and his wife Jean Matherson Cameron. His grandfather was the Reverend John Cameron, rector of Bristol Parish. He attended the College of William and Mary from 1827-29 and soon after, started his law practice in Petersburg. In 1851 a fire nearly destroyed the building but Syme quickly rebuilt and began publishing again later that year. In 1856 he purchased the Raleigh Register and moved to Raleigh soon after and the building was occupied by a variety of commercial establishments from there on.



*View of the Petersburg Intelligencer Building (1836). The printing presses were located on the ground floor with publishing offices upstairs. It has one of the only two remaining iron balconies on Bank Street.*



*Broadside put out after the 1851 fire promising to rebuild. The paper continued on at this location until 1856.*

1837

Market crash - The Exchange Building organizers might have wanted to make a statement in the wake of the crash. Some businesses were not seriously effected by the crash but some, like the Garlands, Elizabeth Kekley's owners, lost everything.

By 1839

Construction of **The Exchange Building** — The Exchange was intended to sell commodities but tobacco was already being sold in a different type of market (inspections). The site was likely chosen because of its situation with the two alleys along its east and west sides and a fair amount of property behind it. Up to that time, nothing had been built on the site since Gowan's buildings were destroyed in the 1815 fire. Ultimately, this market exchange had little impact on Petersburg economy as an exchange. At that time, It was Intended to sell tobacco, cotton, and grain, but grain was mostly being sold by commission merchants and not sold at an exchange and not in large amounts. The city was full of cotton merchants but people didn't really sell cotton at markets. (note: Tom Branch- "The Keziah Affair" ran a commission merchants operation in the **Upholstery Workshop** building on Bank.



## II. BANK STREET - cont'd



*View of West Bank Street as it would have appeared in the later part of the 19th century with the Leonard Hardware Building on the left. Note the right hand (western most) of the two Hardware buildings has been updated with new window hoods and an Italianate cornice with a central pedestal with a life sized lion figure.*



*A closer view of the western most building of the Leonard Hardware Store.*



*1893 photo showing the Leonard Hardware Store with the new facade upgrades to both the east and west buildings with a lion on the pediment of the western building and an eagle on the pediment of the eastern building. The building had been decorated for the 30th anniversary of the Battle of the Crater.*



*The Leonard Hardware Building today is the home of District 19, the regional state social services offices.*

## II. BANK STREET - cont'd

### By 1840

The Exchange Bank had moved to today's **Appomattox Tile Art** site (large building set back from the street). The old Bank of Virginia Building was replaced by a theater after the Civil War and ultimately by the **Academy of Music** which brought a new "high-style" architecture to Bank Street influencing the design of the new **Police Department** building, currently the **Coyle Residence**, and the re-facing of buildings like the current **Upholstery Workshop**, John Bair Jr.'s 1808 building.

There are three major banks on the street and as many as four newspapers publishing there by this time. Bank street has become a favorite location for law offices illustrated by its central northern alley known as Appeal Alley.

The Police Department later occupied the building on the corner of Cox's alley (Coyle Residence today) until it was moved to the Exchange Building when the City purchased it in 1927.



*Early 20th c view looking east on West Bank Street with the Academy of Music on the left and the fire station on the right.*



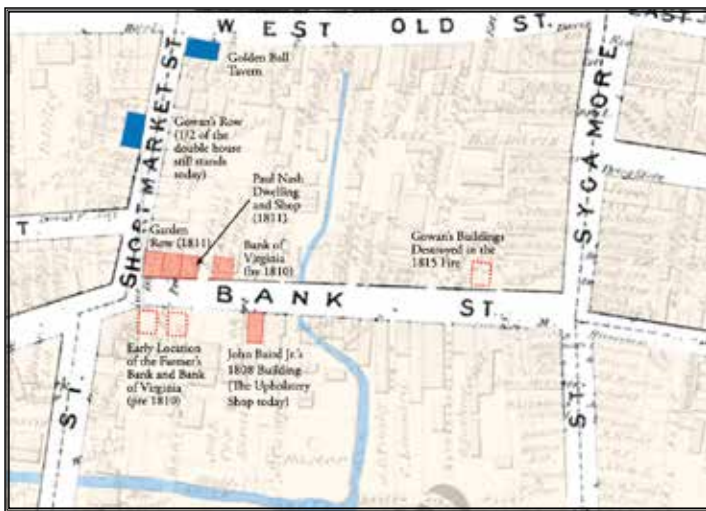
*Early 20th c. view looking east on West Bank Street showing the Ford Model A factory (center left) just past the Academy of Music building*



*Aerial view of West Bank Street (1990's) with the red-roofed Exchange Building in the center. The parking lot at the far left was the site of the Academy of Music.*



## II. BANK STREET - cont'd



BY 1812

*Note: overlays made to the 1877 Beers Map*

**BANK STREET BY 1812** - Both the Farmers Bank and the Bank of Virginia were two of the first businesses to locate to the south side of what would eventually become Bank Street. The Bank of Virginia soon moved across the street to the corner of St. Paul's Alley (Federal Street) and the Farmer's Bank moved to a new brick building on Bollingbrook Street in 1814, just before the Great Fire of 1815. Construction of "Garden Row," in the "garden" of the Golden Ball property, likely began around 1810. John Baird Jr. had built his first building on Bank Street in 1808 and soon after, likely built Gowan's buildings on the Exchange Building lot. These buildings were the only buildings on Bank Street to be destroyed in the Great Fire of 1815. By 1812, Baird was likely working on his double building to the west of the Exchange Building lot (recently known as the Plaza or Exchange Hotel) and establishing the alley along the west of the Exchange Building lot.



BY 1820

*Note: overlays made to the 1877 Beers Map*

**BANK STREET BY 1820** - By 1820 Bank Street was mostly built-out. The building of the stone bridge and walling of the Brickhouse Run along with raising the grade up to the level of the creek walls allowed for urban scale development in the middle of the block. With only Gowan's buildings, on the Exchange Building lot, being destroyed by the fire, development continued, after the fire, with the construction of mostly three-story brick commercial buildings on both the north and south sides of the street. Nothing was built back on the Exchange Building lot. The corner of Bank Street and Sycamore was anchored by to significant buildings, today's Longstreet's building on the northwest corner and the Bowers Building on the southwest (the parklet next to the Dixie Restaurant today).



BY 1840

*Note: overlays made to the 1877 Beers Map*

**BANK STREET BY 1840** - By 1840 the street had been fully developed with many buildings having already been re-built or improved. Bank Street had become the "high-end" commercial street in Downtown and the preferred location for banks, newspapers and lawyers offices. The Exchange Bank joined the list of financial institutions on the street along with The Exchange Bank of Virginia, on the lot where Appomattox Tile Art is located today. The Bank of Virginia remains on the northeast corner of St. Paul's alley until after the Civil War when it is converted into a theater — decades later replaced by the Academy of Music. The small building at 109 Bank Street, The Petersburg Intelligencer building is constructed on the stone foundation of an earlier building, perhaps part of the early development of the street. The south side of the street fills in as the walling of the creek creates additional buildable lots.



3

### III. BUILDING HISTORY



The authors of the 1969 National Register of Historic Places report on the Petersburg Exchange Building, one of the first generation of Virginia buildings to be nominated to the National Register, stressed the building's importance to the economic life of antebellum Petersburg. The Exchange Building and other merchant exchanges of the first half of the nineteenth century were "virtually indispensable to the successful conduct of business" in America's larger cities. "In these buildings bulk commodities such as tobacco, cotton and grain were sold from the wholesaler to the retailer or from the grower to the manufacturer." These functions explain the involvement of Petersburg tobacco manufacturer David Dunlop (1804-64) in the enterprise. Dunlop was a chief backer of the exchange as well as other leading Petersburg social and business initiatives of the antebellum period. The late 1830s marked the highwater mark of Dunlop's Petersburg boosterism. In 1838 he helped found the Petersburg Classical Institute and became a director of the Farmers' Bank of Virginia's Petersburg Branch. The following year he joined the Petersburg Benevolent Mechanic Association. Dunlop also invested in various river improvement and railroad companies that benefited Petersburg's economy. Other names associated with the exchange at its establishment were the commission merchants firm of Dunn, McIlwaine & Brownley, D'Arcy Paul (founder of the Petersburg Savings and Insurance Company), T. N. Lee, and the tobacco firms of Leslie & Brydon and L. E. Stainback Son & Company<sup>1</sup>



### III. BUILDING HISTORY - cont'd

The idea of a Petersburg mercantile exchange may have gestated for some time before the enterprise was publicly launched in early 1839. On January 10, 1839, the Virginia General Assembly instructed the Committee for Courts of Justice to “enquire into the expediency of incorporating a company for the purpose of building an edifice, to be used as a commercial reading room and exchange in the town of Petersburg.” The resolution evolved into a bill to incorporate the “Petersburg Exchange,” presented on January 15 and passed on January 23. On January 11 the Alexandria Gazette reported, “Numerous public edifices are about to be built in Petersburg, Virginia. We are glad to hear that the ancient and respectable city is rapidly improving. There is a great deal of public spirit in Petersburg.” The Exchange Building was likely one of the “public edifices” to which the Gazette alluded.<sup>2</sup>

The act of incorporation stated that “a large number of the merchants and other citizens of Petersburg have united in a subscription for the purpose of erecting an exchange.” The subscribers were to hold their inaugural general meeting on the first Monday of March 1839 at which five to seven directors were to be elected. On March 5 the directors contracted to purchase a lot on the north side of Bank Street from John Gowans for \$4,000, followed on April 2 by the purchase of an adjacent lot containing 0.13 acres from Herbert and Martha Whitmore for \$4,250. According to Petersburg architectural historian James H. Bailey, the building site was “previously occupied by a double brick structure one and [a] half stories high. One portion of the former building had been occupied by the office of the Petersburg Intelligencer, and the other had been used by Samuel Coldwell as a bakery. In the rear portion Dick Hamilton, a musician, had his rooms and kept pet monkeys.” An 1835 Mutual Assurance Society of Virginia policy made



*Exchange Building in the first two decades of the 20th c.*



*Reproduction of Simpson Watercolor - (1850's?)*

<sup>1</sup> “Exchange Building” (National Register of Historic Places Inventory-Nomination Form); Barnes, “David Dunlop;” “The Exchange, Photographs, Written Historical and Descriptive Data.” In 1904 Petersburg chronicler John Herbert Claiborne described the firm of McIlwaine, Brownley & Company as having the largest grocery business in Petersburg in the 1850s (Claiborne, *Seventy-five years in old Virginia*, 55). The Petersburg Benevolent Mechanic Association appears with various spellings in secondary sources including “Mechanics” and “Mechanic’s.” Assistance in the research and writing of this history was provided by Dana Cragg, Librarian with the Petersburg Public Library; Petersburg historian Dulaney Ward; Sergei Troubetzkoy, City of Petersburg; architect Joseph Dye (Jody) Lahendro; Mary Laura Kludy, Virginia Military Institute Archives and Records Management Specialist; and Courtney Griffin and Tom Ratliff, formerly with the Petersburg Bureau of Police. Dulaney Ward notes that most if not all of the men originally involved in the exchange were British immigrants.

<sup>2</sup> *Journal of the House of Delegates of the Commonwealth of Virginia* [1839], 32, 38, 42; *Acts of the General Assembly of Virginia* [1839], 145-146; Alexandria Gazette, January 11, 1839.



### III. BUILDING HISTORY - cont'd

out to Herbert Whitmore [sic] shows the outline of the building with the inscription “Printing Office & bread shop/40 by 50 feet, one story high/Walls brick, roof wood.” The sketch includes the dotted outline of a small “bake house” which stood within about twenty-five feet of the main building.<sup>3</sup>

The Gowans lot purchase was complicated by the fact Gowans was in Scotland and unable to arrange power of attorney for his agent in Petersburg, David May. The Petersburg Exchange brought suit in Petersburg chancery court, leading to May’s appointment as a special commissioner to finalize the transaction. In their presentation to the court the directors of the exchange stated they had incurred “considerable expense in constructing their building.” The statement was apparently made in June 1839, the date of the decree, and indicates construction was well underway by that date. Research undertaken by historian Randall Biallas for the Historic American Building Survey (HABS) in 1968 suggested a date of “c. 1840-1841” for the building based on the 1840 and 1841 city landbooks (real estate tax records). That the building would appear on tax rolls by 1841 indicates completion by 1841. According to journalist Alicelee Walter, writing in 1972, the building cost \$32,000 to erect.<sup>4</sup>

According to James H. Bailey, writing in 1967, a Mr. Berrien of New York built the Exchange Building in 1839-40. Bailey cited an 1884 newspaper article which other authors have written appeared in the Petersburg Mail, a newspaper known to have been published in 1884 but for which no issues are known to currently exist for that year. According to Bailey, the article stated that Berrien “also built about the same time the Exchange Bank on Bank Street and Saint Paul’s Episcopal Church on Sycamore Street which was destroyed by fire in 1854.” Bailey was aware that Saint Paul’s was attributed to New York architect Calvin Pollard (1797-1850), and so he consulted New York City architectural historian James Grote VanDerpool, then president of the Society of Architectural Historians, who “suggested that perhaps Berrien was an assistant to Pollard and that he was persuaded to take on independent commissions while he was in this community.”<sup>5</sup>

Bailey and Vanderpool’s suggestion that Berrien worked for Pollard has been accepted by subsequent historians. Randall Biallas wrote in 1968: “According to an article in The Petersburg Mail of 1884, the Exchange was designed by a Mr. Berrien of New York. Berrien may have been an assistant to Calvin Pollard, to whom St. Paul’s Episcopal Church . . . is attributed. Both buildings were erected at approximately the same time.” Berrien was most likely James or J. M. Berrien (alternate or misspelling Berrian), who is known to have been active in New York from 1846 through 1867 and may have prepared the 1833 drawings for the Potomac Bridge in Washington, D.C. Berrien was accepted as a member of the Petersburg Benevolent Mechanic Association on January 8, 1839. His occupation was listed as carpenter.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> *Acts of the General Assembly of Virginia* [1839], 145; Petersburg Deed Book 11, pp. 22 and 144; Bailey, “History of Buildings” Mutual Assurance Society of Virginia Policy R14V93.

<sup>4</sup> *Petersburg Exchange v. John Gowan*[s]; “Exchange Building” (National Register of Historic Places Inventory-Nomination Form); “The Exchange, Photographs, Written Historical and Descriptive Data,” Walter, “Exchange Building.” David May was the brother of John Fitzhugh May, who served as Petersburg’s General Assembly delegate during the 1839 session and was instrumental in securing the act of incorporation for the Petersburg Exchange.

<sup>5</sup> Bailey, “History of Buildings,” Cappon, *Virginia Newspapers*, 151.

<sup>6</sup> “The Exchange, Photographs, Written Historical and Descriptive Data,” Seagrave, *Early Artisans & Mechanics of Petersburg*, 22.

### III. BUILDING HISTORY - cont'd

Research by architectural historian Sergei Troubetzkoy points more definitively to Pollard as the architect. Pollard had an established association with Petersburg at the time as the architect of St. Paul's (ca. 1838) and the Petersburg Courthouse (1838-40). Troubetzkoy examined Pollard's notebooks at the New-York Historical Society and found references to Berrien, in Petersburg, awaiting payments from or facilitated by Pollard. The dates suggest Berrien was at work on a project other than the courthouse, which suggests he was working on the Exchange Building, though the building is not referenced by name (this assumes Pollard did not have other unknown projects in Petersburg at the time). Though he may have been considered a carpenter, Berrien was more likely to have served as a construction manager on the project. He may have held the position of superintending architect mentioned in the 1839 specifications, which would agree with the 1884 account describing him as the building's architect.<sup>7</sup>

The chief function of the Exchange Building has been described in various ways by various authors. Petersburg historian Edward A. Wyatt IV wrote in *Along Petersburg Streets* (1943):

The Exchange Building, which now serves as the city's police court and headquarters, was erected about 1842 for the Petersburg Exchange, incorporated in 1839. Commission merchants displayed their grain samples in the rotunda for the inspection of millers, but the system proved unpopular and was abandoned, whereupon the building became an imposing white elephant.

Throughout the years it has been used for offices of one kind or another. It was described in 1856 as "the best building in point of architecture we have in the city, and the worst in point of cleanliness or use." Whether they were optimists or wags, there were some who insisted it should be offered to the Confederate States government as a capitol.

Wyatt may have known Petersburg residents who remembered the building in its early years, so his description of how it functioned may be close to the mark. His description also agrees well with other accounts.<sup>8</sup>

In addition to its function as a commodity exchange, the Petersburg Exchange Building provided meeting space for organizations and served as an auction venue. The directors of various local manufacturing and mercantile firms met in the building on May 30, 1842, and in July 1859 members of the Produce Exchange met in the "Exchange Building," presumably a reference to the Petersburg Exchange. A caption on the 1844 Mutual Assurance Society of Virginia policy for the building noted it was "occupied as offices/by May & Joynes/Wm S. Simpson/Cogdill & B[?]/F. H. Archer, Reading/Rooms & others." William Skinner Simpson kept his insurance office in the building through at least 1851; he, or his son, also painted a picture of the building sometime in the mid-nineteenth century. The Petersburg Fire and Marine Insurance County Office and Dr. V. W. Harrison had offices in the building in 1847 and 1859 respectively.

Stocks and land were auctioned at the building, including stock of the Clover Hill Coal Mining company (in 1855) and of the Petersburg Exchange itself, two shares in 1856. In 1846 Texas lands and in 1855 a Dinwiddie County farm were sold at the building, in both cases "in front of the Petersburg Exchange," which suggests the auctioneer stood on the steps or inside the portico and the bidders gathered below. An exhibit in the building states, "For a brief period in the 1840s [the building]

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<sup>7</sup> Sergei Troubetzkoy personal communication; "Carpenter's Specification." A Pollard attribution was also suggested by architectural historians John Wells and Robert Dalton who wrote in *The Virginia Architects* (1997): "It is also possible that the building was designed by Calvin Pollard of New York, or that Berrian [sic] was working for Pollard in designing the building" (p. 30). Architectural historians Anne Carter Lee and others also suggest Pollard may have been the principal architect (Lee et al, *Buildings of Virginia*, 307).

<sup>8</sup> Wyatt, *Along Petersburg Streets*, 18.

### III. BUILDING HISTORY - cont'd

housed an Athenaeum where townspeople could satisfy their thirst for culture through books, periodicals and lectures.”<sup>9</sup>

Henry H. Elebeck, a free black barber, operated his barber shop on the building’s ground floor in 1855 and before. His advertisement in the September 3, 1855 Daily Express, discovered by historian Tim Talbott, provides a detailed account of the business:

Shaving, Hair Cutting, Etc.—The subscriber respectfully informs the Petersburg public, that he is now prepared at his old quarters, Exchange Place, Bank street, to serve them in the most superior style. His razors are ever keen, his establishment always clean and neat, and his assistants attentive, courteous, and obliging. His famous Russian Shaving Soap has acquired a celebrity in both hemispheres, and imparts to the beard a pliancy and suppleness which causes it to come off imperceptibly to the wearer. His celebrated perfumery “Eau de Costral” having been exhausted, he has prepared a new article for the hair, entitled “Tou Jours Pret,” which surpasses all others for cleansing the hair from Dirt and Dandruff. To this he invites the especial attention of the Ladies. It imparts an odor also, which eclipses all the perfumes of Araby. He respectfully solicits a continuance of that patronage so liberally extended him for twenty years past. H. H. Elebeck, Merchants’ Exchange, Bank st.

In addition to barbering Elebeck also offered bathing facilities for patrons, writing in another advertisement, “The subscriber has refitted up his Bathing Saloon in the most tasteful style for the accommodation of the citizens of Petersburg.” The facility was open from 6:30 AM to 10:00 PM and baths were hot, cold, or “tipped” (tepid). In this advertisement Elebeck listed his address as “my old stand, No. 6, Merchants’ Exchange, Bank street.” Talbott’s research indicates Elebeck was a successful businessman possessed of \$1,000 real estate in 1850, as listed in the federal census that year (his real estate was valued at \$500 in the 1860 census). Living in his household along with his wife Agnes Ann and the couple’s children was brickmason John Edwards. Historian Diane Barnes writes that the Elebecks “were among the most financially successful and prominent African American families in Petersburg.”<sup>10</sup>

By the mid-1850s the Petersburg Exchange had fallen on hard times. The post-bellum Virginia publicist Edward Pollock wrote in 1884, “A handsome structure, still known as the Exchange Building, was erected on Bank Street, but the Exchange system was not popular with the merchants of the day, and, after a brief life, the enterprise languished.” In 1904, John Herbert Claiborne, who settled in Petersburg in 1851, described tobacco purchases by general mercantile firms like that of Thomas Branch, a “portly man of fine appearance” located on Old Street, whom Claiborne considered to be the most prominent tobacco trader, and Sturdivant, Hurt & Company, which “commanded the confidence of their customers to the fullest extent” and handled “all the products of the planter in exchange.” The more informal system of tobacco sales described by Claiborne may have created resistance to the exchange system introduced at the Exchange Building.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> *Alexandria Gazette*, June 4, 1842; Daily Express, March 14 and August 11, 1855, July 8, 1856, and July 2 and August 24, 1859; *Richmond Whig*, February 27, 1846; *Petersburg Intelligencer*, October 14, 1847; Exchange Buildings exhibits; Mutual Assurance Society of Virginia; William Skinner Simpson papers finding aid. Tom Ratliff, who as a Petersburg policeman was stationed at the building from 1966 to 1969, recalls seeing an article in a Petersburg newspaper of several decades ago that suggested slave auctions were held at the building. The Athenaeum information earlier appeared in James Scott and Edward Wyatt’s history *Petersburg’s Story*, p. 121.

<sup>10</sup> Talbott, “Petersburg Black Barber Advertisement;” Barnes, *Artisan Workers in the Upper South*; Walter, “Exchange Building.”

<sup>11</sup> Claiborne, *Seventy-five years in old Virginia*, 50; *Thomson’s Mercantile and Professional Directory*, 120. Claiborne listed the “mechanics and contractors in brick or wood” of the period as “Major Daniel Lyon, Mr. Beverly Drinkard, W. H. Baxter, Lumsden & Shedden, Traylor & Peterson,” and others he could not recall. Claiborne also mentioned an Exchange Bank on Bank Street (Claiborne, *Seventy-five years in old Virginia*, 62, 68).



### III. BUILDING HISTORY - cont'd

By 1856 the situation had come to a head. The comments quoted in part by Wyatt in 1943 read in full: "Our Exchange Building.—What is to be done with it? Cannot somebody make a lecture hall, or theatre, or hotel out of it? It is the best building in point of architecture we have in the city; and the worst in point of cleanliness or use. Do something with it and that soon too." The exchange directors made a first attempt to sell the building in late 1856. Advertisements ran in December issues of the Petersburg Daily Express announcing the building would be sold at auction on December 30. The ad noted the building "is so well known that a description of it is considered unnecessary." A December 31 article titled "The Exchange—High Bid Refused" reported the result of the auction:

The Exchange building was offered for sale at auction yesterday, and received the bid of \$11,950 from RICH'D ALFRIEND, Esq, which was refused. The minimum limit upon the structure was \$12,500. We cannot imagine how the paltry difference could have actuated the owners to refuse such a fine bid as that given by MR. ALFRIEND. It is the subject of remark everywhere. The building may be worth more, it is true, but we have our doubts as to such a bid being again offered. Gold, as a trite saying avers, does not grow on trees, nor is Petersburg overflowing with such men as the above bidder, ready to sink a small fortune upon the success or failure of such an enterprise as the Exchange induces. We hope, however, that a larger price may be given when again put up for sale, so that some good may be squeezed out of an establishment now comparatively valueless.<sup>12</sup>

The building stagnated for over a year. On April 22, 1858, a Daily Express editor wrote, "Any one would see from the appearance of this once imposing, but now forlornly dilapidated structure, that it has long wanted other owners, with more to care for in its adornment and importance as a public building, than its present two hundred and fifty-seven stock possessors." A rekindled effort was underway, however. The exchange president, directors, and stockholders decided at a March 22, 1858, general meeting to sell the building at public auction on the first of May. The Daily Express editor suggested the new owner should consider converting the building to a library to be owned and operated by the city Library Association, and he offered suggestions for how this might be done:

The mode of improvement designed, in case of the success of the Association, is the entire remodeling of the interior, from the rotunda and dome to a square or rather oblong hall, sufficient to accommodate the largest number [of books] that the present Library Hall has ever contained. The cases for books will be arranged conveniently, and the furniture and rostrum disposed according as it may see practicable. The exterior will be generally renovated and improved, which must of course add greatly to the appearance of the street, as well as its own condition.

Instead, the building was sold to tobacco manufacturer Reuben Ragland for \$9,025, as recorded in a June 16, 1858 deed, nearly \$3,000 less than what the amount offered for it in 1856.<sup>13</sup>

Of the Exchange Building and its function at the end of the antebellum period, Edward Pollock wrote, "It was revived in 1858, but only for a very short time, after which it was finally suspended. The Exchange Building was occupied just before the civil war by the Bank of the City of Petersburg." The Bank of the City of Petersburg was authorized by the Virginia General Assembly on March 29, 1860, and printed bank notes and shares through late 1862. The bank's notes picture the Exchange

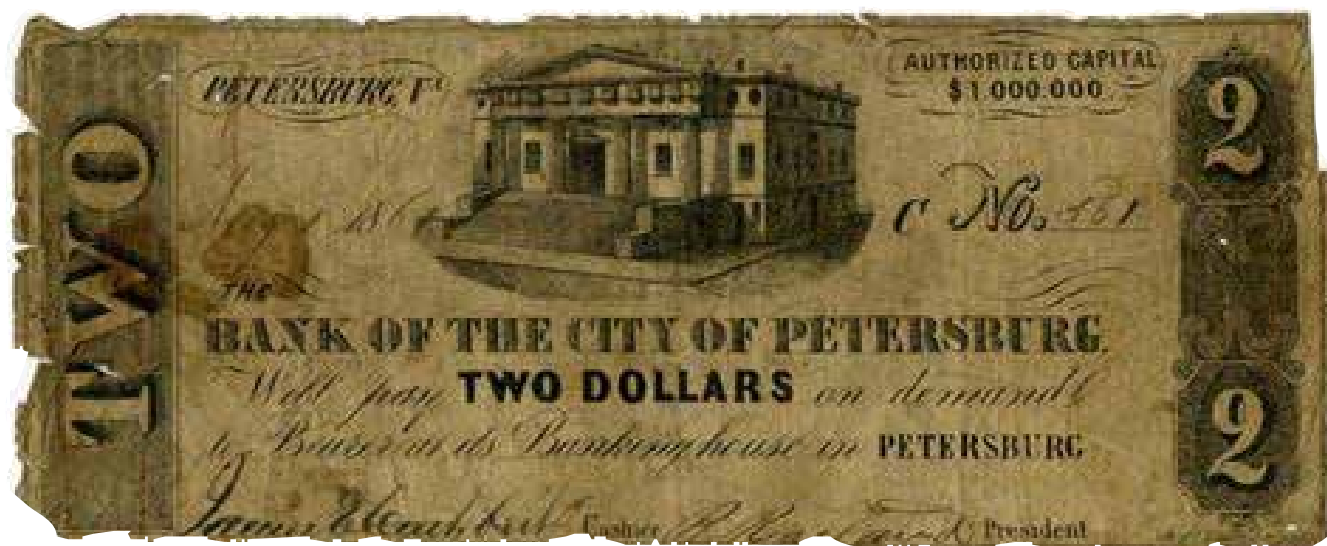
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<sup>12</sup> *Daily Express*, December 5 and 31, 1856; Walter, "Exchange Building." An exhibit in the building states that in 1856 "a local newspaper suggested that this elegant structure be turned into an opera house and 'place of popular resort,' but nothing came of the idea." Richard Alfriend was likely Richard Jeffery Alfriend (1823-59), who is buried in Petersburg's Blandford Cemetery.

<sup>13</sup> Pollock, *Historical and Industrial Guide*, 34; *Daily Express*, April 22, 1858; Petersburg Deed Book 24, p. 436.

### III. BUILDING HISTORY - cont'd

Building, one of the earliest surviving depictions of the building. Reuben Ragland served as the bank's president and James E. Cuthbert as its cashier. According to historian William Henderson, the bank failed in April 1865, a victim of the collapse of the Confederacy. The Exchange Building itself also felt the impact of the war, several shells hitting it on July 5, 1864, during the Siege of Petersburg.<sup>14</sup>



*Two-Dollar bank note issued from the Bank of Petersburg with one of the earliest known image of the Exchange Building*

In 1862 Ragland and his wife, Lavinia, sold the building to M. M. Davis and Philip Abrahams (or Abrams) for \$20,000. M. M. Davis and partner J. C. Drake owned Davis, Drake & Company, a dry goods store which in 1875 was located at the corner of Bank and Sycamore Streets, near and possibly adjacent to the Exchange Building. Claiborne refers to the firm of Abrams, Lyon & Davis and describes it as "large dry-goods merchants, mostly retail," in his 1904 history. Philip Abrahams was a merchant and member of Petersburg's Jewish community. M. M. Davis was Michael M. Davis of New York City, who may also have been Jewish (George H. Davis of Petersburg, a third partner in the firm of Davis, Drake & Company, was Jewish). In October 1862 Abrahams sold his half share in the building to Drake. The deed refers to the "'Petersburg Exchange,' now used and occupied as the 'Bank of the City of Petersburg.'" <sup>15</sup>

In April 1884 M. M. Davis and J. C. Drake and their wives, Miriam M. Davis and Eloise Drake, sold the "Exchange Building" to Henry Heinemann for \$7,500. Heinemann already operated his saloon, known as Heinemann's Exchange, on the building's ground floor, having moved to the location in 1875, and he appears at the address (9 Bank Street) in an 1882 city directory. Two years later Edward Pollock described Heinemann's establishment in his *Historical and Industrial Guide to Petersburg, Virginia*:

Heinemann's Exchange.—This popular Saloon and Restaurant is situated in one of the most central and desirable localities in the City . . . The Saloon occupies the ground floor of the handsome and time-honored Exchange Building, the upper portion of which is used as offices, etc., the whole being the property of Mr. Henry Heinemann, who conducts

<sup>14</sup> Pollock, *Historical and Industrial Guide*, 34; Jones and Littlefield, *Virginia Obsolete Paper Money*, 362; Henderson, *Unredeemed City*, 350. Two physicians kept offices in the building in 1860, V. W. Harrison and Joseph W. Smith (Seagrave, *Early Artisans & Mechanics of Petersburg*, 218, 238.

<sup>15</sup> Ginsberg, *History of the Jews of Petersburg*, 31, 45; Claiborne, *Seventy-five years in old Virginia*, 53; Petersburg Deed Book 26, p. 640, and 27, p. 132. Exchange.

### III. BUILDING HISTORY - cont'd

the Saloon, and keeps nothing but the very best Wines, Liquors, Cigars and Tobacco. The chief attraction, however, to the tired and thirsty, is the delicious Export Lager Beer, from Ballantine's Brewery at Newark, N.J. This is admitted to be the purest, best and most refreshing Lager Beer brewed in this country. An excellent free-lunch is served daily between the hours of 10 A.M. and 3 P.M. Mr. Heinemann has been engaged in this business in Petersburg for the past twelve years, and has occupied his present premises for nine years, so he is too well known to require further recommendation.

According to Heinemann family tradition, Henry Heinemann, who was born in New York City in 1850 and married Wilhelmina Lauderbach (spelling uncertain) in 1873, operated the establishment as a "beer garden." Three attorneys listed Exchange Building business addresses in Pollock's 1884 publication. E. M. Cox, attorney and notary, noted his address as "No. 212 Exchange Building, Bank Street," indicating a room or suite numbering scheme. Robert H. Jones Jr. and W. R. McKenney, formerly partners in Jones & McKenney, maintained offices or a joint office in the building.<sup>16</sup>

Photographs from the Heinemann period, which lasted until 1916, document other uses for the building. Real estate agent R. T. Jarvis occupied the front southwest corner of the ground floor in the late nineteenth century. About 1893 a job printing company may also have occupied a part of the ground floor. A ca. 1900 photo of a gathering of what appears to be Confederate veterans, seated on the front steps, shows a sign board reading Jones & Stevens Insurance across the window to the left of the main entry, inside the portico. A historical exhibit in the visitor center notes that "numerous fraternal orders and mutual benefit organizations met in the Exchange Building" during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, among them the Knights of Pythias. The building was called "Pythian Castle" as a result of the Knights of Pythias association, according to the exhibit. An 1882 city directory notes that the Pythians met on Bank Street in "Castle Hall." Pollock places them on Bank Street in 1884 and identifies them as Ruth Lodge No. 21, chartered in 1871. The move to the Exchange Building was recent at the time; a fire on September 2, 1878, destroyed the Pythians' former meeting place at the corner of Sycamore and Bollingbrook Streets. Petersburg's Pythians hosted the Grand Lodge of Virginia in the Exchange Building (Castle Hall) on February 19-21, 1884.<sup>17</sup>

In February 1916, for \$10,000, Henry Heinemann sold "Heinemann's Exchange" to H. P. Stratton and others. In November 1917 Stratton and others sold the building to the Exchange Realty Company. The company directors consisted of members of the Stratton family, including H. P. Stratton's wife, Ella L. Stratton, vice president, and Florence T. Stratton, secretary. In February 1923 the company sold the building back to H. P. Stratton. A soft drinks retailer known as The Exchange operated in the building in 1924. William A. Lucie was the proprietor. On February 16, 1927, H. P. and Ella L. Stratton sold the building, still described as Heinemann's Exchange, to the City of Petersburg for \$25,000.<sup>18</sup>

The sale to the city inaugurated a period of public ownership that continues to the present. The 1932 Sanborn map labels the building Police Hqs [Headquarters] & City Offices with the northeast corner labeled Pool R'm [Room]. Although the map doesn't specify, the police department likely occupied the ground level, its location in the 1960s, whereas the city offices likely occupied the first and perhaps the second stories. The Pool Room was probably the city offices secretarial pool rather than a billiards parlor, though the latter is not inconceivable and would explain why that one function was singled out. The map labels the alley on the west side of the building Exchange Alley (the alley on the east side is unnamed) and notes the existence of an automobile garage in the northeast corner

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<sup>16</sup> Ann Heinemann, Ann personal communication; Petersburg Deed Book 45, p. 125; Pollock, *Historical and Industrial Guide*, 167, 222, 223, 234; Exchange Building exhibits; 1905 Sanborn map.

<sup>17</sup> Pollock, *Historical and Industrial Guide*, 72; Kennedy, History of the Knights of Pythias, 597, 600, 604.

<sup>18</sup> Petersburg Deed Book 87, p. 10, Deed Book 91, p. 182, Deed Book 103, p. 315, and Deed Book 112, p. 549; *Hill Directory*, 256, 353.



### III. BUILDING HISTORY - cont'd

of the lot. Tom Ratliff, who went to work for the Petersburg Bureau of Police in 1966, recalls that the garage may have been of brick construction with a metal roof. It was used to store motorcycles in the 1960s. A 1974 survey of the building filed with the Virginia Department of Historic Resources states: "There is a one-story building being used as a garage in the parking lot behind the Exchange Building. The structure is probably of the period 1800-1850 and may have been the stables for the exchange or one of the three early 19th century structures on Sycamore Street."<sup>19</sup>

Petersburg city directories from the 1960s document in detail the various organizations, most of them city agencies, that occupied the building during the period. The 1960 directory referred to the building as the Police Building and listed its police-related departments as headquarters, detectives, and women's division. The rotunda was used as a court room by the Municipal Court and the Juvenile & Domestic Relations Court. The clerks of the two courts had offices in the building. Other occupants included the Petersburg Boys Club, the city Probation Officer, a US Navy Recruiting Station, and, at the back of the building, the city electric inspection office. The boys club and recruiting office were gone by 1961 and the probation and electric inspection offices were gone by 1964. In 1969, the last year the police department occupied the building, only it and the two courts and their clerks were listed in the building.<sup>20</sup>

Retired policeman Tom Ratliff, whose first day with the Petersburg Bureau of Police was December 1, 1966, recalls many aspects of the ground-level police department layout. Double doors to the right of the front steps opened to the "desk sergeant" desk. Nearby were restrooms and the justice of the peace or magistrate duty station. Beyond this was the "roll call room" and a row of wooden lockers. Near the middle of the building was the office of the Chief of Police and his secretary. The records room stood opposite the chief's office. At the back of the building were detectives' offices and four to six "old iron cells" used as holding cells, perhaps into the 1950s, but which were used for general and evidence storage in the 1960s. As a recent hire one of Ratliff's responsibilities was to stoke the coal boiler in the basement, which he believes may still have had a visible brick floor at the time. The Municipal Court occupied the building's first story, with offices for judges and clerks. The rotunda was used as a courtroom with a judge's dais and theater-type seating. Courtney Griffin, who went to work for the bureau in October 1970, believes the police department moved out of the Exchange Building in September or October of 1969. According to an exhibit in the building, the building also once housed the Department of Public Safety and the Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court. When the police station opened, "it was reported to be one of the most modern and best equipped police headquarters in the South. By 1966, it had fallen into such disrepair that City Manager Roy F. Ash complained he could not hire the police he needed because it was 'too depressing to work there.'"<sup>21</sup>

The Exchange Building was rehabilitated as the Petersburg City Museum, later known as the Siege Museum, beginning in 1973. The architect for the work was Gordon B. Galusha of Petersburg and the contractor was the Walthall Construction Corporation of Colonial Heights. The initial work, described in a 1980 completion report, resulted in the installation of a sprinkler system, window glass replacement, the sanding and refinishing of floors, and "millwork." A photo of the front elevation taken for an architectural survey dated July 2, 1974, shows scaffolding around the building. The 1980 report notes that National Park Service funding was denied for the exterior rehabilitation because exterior paint was removed by sandblasting. Grants were awarded for interior woodwork in 1974 and lath, plaster, and stucco in 1975; the projects were approved in 1976.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Tom Ratliff personal communication; Sanborn map; "Exchange Building" (Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Architectural-Historic Inventory Card).

<sup>20</sup> *Hill's Petersburg and Colonial Heights . . . 1960*, 10; *Hill's Petersburg and Colonial Heights . . . 1961*, 9; *Hill's Petersburg and Colonial Heights . . . 1964*, 11; *Hill's Petersburg and Colonial Heights . . . 1969*, 11.

<sup>21</sup> Tom Ratliff and Courtney Griffin personal communication; Exchange Building exhibits.

<sup>22</sup> "Exchange Building" (Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Architectural-Historic Inventory Card); "Completion Report: Exchange Building, Petersburg, Virginia."

### III. BUILDING HISTORY - cont'd

The 1980 report states: “The project included work on the floors. The existing 2 1/4” tongue and groove flooring was removed from the rooms surrounding the rotunda, and the existing wood sub-flooring was patched, repaired and refinished. A new slate floor was installed in the lobby. The architect managed to locate the original 1841 [1839] specifications for the building, which called for a slate floor in that location. No evidence of such a slate floor had survived, and there [were] some questions about whether one was ever actually installed.” Work was also done on the stairways visible from the rotunda including new treads and risers and replacement of several newels. The report continues:

The rehabilitation of the rotunda and balcony comprised one of the major work items of the project. The G. M. Clements Company, which had done the sandblasting and exterior painting, removed the existing plaster and wood lath in the rotunda (including the ceiling dome), lobby, and several other rooms. Following the specifications they then replastered on new metal lath, finishing the plaster to match the existing surfaces. In other areas of the building the existing plaster was patched as necessary.

The frieze, soffit and plaster [were] removed from underneath the balcony; new plaster was applied and all of the detail and soffit work [was] built back to match what had been removed. In the second floor area of the balcony the existing plaster, crown moulding, frieze, soffit and detail work were patched and repaired as needed. New wooden spindles which matched the existing ones were installed in the balcony railing to replace deteriorated or missing members . . . Other rehabilitation work not covered by the grant included the installation of new plumbing and electrical work, the repair, removal and/or moving of some doors, and the installation of 6” batt insulation in the attic area above the second floor.

The last work to be completed was the interior painting. The report notes a paint analysis done by architect Joseph Dye Lahendro with the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities in July 1976. Paint specimens were taken and it was “determined that the plastered areas [had] originally been painted white and the woodwork beige. The interior of the building was repainted to reproduce this color scheme.” The white and beige color scheme remains in place in 2022. The exhibits installed in the 1970s were designed and produced by the Washington-area firm Design and Production Incorporated.<sup>23</sup>

An elevator tower was added to the back of the building and other modifications were made at a later date. Later work included interior repainting by K. M. Painting of Hampton in 1992. The museum exhibits have evolved since the original ca. 1976 installation. A gift shop and visitor entrance area were planned in 2003. The building currently houses the Petersburg Visitor Center. Musical groups occasionally perform on the steps in front of the building.<sup>24</sup>

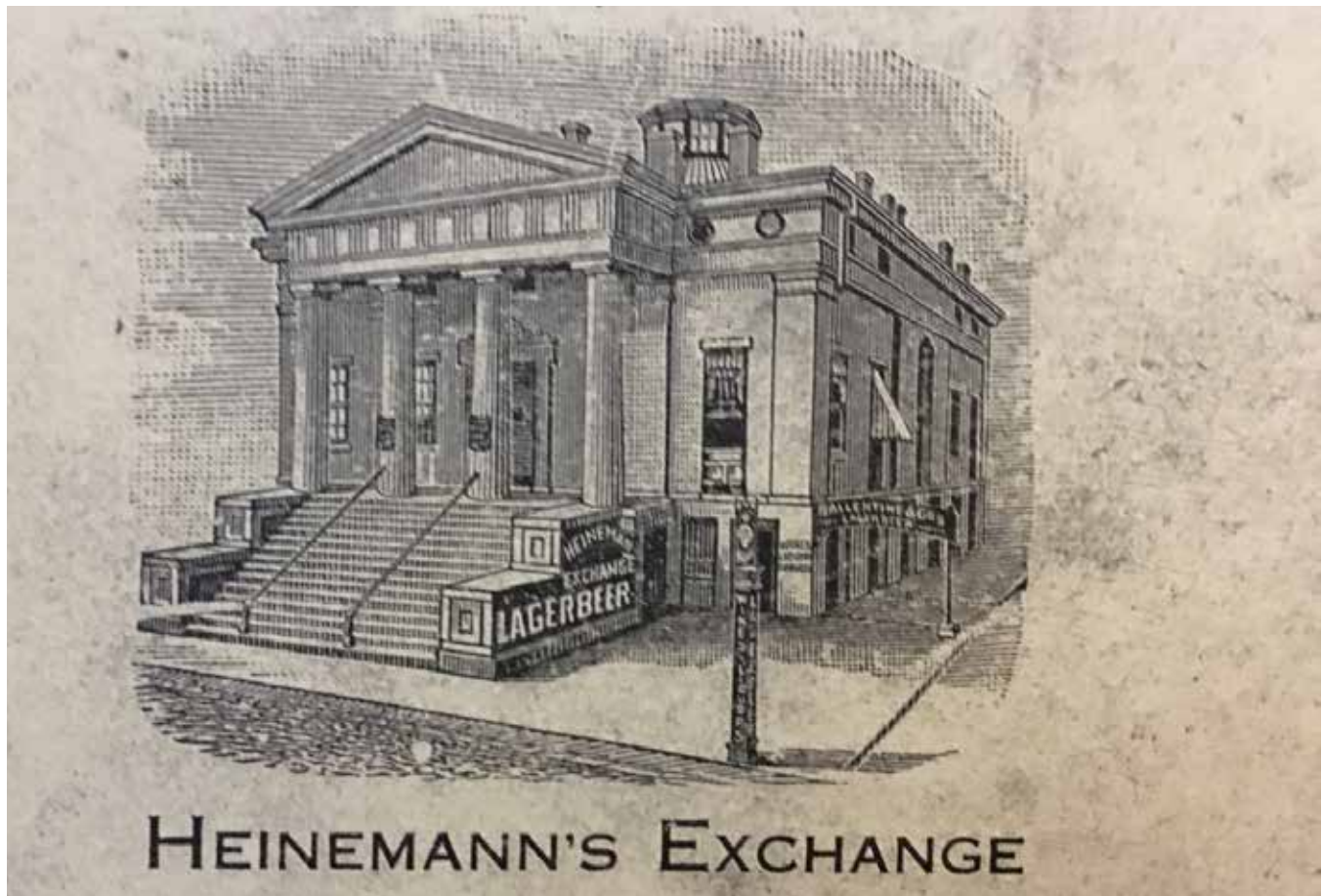


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<sup>23</sup> “Completion Report: Exchange Building, Petersburg, Virginia;” Lahendro, “Interior Paint Analysis.” Lahendro proposed the plaster be painted white in an April 26, 1976, list of suggestions based on a brief field investigation (Virginia Department of Historic Resources survey file [123-0051], Richmond, Va.). The 1839 specifications displayed in an exhibit in the building do not call for slate flooring (“Carpenter’s Specification”).

<sup>24</sup> *Progress-Index*, February 27, 1992, and August 8, 2019; *Southern Living*, January 1997; Virginia Department of Historic Resources survey file [123-0051], Richmond, Va.

### III. BUILDING HISTORY - cont'd



*Advertisement for Heinemann's Exchange*

**HEINEMANN'S EXCHANGE,**  
**HENRY HEINEMANN - - - PROPRIETOR.**  
**BALLANTINE'S**  
**CELEBRATED NEWARK (N. J.) EXPORT LAGER BEER:**  
**WINES, LIQUORS, CIGARS AND TOBACCO.**  
**LUNCH EVERY DAY FROM 10 A. M. TO 3 P. M.**  
**No. 9 Bank St., (Under Exchange Building,) PETERSBURG, VIRGINIA.**



4

## IV. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION



*Southeast view of the Petersburg Exchange Building Front Portico - HABS 1968*

### Summary

The Petersburg Exchange Building is an 1839-41 Greek Revival building located at 15-19 West Bank Street in downtown Petersburg, Virginia. The south-facing five-bay building has two stories set on a ground story with a basement below grade. The building is constructed of brick with granite trim and a scored stucco front elevation to simulate ashlar masonry. The metal-sheathed hip roof has a ten-sided cupola at its apex relating to a domed rotunda on the interior. The salient feature of the front is a monumental tetrastyle (four-column) Doric portico on a high base with granite steps.

Other major exterior features include a Doric entablature across the front, corner pilasters, tall round-arched Italianate windows on the side elevations, and a late-twentieth-century Modernist elevator tower on the rear elevation. The interior is dominated by the aforementioned rotunda, the dome of which is supported by square columns with intricately carved capitals. The rotunda is encircled by an annular second-floor corridor with a balustrade and vaulted ceiling. Typical interior finishes include plaster and lath walls and ceilings, wooden floors, and panel doors. The basement features interior bearing walls with large round-arched brick arches. The building is flanked by alleys and has a rear parking lot, all areas paved with asphalt.

The setting is urban, with dense historic-period construction around the building. For simplicity, the building will generally be referred to as the Exchange Building in the report. Reference is made to the 1839 specifications for the construction of the building (the construction drawings referenced in the specifications are not known to survive).

#### IV. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION - cont'd



*Southeast view of the Exchange Building — HABS 1968.*



*Rear (north) view of the Exchange Building - HABS 1968.*



*Current west west alley view looking from back to front.*



*Current view of the rear (north) elevation of the building showing the 1970's elevator tower addition.*

### *Building Exterior*

The Exchange Building is constructed of handmade brick laid in 1:5 common bond and painted white. The brick was sandblasted in the 1970s, and there are areas of brick infill such as under many ground-story windows and inside a large former arched opening on the rear elevation. This former opening, which occupied the rear central portion of the first and second stories and is segmentally arched above the infill, is believed to be a remnant of entries and/or windows that opened onto a former two-story porch (discussed in greater detail in the architectural analysis section). The two second-story windows that flank the former opening and would have been under the porch were segmentally arched; the ends of the arches are visible where the window openings cut into them. The Italianate windows on the side elevations are surmounted by round brick arches with decoratively corbeled brick imposts.

The stucco rendering on the front elevation is scored to simulate large, rectangular, stretcher-bond ashlar blocks with narrow joints. The rendering and scoring also cover the two shallowly-projecting rectangular pilasters where the portico joins the building and the fronts and sides of the shallowly-projecting rectangular pilasters at the two front corners (the corner pilasters mark the point where the rendering ends and the exposed brickwork of the side elevations begins).



#### IV. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION - cont'd



*Current view down the west alley side showing the typical white painted brick with brick infills under each window.*



*Detail of brick infill under double window (typical on both alley sides).*



*Detail at side of Front Portico where granite cheek walls meet ashlar stucco treatment.*



*View of the small portion of brick segmental arch from original rear opening on the First Floor. Most of the arch is now hidden behind the elevator addition (right).*

The ground story is delineated at top and bottom by shallowly-projecting square-edged granite belt courses. The granite, which is light gray in color with a smooth (but not polished) finish, is similar to granite known to have been quarried in the Petersburg area in the nineteenth century. Granite pieces of similar character were used for window sills and lintels in the first and second stories and as window and entry lintels in the ground story. The granite trim on the rear elevation has a number of unusual features described in the architectural analysis section.

The front portico has four fluted, baseless, and slightly tapered Doric columns with simple echinus capitals. The columns are constructed of stucco over brick, the brick core, which is revealed where small sections of stucco have fallen away, consisting of bricks set jaggedly to provide multiple surfaces and angles for the stucco to adhere. The capitals support thin square granite slabs (abacuses) that support a wooden Doric entablature consisting of three registers or parts, described bottom to top: 1) a plain architrave with stepped recessed rectangular panels in the soffits; 2) a frieze with triglyphs (three-piece

#### IV. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION - cont'd

ornaments) with guttae (or drops; small peg-like ornaments) that project below the narrow file molding (the taenia) that separates the frieze from the architrave; and 3) a projecting cornice with close-set mutules with guttae (looking like rectangular pegboards) in the soffit. In the mid-twentieth century the architrave bore signage reading Police Headquarters and pendant globe lights hung from its soffit.



*Front Portico*



*Detail of entablature showing triglyphs, guttae, and the projecting cornice.*

The entablature wraps around the portico and continues to the building proper where a short section of it wraps around the corners to the side elevations, consisting of a single mutule and guttae below the taenia (no triglyphs) on each side, positioned above the corner pilasters. At each turn of the cornice (the outer corners of the portico, the reentrant corners where the portico meets the building, and the building corners) are anthemion or palmette ornaments in the soffit.

The two sections of frieze on the building proper have, instead of triglyphs, a pair of round windows framed by carved wreaths. For reasons explained in the architectural analysis the wreaths are likely modeled on olive wreaths that were once depicted on the Choragic Monument of Thrasyllus in Athens, though the Exchange Building wreaths appear to lack the olives depicted in the original carving.



*Entablature wrapping around part of the side elevations.*

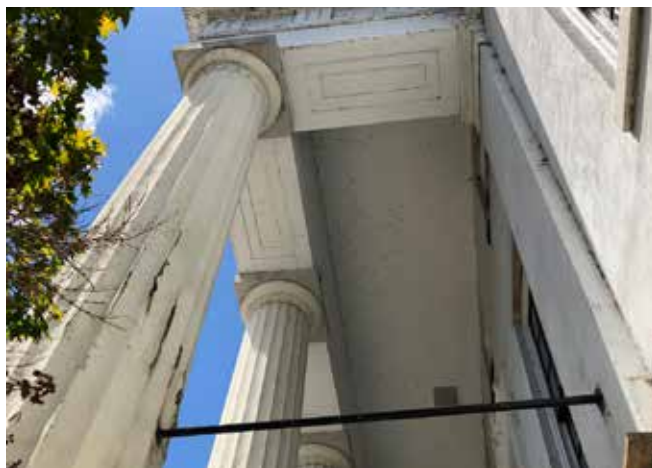


*Detail of the round windows with carved wreaths*



#### IV. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION - cont'd

The portico has a plain stucco ceiling and a pediment with a plain flush-board tympanum with a simple molded raking cornice. The portico base is constructed of brick (visible on the interior) faced with ashlar granite slabs and has closed entries at both ends. The granite extends to form double-stepped cheeks that bracket the front steps. The stepped ends of the cheeks have stepped recessed rectangular panels. Rust stains and circular holes indicate fixtures, perhaps lamp posts, formerly stood on the cheeks.



*Portico Ceiling*



*Portico base showing ashlar granite cheek walls and granite steps. The doors under the portico had been closed up by this time — HABS 1968*

In the mid-twentieth century painted signage on the end of the east side of the east cheek read Police Headquarters (with an arrow through the word Police pointing at the ground-level entrance) and, below, Police Justice Court Upstairs. The steps consist of long granite blocks. Two molded cast iron railings, painted glossy black and supported at their midpoints by slender iron supports, extend from the center columns to cast iron newels at the base of the steps. The left newel stands on an iron plate that was added to hold the pieces of the broken step underneath together. The newels are heavily proportioned, with vasisform forms on octagonal bases.



*Detail of portico cheek walls and steps*



*Detail of cast iron newel post at front steps*

The portico floor is paved with large rectangular slate flagstones. Slender iron hand rails connect the corner columns to the pilasters. Flanking the portico steps on each side are ground-story entries. The left entry has double-leaf doors, two panels per leaf, which ap-



#### IV. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION - cont'd



*Flagstone floor at portico*



*Detail of column base and flagstone floor*



*Filled in entrance under east side of the portico with current entrance to the right*



*Filled in entrance on west side of portico with double door entry to the left (not currently used)*

pear to be late-twentieth-century reproductions. The right entry has similar double-leaf doors which open to reveal a modern plate glass and anodized aluminum entry with plate glass sidelights and transom. The embrasure for this entry has paneled wooden jambs and soffit. In the mid-twentieth century a sign reading Police Headquarters was posted over the entry which had double-leaf wood and glass panel doors.

The portico shelters the center three bays of the five-bay front elevation. The center bay is the building's principal entry. The entry has a crosssetted (eared) surround defined by bold file moldings and slightly peaked at the top. The peaked lintel is ornamented by a large free-standing anthemion or palmette which appears to be cast iron. The ornament is double-furled at the base with a center basal jewel-like figure. It has two long extensions that run along the slopes of the lintel before terminating in double furls (the lower part of the right furl has broken off; it is shown in a 1968 Historic American Building Survey photo). The entry has double-leaf doors, each leaf with a single recessed and heavily molded panel. Each tall rectangular panel has scalloped corner indents, and within each panel is a second recessed panel of similar form (heavily molded and with scalloped corners). The door leaves are wood painted a glossy black. Nineteenth-century locks and lock escutcheons have been removed.

#### IV. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION - cont'd



*Front Portico entry door — HABS 1968*



*Detail of entry doors and palmette*

The elevation inside the portico reads as a full two stories, with tall nine-over-nine wood sash windows in the first story and shorter three-over-six wood sash windows in the second story. The elevation flanking the portico is treated as a single monumental story with an attic story above. These sections have the aforementioned continuation of the entablature with the round windows, and, in the first story, nine-over-nine wood sash windows that are taller than the ones inside the portico. The monumental first-story treatment continues to the side elevations which have tall nine-over-nine wood sash windows, small rectangular attic-story windows, and the round-arched Italianate windows, which are the tallest windows in the building. Contained within each round-arched opening are double round-arched windows framed and divided from each other by bullnosed wood trim.



*Windows under the portico*



*View of front windows and monumental first story treatment*



#### IV. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION - cont'd



*View of the double arched window at the center of each side of the building*



*Detail at the top of the double arched window showing scalloped transom.*

Above the double arches and under the arch of the opening is a scalloped triangular transom. Each window has decorative muntin patterns with wide panes flanked by narrow panes and with radial muntins at the top. The window openings have ragged brick edges which suggest the Italianate windows were inserted rather than an original feature (a modification discussed in greater detail in the architectural analysis section).

The ground story has double four-over-four wood sash windows which are not original to the building and may date to the 1920s, though the openings that contain the windows are original to the building. The windows have brick sills (which distinguishes them from the original windows, which have granite sills) and brick infill between the sills and the granite belt course at the base of the story. The belt course blocks under the infill have shallow outward-sloping thresholds indicating the former existence of entries, probably with sidelights (the evolution of these openings is discussed in greater detail in the architectural analysis section). Some of the openings have single-leaf two-panel wood doors flanked by single four-over-four wood sash windows with paneled aprons. The doors and possibly the flanking windows appear to date to the 1970s.



*View of 4-over-4 window infills with brick sills at alley openings. Typical of both alley sides.*



*Shallow sloping threshold in the center indicates a center door at one time.*



#### IV. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION - cont'd

The rear ground-story door and window openings have been most altered, with inserted doors and ventilation louvers. The rear first story has nine-over-nine wood sash windows and the second story has six-over-six wood sash windows. At the center of the rear elevation is the Modernist 1970s elevator tower, which connects to the building via a three-story metal and glass hyphen. The tower has a stucco finish, a parapet gable roof, corner pilasters, and belt courses that align with the ground/first-story belt course and the main roof cornice. The hyphen is entered on the west side via double-leaf plate glass doors sheltered by a triangular metal roof supported by a round concrete column. Centered over the rear elevation is a pediment that presumably formerly connected to the front-gable roof of the two-story back porch. Seams in the cornice also appear to relate to this former porch. The rear elevation is bracketed by corner pilasters which mark the



*View of the rear or north building elevation showing 1970's elevator tower in the center and window pattern.*



*How the modern elevator tower meets the historic building.*



*Rear entrance at the elevator tower showing the metal canopy and concrete sonotube column at the storefront system entrance doors.*



*Stepped seams in the cornice and fascia where original rear portico pediment extension was removed and patched.*

end of the architrave and frieze registers of the side elevation entablature. To the left of the elevator tower hyphen, aligned with a window that has been made into a vent, is a basement bulkhead with low-pitched sheet-metal doors that have been permanently closed by welded cross members. One of the bulkhead door leaves has a handle with heart-form attachments similar to eighteenth and early nineteenth century hardware. The handle is probably reproduction hardware. A matching bulkhead formerly existed to the right but was eliminated by the entry area of the elevator tower.

#### IV. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION - cont'd



*View of the northeast bulkhead entrance to the basement and window turned into a vent above.*



*Location of original northwest bulkhead now covered up by paving at 1970's entrance to the elevator tower. Bulkhead still exists in the basement*

### Roof

The building's low-pitched hip roof has gables on the south and north sides, the south gable extending over the front portico and the north extension representing the stub of the former rear portico roof. The dome rises above the sloped planes of the roof on a low base and is flared above the base. The ten-sided cupola has six-pane windows and is capped by a ten-sided pyramidal roof with a small overhang. The roof, which is currently drained by external gutters and downspouts, has two roof accesses and is penetrated by the brick boiler flue at the north end. Evidence suggests original built-in gutters with straight-drop downspouts. The 1839 specifications call for "lead plate, tin joints, clenched and soldered water tight." The original roof would have been painted and would have been the same iron oxide color that it is today. Most of the existing roofing is a painted "tin" roof which could be one or both of a combination of tin plated iron or "terne" metal, a tin and lead coated iron sheet. Across the larger expanses of roof, continuous-pan steel roofing has been installed. The soldered roof on the dome appears to be original and may be lead plate as originally specified. This approach was often used where panels needed to be shaped or curved such as in the curved and tapered panels of the dome.



*SE View of the roof and dome — HABS 1968.*



*HABS Front Elevation drawings showing dome and cupola.*

#### IV. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION - cont'd



*Existing exterior hung half-round gutters and downspouts.*



*Downspouts snaking around the building features.*



*Detail of existing roofing showing long panels and oil-canning along with severe rusting*



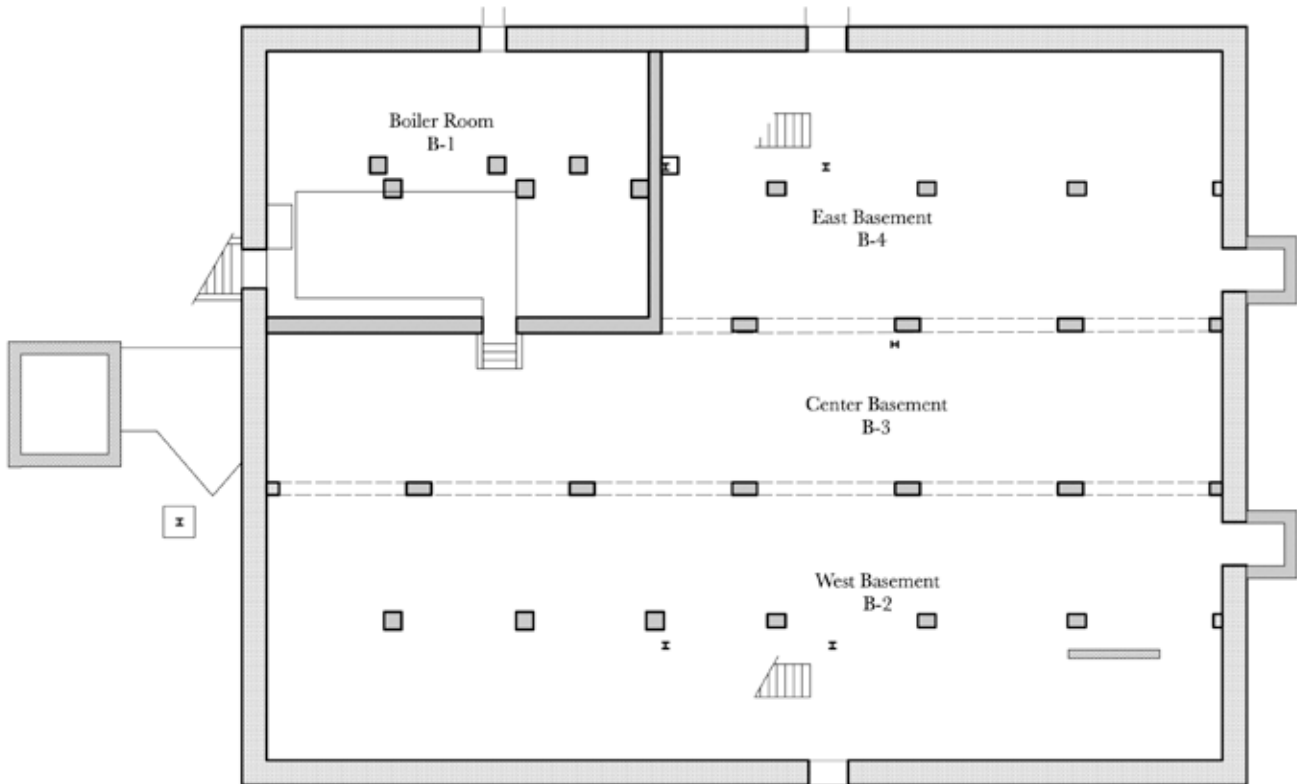
*Detail of existing dome roofing showing segmented terne metal panels still intact.*



#### IV. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION - cont'd

### *Building Interior*

#### *— Basement*



**Basement Floor Plan** *with room names and numbers for reference in this report. Note: room configuration and names shown refer to the current and most recent use of the building as a museum and visitor center with a few spaces used as city offices and meeting rooms.*

The dominant feature of the basement (described as the “cellar” in the 1839 specifications) is a double row of north-south-running brick round arches that divide the space in three: two outer rectangular spaces—the west basement (B-2) and east basement (B-4)—and a somewhat narrower center basement (B-3). A boiler room (B-1) was created at the north end of the east basement by brick infilling of two and a half arches and the construction of a perpendicular brick wall. Supplementing the main structure of the arches are rows of brick piers that extend north-south down the center lines of the east and west basements. The arches are one and a half bricks wide on both their inner and outer faces and the spandrels between them are constructed of 1:5 common-bond brickwork. The arches, spandrels, and piers are crudely mortared. The perimeter walls are coursed stone of variegated size and color (some or possibly most of the stone appears to be granite) with the occasional brick top course for leveling. Brick floor pavers are visible at the center north end of the basement; otherwise, the floor is covered with dirt. Ceiling joists are exposed. The joists have been replaced with a poured concrete ceiling for about a quarter of the north end of the space. The joists are shimmed with wood shims over the east row of arches. They are shimmed with pieces of roofing slates over the west stone wall. Above the arches the joists rest on a narrow wooden plate inserted in the brickwork.

#### IV. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION - cont'd

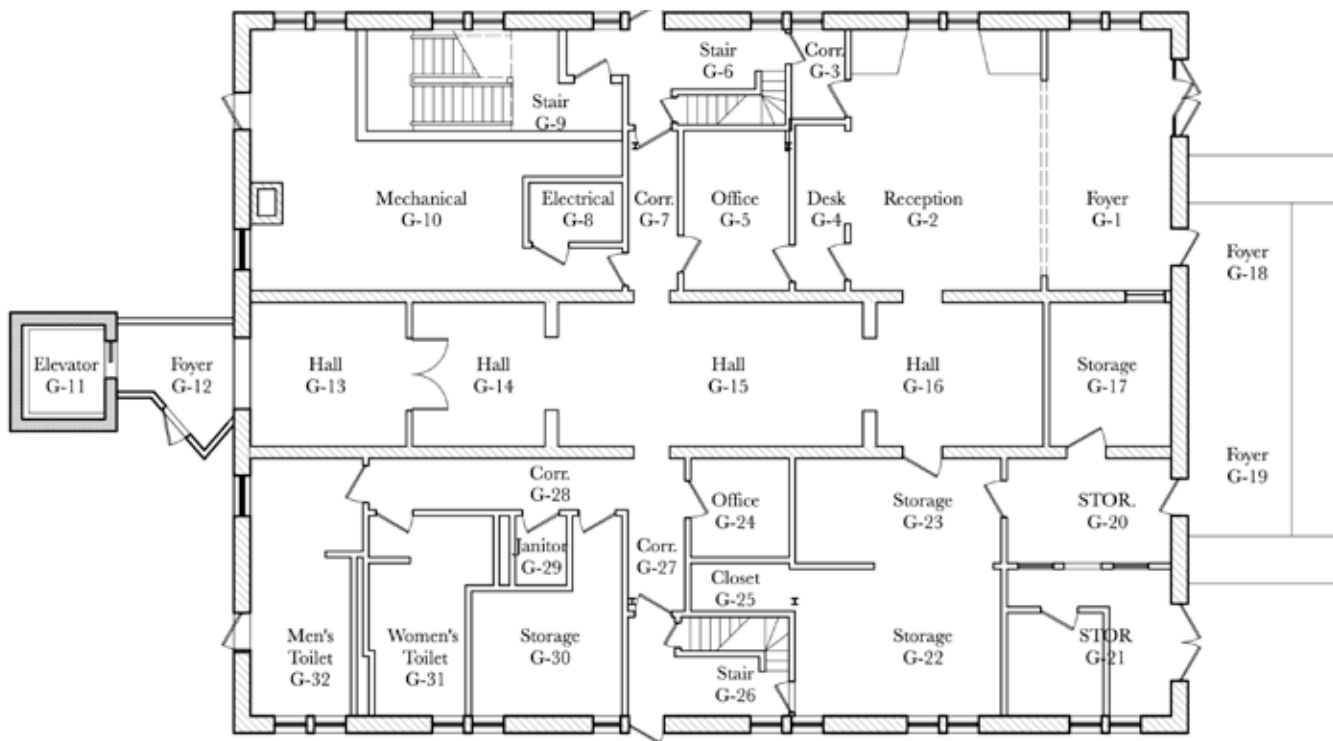
The boiler room is accessed via a doorway through the brick infill in the second arch. Poured concrete steps with a poured concrete curb descend into the room. The doorway retains its wood lintel and right jamb. The left jamb, which was pegged to the brickwork, is missing, which has caused the lintel to sag. Projecting through the mortise on the underside of the lintel that received the top of the jamb are wire nails. Nailed to the outfacing edge of the lintel is a horseshoe in the U position (opening facing upward). To its left is a row of eight thin metal disks nailed to the lintel's outfacing edge. The rightmost disk is separated from the others by a gap (a ninth disk may once have occupied the gap). A single disk is nailed to the outfacing edge of the jamb. The jamb is carved with initials that appear to read JCP. The boiler room is divided laterally by a wood partition that may have formed the side of a coal bin. At the north end of the room is a brick chimney breast which formerly received the flue for a boiler.

At the south end of the basement are two ventilation wells. The wells are recessed into the perimeter wall and are positioned under the outer ends of the space under the portico where they would have received air and light, especially if the space under the portico was open at both ends (see plan illustrations of this possible configuration in the architectural analysis section) from a former window at the east end of the portico base. The wells are secured at the top by corroded iron grates constructed of narrow vertical strips of bar iron. The grates are affixed to dressed granite frames. The granite of the frames is of the same type as the granite trim on the aboveground levels of the building, rather than the cruder stone of the perimeter wall. One of the frame stones has a wood peg inserted in it. The perimeter wall is also interrupted by outdoor doorways that have been infilled partway up with brick and with wood window sashes inserted at the top (at least one six-pane sash survives; another sash has been replaced by a plywood panel). These features served as light wells but may originally have served as bulkhead entries. The clean-edged stonework around the doorways suggests they are original features. Some of the brick infill appears to be twentieth-century.

The basement is accessed by two wooden interior stairs. These are of simple construction with two tiers of diagonal rails and square-section newels at the foot with pointed tops. The stairs appear to be wire-nailed and may date to the 1920s police department conversion, though they likely occupy the position of earlier stairs. The basement has a few relatively recent concrete block and steel supports, a sprinkler system hub in the southeast corner, and two disused panel boxes. One of the panel boxes, which is labeled "26/Western Electric/Made in USA," has brass fittings on a pale yellow enameled metal panel. Both boxes are hand-inscribed "31HH." The box with the enameled panel also has 31HH in black stenciled characters. Other basement features include: the inscription MATT-04 scratched into a brick of the arch at the boiler room corner; a group of large roughly-shaped stones lying on the dirt in the southeast corner; and a cast iron ring fitting, which probably once supported a gas line, in the space between two joists near the south perimeter wall.

## IV. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION - cont'd

### — Ground Floor



**Ground Floor Plan** with room names and numbers for reference in this report. *Note: room configuration and names shown refer to the current and most recent use of the building as a museum and visitor center with a few spaces used as city offices and meeting rooms.*

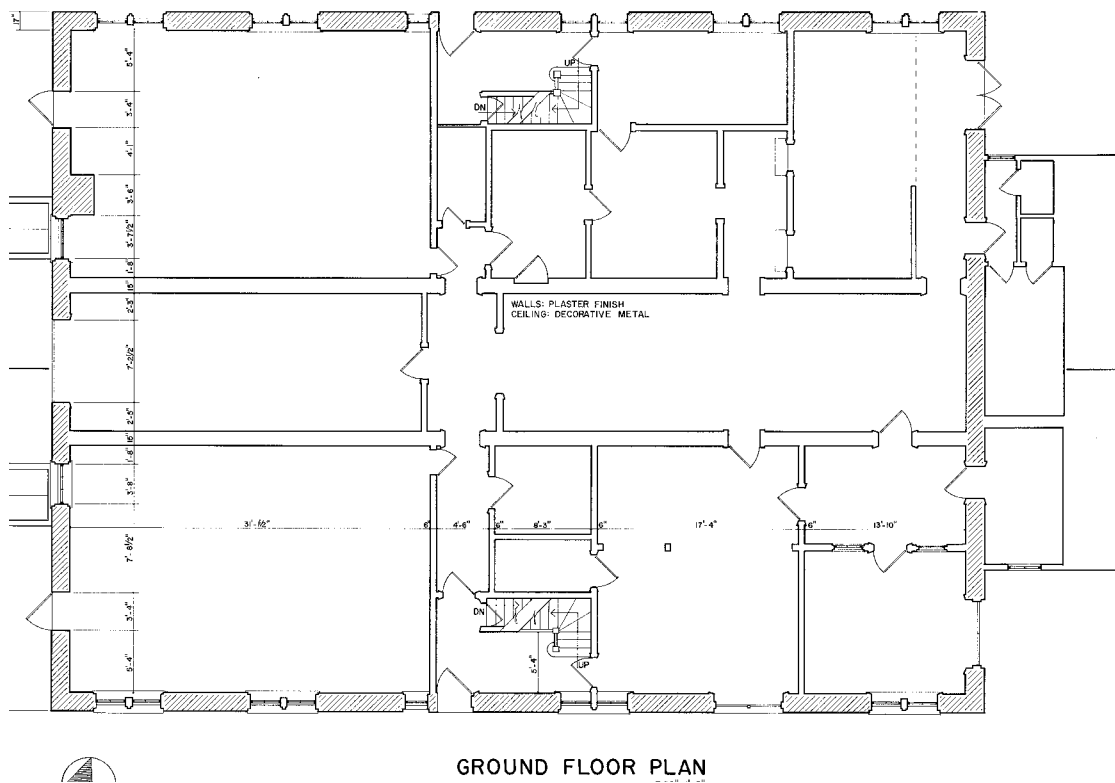
Of all the Exchange Building's interior spaces, the ground floor (referred to as the "base-ment story" in the 1839 specifications) has undergone the most change since original construction. The current appearance and room layout is largely the result of the floor's use as the police department from 1927 to 1969 and subsequent city tourism, museum, and storage use. Note: The parenthetical initials and numbers that appear throughout the interior discussion key to the room numbers on the floor plans.

The ground floor is entered at two locations: a front entry opening into the foyer (G-1) at the building's southeast corner and a rear entry through the foyer (G-12) of the elevator tower (G-11). These two points of entry lie at opposite ends of an L-shaped circulation path featuring museum exhibits (in hall spaces G-13 through G-16) and a reception area (G-2) that communicates with a front desk (G-4) and rear office (G-5). These spaces have modern finishes with drop ceilings, carpeted floors, plaster wall finishes, and mostly modern doors and door trim. The front desk counter has a pattern of exes done with molding strips on its front. Other modernized ground-floor spaces include the men and women rooms (G-31 and G-32) in the back northwest corner, the mechanical room (G-10) in the back northeast corner, and various stair and corridor spaces. Earlier fabric survives in some of these spaces as noted below.

More historic-period fabric survives in the southwest corner, the suite of storage rooms numbered G-20 through G-23 and adjacent spaces under the portico (G-18 and G-19).



#### IV. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION - cont'd



*Ground Floor Plan from the 1968 HABS documentation when the building was still being used as the city's Police Headquarters.*

Rooms G-22 and G-23 effectively form a single large room which mostly lacks a ceiling, revealing x-braced ceiling joists with key stains from a former plaster and lath ceiling that was likely original. A carved letter M graffito appears on a floor board above the joists. In the northeast corner of room G-23 is a scrap of pressed metal ceiling cornice with an egg and dart pattern. Rooms G-20 and G-21 have more of a twentieth-century office character with a partition with high interior windows, a wood and glass panel door with a mail slot, 1950s-1960s paneling on one wall, and a partial drop ceiling. Room G-17, which is used for the storage of museum-related records, has at the top of its south wall, which is part of the building's brick perimeter wall, what appears to be a segmental arch, either a relieving arch (it is located approximately under the first-story front entry) or an arch over a former opening into the space under the portico.

The two spaces under the portico (foyer G-18 and foyer G-19) are spanned by shallow brick vaulting which supports the flagstones of the portico floor. The vaulting is revealed where plaster has fallen away, and it is supported by beams with a curved top profile that conforms to the curve of the vault. The beams are slightly pitched and bear traces of whitewash. There is evidence of former one-brick-thick brick walls that formed cubicles in foyer G-19. G-19 has kitchen-type counters with cutouts for two former sinks.

#### IV. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION - cont'd



*Current east Front Entry to the Ground Floor Visitor Center.*



*Rear Entry to the Ground Floor.*



*Inside Visitor Center lobby on the Ground Floor.*



*View of center "Hall" that runs from the front to the back of the building. It is currently being used for temporary exhibits.*



*Toilet rooms installed in the 1970's when the building was converted into a city museum.*



*Toilet room view to a window onto the west alley.*

#### IV. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION - cont'd



*View looking south in room G-23.*



*View looking south in room G-22.*



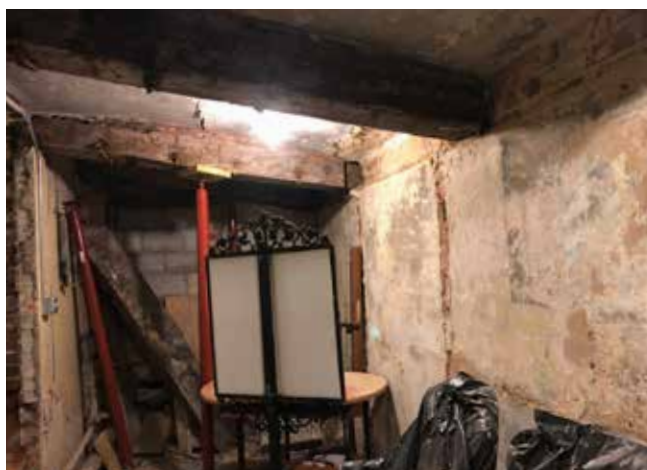
*View into the current Mechanical Room in the northeast corner.*



*Some original building fabric still exists in the Mechanical Room where new finishes were never fully installed.*



*View into Foyer G-19 showing original plaster, beams supporting the portico floor above, and evidence of brick partitions.*

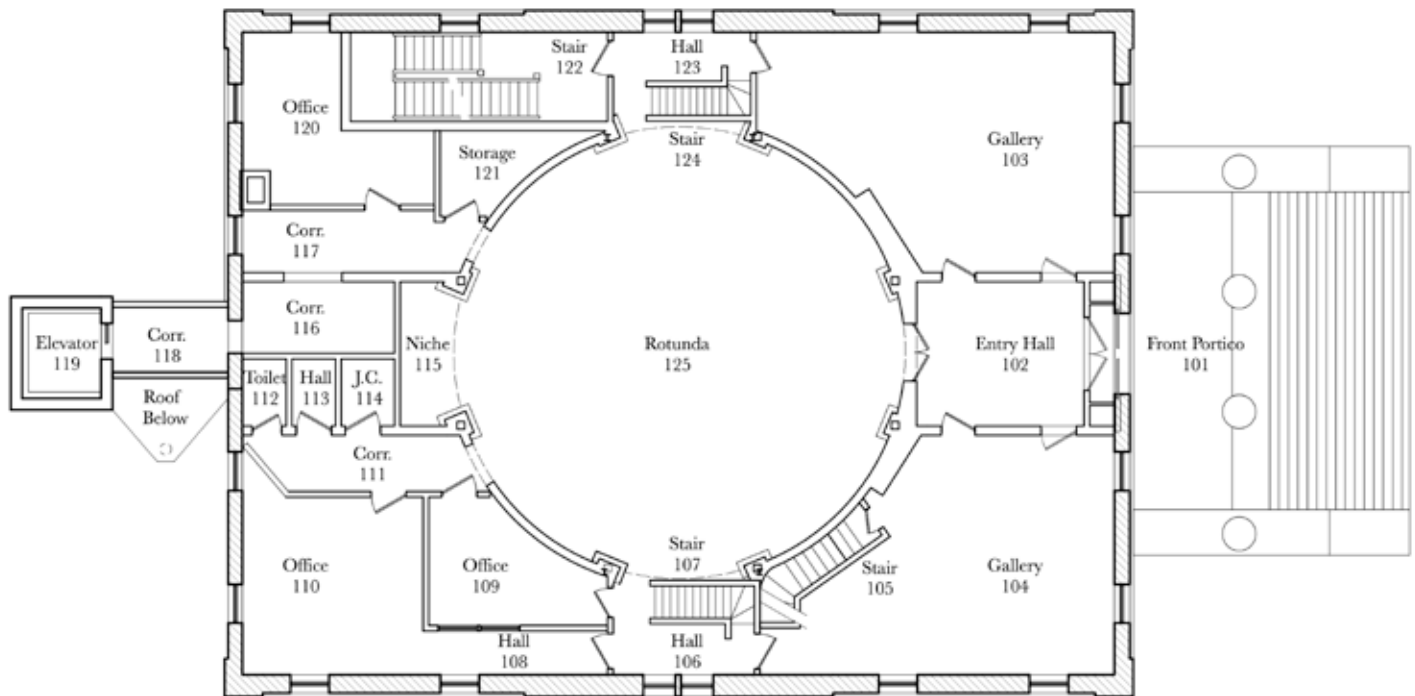


*View into Foyer G-19 showing supporting beams for the portico floor above and early plaster with evidence of brick partitions.*

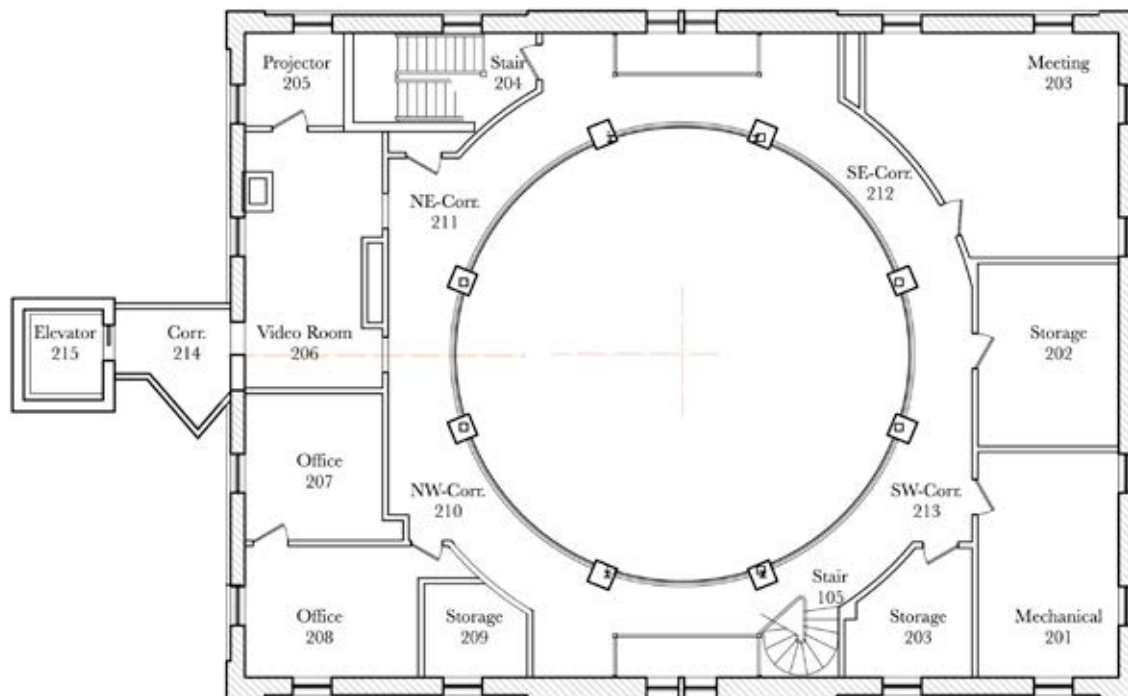


#### IV. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION - cont'd

### — *First and Second Floors*



**First Floor Plan** with room names and numbers for reference in this report. Note: room configuration and names shown refer to the current and most recent use of the building as a museum and visitor center with a few spaces used as city offices and meeting rooms. Steel columns added at the Ground Floor level to support the dome are shown for reference.



**Second Floor Plan** with room names and numbers for reference in this report. Note: room configuration and names shown refer to the current and most recent use of the building as a museum and visitor center with a few spaces used as city offices and meeting rooms. Steel columns added at the Ground Floor level to support the dome are shown for reference.

#### IV. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION - cont'd

The first floor is the building's main floor. The 1839 specifications for the building calls for its floors to be "well seasoned narrow Georgia yellow pine." The front entry opens through a shallow vestibule into an entry hall (102) with side doors that open into large rooms in the two front corners of the building (gallery 103 and gallery 104) and a double-leaf door at the end that opens into the Rotunda (125) under the dome at the center of the building. The entry hall has features that are common to other spaces in the building, such as mold-ed baseboards and door trim and molded two-panel doors hung on butt hinges, as well as features that are unique such as crown molding and a 1970s slate floor with square slates set at a diagonal. The doorway from the vestibule to the entry hall has reproduction dou-ble-leaf two-panel doors under a rectangular transom with twelve rectangular panes in two tiers of six panes each (a 1960s photo shows standard twentieth-century wood and glass panel doors). The double-leaf doorway to the Rotunda is round-arched with a fan-light with radial muntins, petal-form panes, and a half-round cutout at the center of the hub. The door leaves have recessed and molded panels with scalloped corner indents. Each leaf has three panels: a long rectangular panel with square panels above and be-low. A wall sign provides a brief historical summary of the building and acknowledges the principal parties involved in the 1970s rehabilitation: the City of Petersburg Department of Tourism, restoration architect Gordon B. Galusha, and exhibit designers and producers Design and Production Incorporated.



*View from Entry Hall (102) towards interior doors at main entrance from the Front Portico.*



*View from Entry Hall (102) looking into the Rotunda (125)*

Gallery 103 and gallery 104 are similar in plan and detail, with irregular north walls that conform to the arc of the Rotunda and have boxy modern chases; recessed ceiling lights;

#### IV. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION - cont'd

and two-panel window aprons. Gallery 104 differs in that it has a twisting enclosed stair on the north wall with, inside, a complexly formed round-section handrail supported by small cast iron brackets, vertical beaded board enclosure in the upper part, rectangular and wedge-shaped winder steps, and a column-like shaft at the turn. A patch of flaking modern paint on a riser reveals a light-hued wood color that may be graining. A chase in gallery 103 has a section of brick wall or pier supported by a short plate supported by a stud.



*View of Gallery (104) showing front windows and two doorways into the Entry Hall (102).*



*Gallery (104) showing 1970's build-outs for mechanical ducting — door to Stair (105) in center, door to Entry Hall (102) at right.*



*View up Stair (105).*



*View down Stair (105)*



#### IV. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION - cont'd

The two-story Rotunda (125), the largest space in the building, has a cylindrical or drum-like form capped by the dome. The space is encircled by eight rectangular-plan pilasters that become full square-plan columns at the second-floor level (the pilaster/columns are called “antae” in the 1839 specifications). The pilaster/columns have double-stepped recessed rectangular panels on their faces and heavy molded bases, some or all of which may be modern replicas of the originals. At the top of each column is an ornate hand-carved capital of Greek inspiration. Each capital has two ornamental registers. The egg-and-dart bottom register is framed below by a narrow rounded molding with a repeat of three cuts, a design that suggests a bead-and-reel molding, and above by a fillet molding. At each corner of the lower register is a small scrolled anthemion-like ornament. The upper register is modeled on a Greek fret with modillion-like ornaments with bowed rectangular faces with nested projecting and recessed fillet molding frames, the innermost rectangle deeply incised. The multiple small brackets under these overhanging faces have cyma recta profiles. Above the upper register is a fascia with a molded cap.



*View of the two-story space of the Rotunda (125) showing the arched Niche (115) which originally led to the rear portico entrance.*



*View of the two-story Rotunda (125) showing tall arch-top windows on the east alley elevation.*



*Detail of the dome and cupola.*



*View at the Second Floor level showing the Rotunda columns and the column capital detail. HVAC diffusers can be seen around the perimeter of the base of the dome.*

#### IV. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION - cont'd

The pilaster/columns are grouped in four pairs at the cardinal points of the space, with the curving wall area between them mostly blank except for doorways flanking the north pair and miscellaneous modern HVAC vents. The narrower wall areas inside the pairs are variously treated. Between the south pilasters is the aforementioned entry hall doorway with the round-arched fanlight. Between the north pilasters is a niche (115) or alcove behind a round arch supported by consoles or scrolled brackets. The consoles are constructed of nine sandwiched boards that are slightly staggered to create fluted or channeled edges. The front and back outer or face boards are sawn into scrolls that terminate in three-petaled tulip forms and are ornamented with upper and lower round bosses. The upper bosses have hand-carved petaled or rosette forms with center buttons. The lower bosses have concentric stacked forms with half-round center buttons. The consoles support small entablatures consisting of cyma reversa, cavetto, and fillet moldings, on top of which springs the arch which tapers in thickness toward the top. The spaces between the east and west pilasters are open from pilaster to pilaster and from the floor to the underside of the corridor that encircles the Rotunda at the second-floor level. These spaces are brightly lit by the tall round-arched windows on the side elevations and contain stairs with balustrades with square newels with molded caps and heavy turned balusters (the newels and balusters may date to the 1970s).

The open spaces between the columns on the second-floor level contain curved balustrades with molded natural-finish handrails and slender turned balusters, some of which are 1970s replicas. The columns support a circular entablature with a soffit with a double-stepped recessed profile that matches the profile on the faces of the pilaster/columns. The entablature consists of several registers. Lowest is a series of shallowly out-stepping friezes or fascias capped by a molding. Above is a taller fascia that terminates at a beaded or molded board below a dentil molding. Above the dentil molding is a pearl molding and then the entablature steps out as a cornice with a plain fascia, an egg and dart molding, and then a heavy cyma recta molding. Above the cornice is the smooth plaster finish of the dome, which was refinished in the 1970s. The dome rises to an oculus above which is the cupola with its six-pane windows and flat ceiling. The annular corridor behind the tops of the columns is barrel-vaulted with a smooth 1970s plaster finish and has stilting on the column side. The line where the vaulting meets the flat ceilings over the back parts of the two side window alcoves is not stilted. A piece of plaster with rus-



*Detail the round-arched windows on the side elevation at each of the stairs between the Ground Floor and the First Floor Rotunda space.*



*Detail of the scrolled brackets and arch at the Niche (115) between the north column pair.*

## IV. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION - cont'd

set-colored hair binder, discovered on top of one of the column capitals, may be a remnant of the original vault plaster. The plaster has a layer of thick white parging or paint (no other color layers detected). The corridor floor is pulled back from the upper parts of the side windows and the two resulting openings are railed by a balustrade with slender turned balusters and square newels with molded caps.

The back or north end of the first floor is divided into small rooms including offices, a toilet, closet and storage space, and several short corridors. On the east side is a modern stairwell (122) with painted concrete block interior walls, a stair with rectangular and square newels, slender rectangular balusters, and slender handrails—all steel—and a ceiling access to the north end of the attic. At the center rear a corridor (116) connects to a late twentieth century corridor (118) which serves as a connector to the elevator tower (119). A similar corridor (214) on the second floor connects the small auditorium known as the video room (206) to the top of the elevator tower (215). This corridor has a pitched glass ceiling. A short hall (108) on the west side of the first floor has a number of interesting features. One is an interior double window, which appears to have been inserted during the period of the building's police and judicial use (1927 to 1969), which transmitted light from an outside window to an interior office (109) before the opening was plastered over on the office side. Another interesting aspect is the early paint colors revealed by flaking paint and incomplete 1970s rehabilitation of the space. The wall colors, described from top layer down, appear to go from beige to lighter beige to white to black to an assortment of whites and light grays. The baseboard had brown paint over black.



*Detail of the circular entablature at the base of the dome.*



*View at the Second Floor level showing the handrail and turned balusters along the annular corridor that encircles the Rotunda with its barrel-vaulted ceiling.*

The two front corner rooms of the second floor preserve a number of early features and finishes. The mechanical room (201) has baseboards with blue paint over black, mustard yellow, and pale yellow paint layers. This room and the meeting room (203) have inward-opening casement sashes inside the circular window openings of the exterior frieze (though the sashes are technically operable they do not appear to have been opened for a long time). The front window at the east end of room 203 is missing part of its frame which reveals a sash weight of bricklike form. Two layers of wood flooring are exposed in the meeting room (203) where a partition was removed. The older floor boards are attached with cut nails and the newer ones with wire nails. In a chase at the back of the room are revealed sections of baseboard with black, light brown, and pale yellow paint colors. A section of plaster on the exterior wall has beige paint over white and gray.



#### IV. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION - cont'd



*Detail of the dome and cupola.*



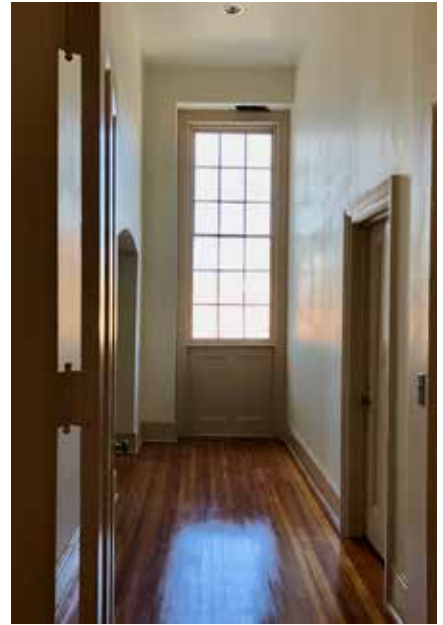
*View, at the Second Floor level showing the Rotunda columns and the column capital detail. HVAC diffusers can be seen around the perimeter of the base of the dome.*



*First Floor Hall (108) showing interior windows (right) and early finishes remaining on the floor, walls, and window.*



*View from First Floor to Second Floor of 1970's Stair (122) with steel and concrete stair.*

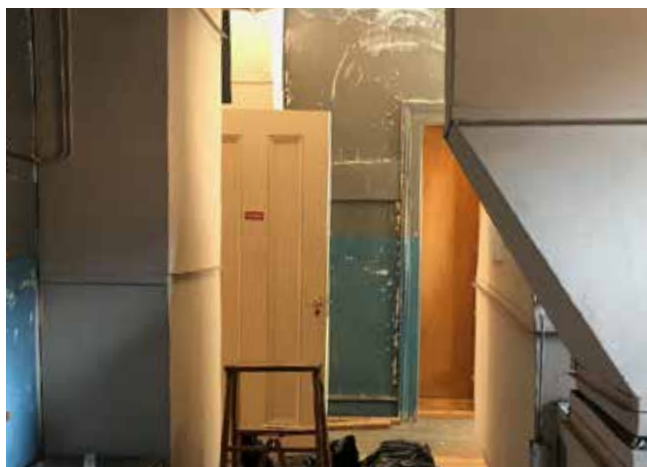


*View down back Corridor (117) on the First Floor, showing original rear window and arched opening (left) into corridor connector to 1970's elevator tower.*

#### IV. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION - cont'd



*View on the Second Floor Corridor looking toward the door into Mechanical Room (201) showing mechanical grills in the corridor wall.*



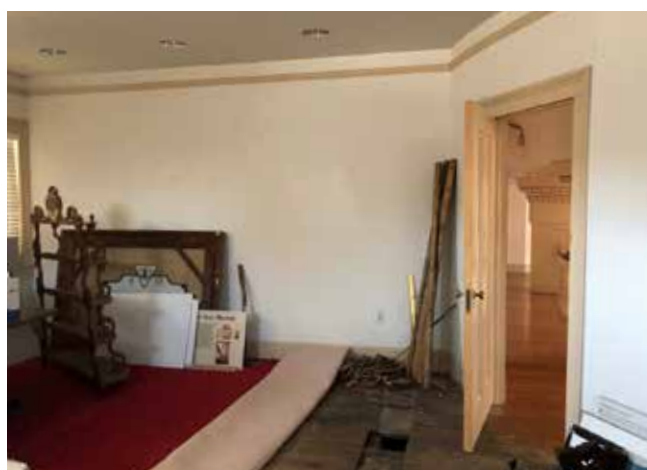
*Inside Mechanical Room (201) showing evidence of early finishes and mechanical ducts.*



*Details of round windows from the inside of Mechanical Room (201)*



*View looking east in Meeting Room (203) showing upper clerestory windows and wall access (open) to mechanical equipment.*



*View in Meeting Room (203) looking towards the Corridor and Rotunda. Note location where flooring was removed to assess structural issues.*

#### IV. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION - cont'd



*Detail in Meeting Room (203) showing evidence of two finish floor layers.*

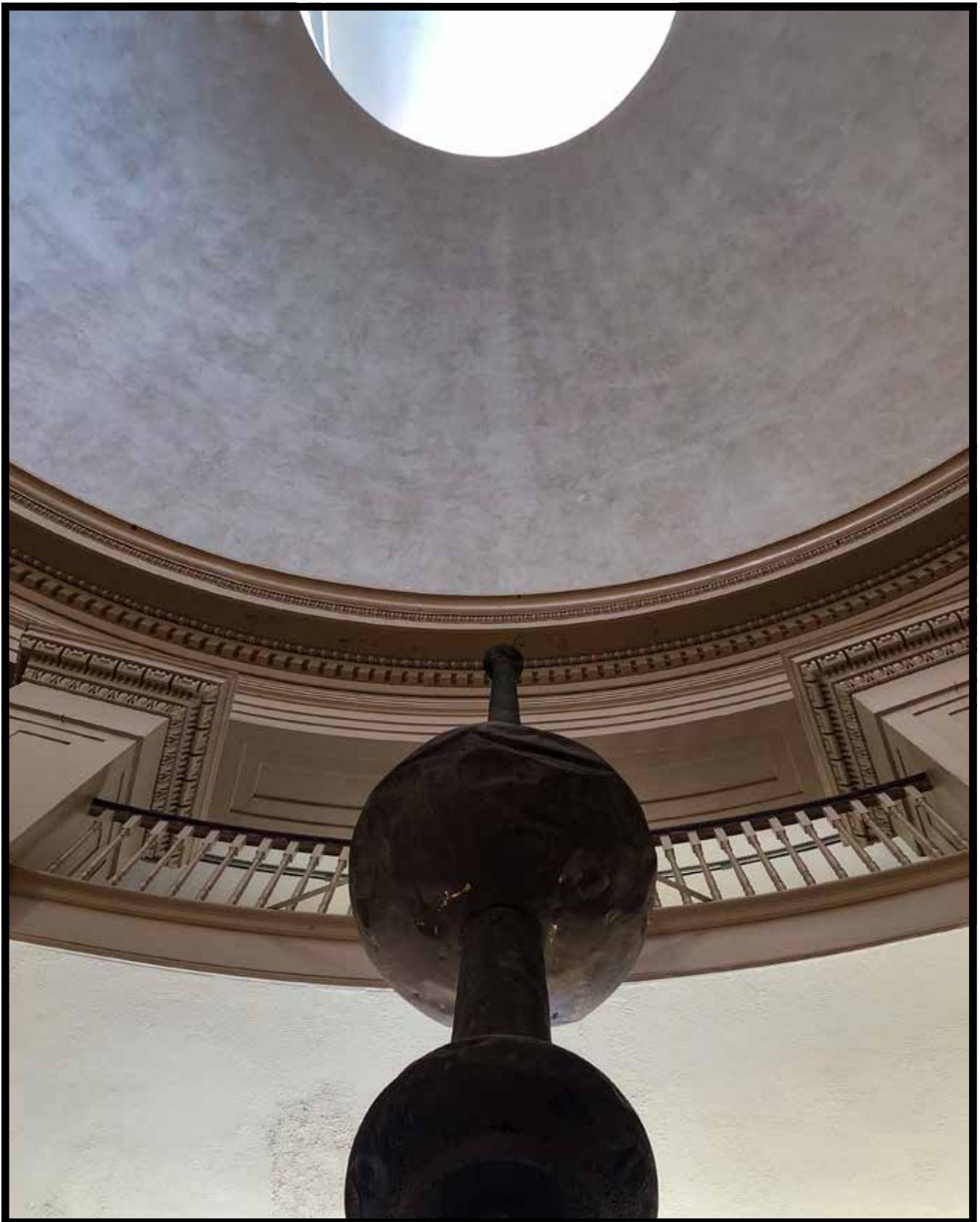


*Detail at Second Floor clerestory window in Meeting Room (203).*

#### — Attic

The southwest portion of the attic space was observed from the attic access above Room 201. Cut-nailed vertical-sawn framing members are standard. A portion of the framing and lath and plaster of the barrel vaulting over the second-floor annular corridor is visible from the access. The framing consists of inverted v-shaped frames to which are nailed boards with arced cutout forms. The boards may have originally served as vaulting forms to guide the installation of the lathing over the annular corridor, before being reused as structural reinforcement for the v-shaped frames. A small iron tie rod plate was observed on the side of a joist. Disused white porcelain knob and tube electrical fixtures are evident. The side of a rafter is scored with four vertical lines slashed by a diagonal line, a builder's mark representing the number five. Engineering Design Associates report (2013) describe the basic roof structure as consisting of a pair of east-west primary trusses, one crossing above the north end of the rotunda and the other above the south end and bearing on the outer walls, with north-south secondary trusses spanning between the primary trusses above the east and west sides of the rotunda. Photos in the 2013 Engineering Design Associates show the bottom of the dome structure where the structure is revealed inside the attic and suggest standard upright post construction with diagonal bracing between the posts above the plates.





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## V. ARCHITECTURAL ANALYSIS



Calder Loth, formerly the Senior Architectural Historian with the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, described the Exchange Building as a “splendid Greek Revival building” in the 1986 and 1999 editions of *The Virginia Landmarks Register*. The Greek Revival style, a late outgrowth of the Renaissance and its revival of classical architecture, reflected growing appreciation for classical Greek architecture among America’s intelligentsia during the early nineteenth century. The temple front with its columned portico and triangular pediment was considered the epitome of Greek classicism and was emulated in such early American Greek Revival buildings as the Second Bank of the United States in Philadelphia, designed by architect William Strickland in 1818, and Arlington House, the Virginia home of Robert E. and Mary Custis Lee, the central porticoed section of which was under construction in 1818 to a design by architect George Hadfield. The style spread across the nation, largely supplanting the classically-inspired Federal style by 1840, and reached a height of popularity in the 1840s and 1850s. The style fell out of favor after the Civil War, though its influence lingered in rural areas.<sup>25</sup>



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<sup>25</sup> Loth, *Virginia Landmarks Register* (1986), 325; Loth, *Virginia Landmarks Register* (1999), 377.



## V. ARCHITECTURAL ANALYSIS - cont'd



*Greek Revival use in the design of Boston's Quincy Hall built in the two decades before the Petersburg Exchange Building - HABS*



*Charleston Public Market Hall — The Greek Revival temple form. The Charleston Market Hall was under construction at the same time as the Petersburg Exchange Building - HABS*



*Front view of the Petersburg Exchange Building portico - HABS 1968*



*SE view of the Petersburg Exchange Building - HABS 1968*

Exterior features of the Exchange Building that are specifically Greek Revival include the building's pedimented Doric portico with fluted columns; its Doric entablature with characteristic triglyphs and mutules; its crosssetted front entry surround; and its palmette, anthemion, and wreath ornaments. The building's symmetry, though not specifically Greek-derived, is nevertheless essentially obligatory for the style, and the stuccoed front, scored to simulate ashlar, evokes the stone construction of the building's Greek temple prototypes. The rectangle-within-a-rectangle motif that appears on the soffits of the portico entablature and the ends of the cheeks that flank the front steps is a simple geometrical treatment that resonates with the simplicity of the Greek Revival style. The classical temples that inspired the style were typically monumental in scale, and the Exchange Building is likewise monumental, its imposing presence created by its three-story height; the treatment of the ends of the front elevation as a single tall story with a narrow attic story, all raised on a base; the heaviness and two-story height of the columns; and the broadness and height of the front steps, which are actual granite rather than simulated stone. The dome, one of the building's most distinctive features, is not Greek-derived but ultimately Roman. Likewise, the drum-like rotunda under the dome is ultimately Roman, though the columns that define the rotunda have molded capitals based on a Greek prototype. The rotunda column faces repeat the rectangle-

## V. ARCHITECTURAL ANALYSIS - cont'd



*View of the dome and cupola on the Petersburg Exchange Building - HABS 1968*



*Interior views of the Rotunda of the Exchange Building — (left) view up to the cupola (right) View of the Second Floor gallery*

## V. ARCHITECTURAL ANALYSIS - cont'd



*Rectangle-within-a-rectangle motif used on portico soffits (left) and the rotunda columns (right)*



*Views of the granite steps at the main entrance*

Calvin Pollard, the likely architect of the building, was well versed in the Greek Revival style, as his designs from the 1830s demonstrate. His work in Petersburg includes Greek Revival buildings that share certain features with the Exchange Building. St. Paul's Church, Petersburg (late 1830s; demolished), featured a temple front, Doric columns, a façade with ashlar-scored stucco over brick, a triglyph frieze, and broad front steps, like the Exchange Building, though the addition of a belfry tower, the design of the portico, with a pair of columns at the front of a recessed entry alcove (a treatment known as distyle-in-muris), and the full-façade gable-fronted treatment gave the church a markedly different form. The rectangle-within-a-rectangle motif that appears at several locations on the Exchange Building also appeared on St. Paul's, though there the rectangles were more prominent and were meant to evoke the form of windows.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>26</sup> Brownell, et al, *Making of Virginia Architecture*, 264-265.



## V. ARCHITECTURAL ANALYSIS - cont'd

The Hustings Courthouse (1838-40), also known as the Petersburg Courthouse, is another Greek Revival design by Pollard which differs in overall form from the Exchange Building (full-façade portico, tower, round portico columns with Tower of the Winds capitals, and so forth) but shares a striking commonality: the courthouse portico has at its ends rectangular columns (the outer corners) and pilasters (where the portico joins the building) with capitals that are virtually identical to those on the rotunda columns of the Exchange Building. The principal difference, and it is very minor, is a slightly different treatment of the lowest molding, which has a more academic bead-and-reel appearance in the courthouse capitals. This detail greatly strengthens the Pollard attribution for the Exchange Building. The courthouse portico soffits also have rectangle-within-a-rectangle treatments, though the courthouse portico ceiling is coffered whereas the Exchange Building's portico ceiling is smooth.<sup>27</sup>



*Early 20th c. postcard view of Petersburg's Hustings Courthouse designed by Calvin Pollard*



*Petersburg Hustings Courthouse — column and soffit detail showing rectangle-within-a-rectangle soffit and capitals on the square end columns similar to those on the Exchange Building rotunda columns — HABS*

<sup>27</sup> "Hustings Courthouse." Architectural historian Sergei Troubetzkoy has pointed out the similarities between the column capitals of the two buildings and how they bolster the case for Pollard as the architect of the Exchange Building.

## V. ARCHITECTURAL ANALYSIS - cont'd



*Detail of Courthouse capitals — HABS*



*Detail of Rotunda column capitals in the Exchange Building*

Architectural historian James Bailey, writing in 1967, observed:

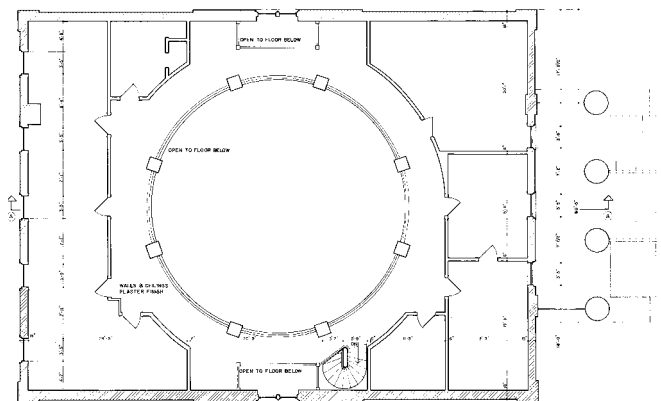
The interior of the Petersburg Exchange Building bears a marked resemblance to the third Merchants' Exchange in New York City, which was designed by the distinguished architect, Isaiah Rogers, shortly after 1835. Both buildings have as interior climax a great rotunda, with a dome. Both buildings have recesses, framed by columns, opening from the rotunda, and both buildings have balconies that give passage behind the columns at the floor level above the main floor.

Indeed, the similarity between the two interiors is so great as to suggest that Berrien was consciously emulating the New York design of Rogers.

E. R. Carhart, a historian of the New York building, which was known as the New York Produce Exchange (1836-42) and which survives today at 55 Wall Street in altered form, noted that its dome was "supported on eight pilasters of fine variegated Italian marble." As to the function of the New York exchange, Carhart added, "Merchants in all lines of commerce met here daily to consider questions incident to their trade, gather the latest news and transact their business." Pollard would have been familiar with the New York exchange, which was under construction at the time the Petersburg building was being planned, and the architectural similarities noted by Bailey and Carhart suggest the New York building did indeed influence the Petersburg one.<sup>28</sup>



*New York Produce Exchange (1836-1842)*



*Floor plan detail of the First Floor of the Petersburg Exchange Building showing the eight columns that support the dome*

<sup>28</sup> Bailey, "History of Buildings;" Carhart, "New York Produce Exchange," 531; Ripley and Dana, *American Cyclopaedia*, 376.



## V. ARCHITECTURAL ANALYSIS - cont'd

Domes and Greek Revival detail were common ennobling devices for markets and mercantile exchanges of the early 1800s. In addition to the buildings in Petersburg and New York is the Quincy Market (1824-26) in Boston, which has a temple front and a dome with trompe l'oeil painting of coffering on its interior. The head-house of City Market (1841) in Charleston, South Carolina, is more temple-like in form and appearance, with a main level raised high on an arcaded ground level, an engaged portico with Doric columns, and a Doric entablature. Another Greek Revival exchange building of note is the Merchants' Exchange Building (1832-34) in Philadelphia, designed by architect William Strickland.



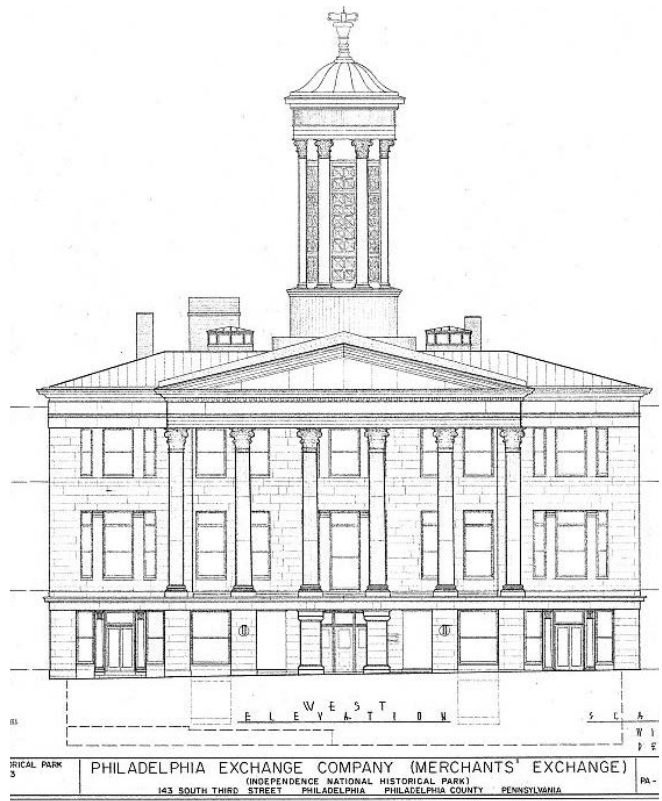
*19th c. view of Quincy Hall showing its Greek Revival front and central dome and cupola.*



*Contemporary view of the coffered ceiling of the Quincy Hall dome*



*Temple form of the Charleston Market Hall head-house — HABS*



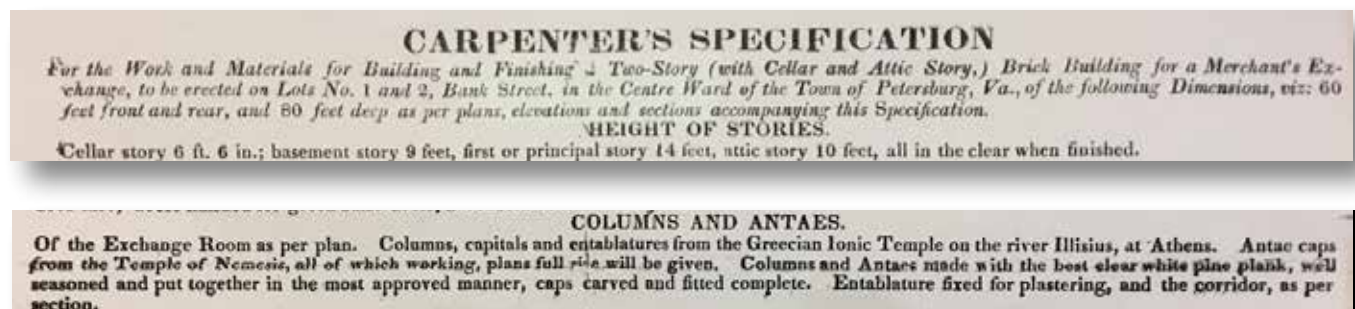
*Elevation of the Philadelphia Merchants' Exchange Building (1832-34)*



## V. ARCHITECTURAL ANALYSIS - cont'd

Building specifications, unsigned but dated 1839, provide insights into the Exchange Building's design as originally conceived. The specifications contain references to three classical Greek prototypes. Under the heading "Columns and Antaes" the specifications stipulate: "Columns, capitals and entablatures from the Grecian (sic) Ionic Temple on the river Illisius, at Athens." The reference is apparently to a small temple on the Illisus or Illisos River in Athens which is pictured in British architects James Stuart and Nicholas Revett's *The Antiquities of Athens* (1762), the most detailed record of the building, which was destroyed in the late 1700s. The details pictured by Stuart and Revett do not appear to bear a resemblance to the details of the Exchange Building, which at any rate is not Ionic.<sup>29</sup>

A second specification under "Columns and Antaes" does produce a match. The specification reads: "Antae caps from the Temple of Nemesis" (antae are pier-like thickenings at the ends of walls). This is in reference to the ruined but well-documented ca. 430 BC Temple of Nemesis at Rhamnous, a city in Attica near Athens. British architect John Peter Gandy includes a number of plates of his reconstruction of the temple in Chapter 6 of *The Unedited Antiquities of Attica* (1817; 1833 second edition). In Chapter 6 Plate 6 Gandy details "the capital of the antae, shewing the enrichments." The plate shows a design nearly identical to the capitals of the rotunda columns, with a geometrical repeat above an egg-and-dart molding above a bead-and-reel molding, and with small anthemion or palmette-like ornaments at the corners. This also identifies the source of the same detail on the Hustings Courthouse columns and pilasters.<sup>30</sup>



*Excerpts from the Carpenter's Specifications*

A third specification, under "Cornice," also agrees well with the Exchange Building as built. The specification stipulates: "The exterior cornice, as per plan, Grecian dorick (sic), from the Parthanon (sic), at Athens." The Parthenon (mid-400s BC) has a Doric cornice with triglyphs, mutules, guttae, and filets very similar to those in the cornice of the Exchange Building. The carpenter was careful to make rows of six guttae in the mutules, the standard number of guttae in a row in Doric architecture and in the Parthenon cornice. The Parthenon has bas-reliefs in the spaces between the triglyphs (the metopes), whereas the spaces are blank in the Exchange Building entablature.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>29</sup> "Carpenter's Specification." The specifications have numerous misspellings which are retained here.

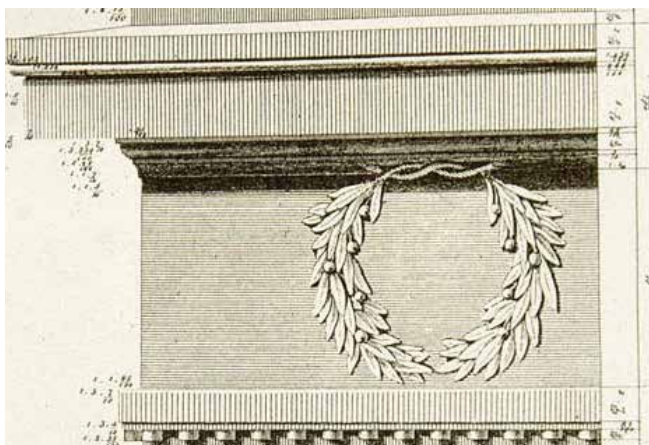
<sup>30</sup> Ibid.; Miles, "Reconstruction of the Temple of Nemesis," 217; Gandy, John Peter. *The Unedited Antiquities of Attica*. Margaret Miles refers to the upper part of the rotunda column capitals as a hawkbeak or beak molding, though it is more similar in appearance to a fret.

<sup>31</sup> "Carpenter's Specification."

## V. ARCHITECTURAL ANALYSIS - cont'd

**CORNICE.**  
The exterior cornice, as per plan, Grecian dorick, from the Parthanon, at Athens, see front elevation, for which working, plans full size will be given and detailed. All put up on brackets, with clear white pine plank in the best manner, and as shall be required, 4 wooden laurel wreaths in front to cover the attic windows as per elevation, portico front and rear as per section, framed with suitable sized timber and recessed, and all fured for plastering as may be required. The tympanum to the front and rear ceiled with clear narrow white pine boards planed, tongued, grooved and nailed to perpendicular joist, placed not more than 2 ft. apart, blocking corse on the fronts and flanks, as per elevation, to be of plank planed, tongued and grooved, and battened and fastened to iron anchors from the roof, say 20 anchors. The base of the dome formed with 1 1/4 white pine

The specifications call for “4 wooden laurel wreaths in front to cover the attic windows.” These were modeled on the carved olive wreaths that ornamented the Choragic Monument of Thrasyllus (320 BC), a frontispiece that once framed the entrance to a cave at the base of the Acropolis in Athens. The monument is depicted in volume 2 of Stuart and Revett’s *Antiquities of Athens* (1789), which Calder Loth has documented as the source for similar wreath ornaments in many subsequent buildings including the United States Capitol. In the Capitol the wreaths appear in a frieze in the Rotunda, completed in 1829 to a design by Charles Bulfinch, though the wreaths have oak leaves and acorns instead of olive leaves and olives. The leaves of the Exchange Building wreaths could represent either olive leaves or laurel leaves, though the specifications identify them as laurel leaves. The carved stems are twined at the top as shown in Stuart and Revett’s detail of the Grecian prototype.<sup>32</sup>



Detail of a wreath from volume 2 of Stuart and Revett's "Antiquities of Athens" (1789)



Wreath detail on the facade of the Exchange Building

The dome is the Exchange Building’s main departure from Greek prototypes. The specifications provide cursory information on the construction of the dome, noting that it was to be built of 1-1/4-inch “plank ribs in 3 thicknesses,” meaning boards with three widths. The interior treatment of the dome was described at greater length:

The coffers of the dome will be equal in width to the margins or rails between them which will be found by dividing the base of the dome into 40 equal parts. These coffers will be double sunk, first sinking 5 in. at base, 3 in. at the crown, 2nd sinking 4 in. at base, and 2 in. crown. The pannels [sic] will radiate and graduate from or [?] to the centre. The opening of the centre will be 8 in. [feet?] and covered with a stained glass sky light.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.; Stuart and Revett, *Antiquities of Athens*, vol. 2, chap. 4, plate 3; Loth, “Choragic Monument of Thrasyllus.”

## V. ARCHITECTURAL ANALYSIS - cont'd

To the dome specifications was appended a note prefaced with the initials N. B. and reading, “If the committee should select the accompanying design for pointing the dome in base [sic] relief, then the dome will be fured [sic] plain. Please state the expense of furing [sic] the dome as above specified, that they may decide on the plan.” (For an interpretation of this wording see the discussion of painting below.) The committee mention presumably refers to a building committee composed of Petersburg Exchange shareholders. There is no evidence that the coffering was executed.<sup>33</sup>



*Interior view of the Exchange Building dome*



*Close up of the dome showing its original soldered terne metal roof*



*View of the dome and cupola — HABS 1968*

<sup>33</sup> “Carpenter’s Specification.”



## V. ARCHITECTURAL ANALYSIS - cont'd

The specification that the dome be coffered, that is, decorated with square-based recesses, suggests that the prototype was the Pantheon (ca. 113-125 AD) in Rome. The colossal Roman temple, one of the best-preserved buildings to survive from antiquity, is covered by a coffered dome. The Pantheon was intensively studied by architects from the Renaissance on and was the model for numerous buildings, including Monticello in Virginia, and hence would have been well known to Calvin Pollard and other architects of his generation. The Pantheon's coffers have four inward steppings, whereas the Exchange Building's coffers were to be double-sunk, meaning they were to have two inward steppings. The detailed measurements for the first and second sinkings refer to the architect's intention to evoke the complex asymmetrical steppings of the Pantheon's coffers, the surfaces of which are only seen in their entirety from the center of the building.<sup>34</sup>

The Exchange Building dome and the drum that supports it allude to the Pantheon in other ways. Both buildings have an oculus or round opening at the top of the dome, which has a cupola above in the Exchange Building but is open to the sky in the Pantheon. The Pantheon has six large niches or alcoves, three to either side of its center axis, with columns that frame and screen the openings to the niches. The Exchange Building has somewhat similar spaces, on the east and west sides of the rotunda, that are framed (though not screened) by columns. The Pantheon has a seventh niche or apse, at the back opposite the front entry, framed by a round-arched opening. The Exchange Building has a similar treatment at the same location opposite the front entry, with an archway that opens into a shallow alcove. Originally this archway opened into a hallway that connected to a rear entry. The closing off of the hallway has made the Exchange Building archway and alcove more like the one in the Pantheon.

Petersburg historian Dulaney Ward notes possible influence from the Villa La Rotonda (begun 1567), a house in the Vicenza area of northern Italy designed by the noted Renaissance architect Andrea Palladio. Features of the villa also seen (or formerly seen) in the Exchange Building include front and rear porticos, sweeping front steps bracketed by cheeks, a raised ground level, a dome with an oculus at the center of the building, an upper-level balustrade in the rotunda, a cross axial plan, and an attic story with rectangular windows. Like the Pantheon, the Villa La Rotonda was extensively published and emulated. The Exchange Building differs from the villa in that it does not have side porticos.<sup>35</sup>

The dome has another historical association, and that is to the wooden dome construction technology pioneered by French architect Philibert Delorme in the 1500s. According to architectural historian Douglas Harnsberger, Delorme's approach "provided a new means of vaulting arched and domed spaces by laminating short curved segments of wooden planks into long, continuous structural ribs." Harnsberger adds, "The principal advantages of Delorme's dome were that it was lightweight, inexpensive, prefabricated and quick to assemble." Thomas Jefferson learned about Delorme domes while he was minister to France in the 1780s and he applied the technique first at Monticello and then for the Rotunda at the University of Virginia in the first quarter of the nineteenth century. Photos of the base of the Exchange Building dome taken by Engineering

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<sup>34</sup> MacDonald, *"Architecture of the Roman Empire,"* 115.

<sup>35</sup> Dulaney Ward personal communication. Regarding possible additional Pantheon influence, it is possible to describe a circle in the interior of the Pantheon with the upper part conforming to the dome and the bottom touching the floor. At Ward's suggestion a HABS section of the Exchange Building was measured for a similar

## V. ARCHITECTURAL ANALYSIS - cont'd

Design Associates in 2013 show that most of the vertical ribs are composites of two to three boards nailed together. The apparent variation from two to three boards, at least at the base of the dome, suggests a somewhat haphazard application of the Delorme technique, but the construction satisfies the essential criteria for qualifying as a Delorme dome. The diagonal braces at the foot of the dome appear to be an innovation of the builder, though bracing varies in published examples of domes designed by Delorme and Jefferson and should not be considered an essential characteristic. The wooden support structure of the annular vault around the rotunda may show Delorme influence in its crudely composite ribs.<sup>36</sup>



*View of Palladio's Villa La Rotonda — Archweb*



*Similar view of the Exchange Building portico and dome*



*Monumental Church in Richmond, VA designed by Thomas U. Walter and constructed at approximately the same time as the Petersburg Exchange Building with a similar temple front, dome, and cupola.*

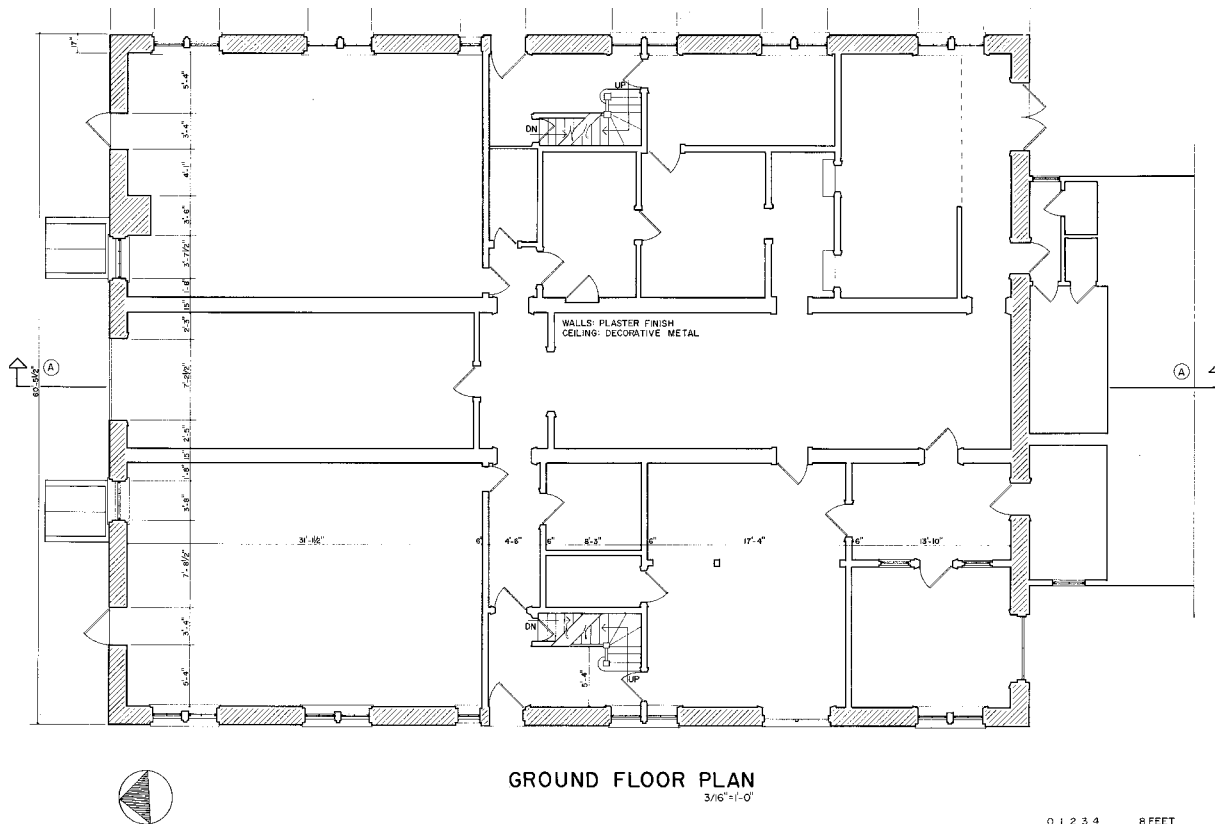


*Model of a Jefferson's structure for the Rotunda dome at the University of Virginia, constructed by UVA architecture students under the direction of architect Douglas Harnsberger. Jefferson acquired Delorme's handbook when he served as the American Ambassador to France in 1786. Upon returning to the States, he built his first version of a Delorme dome at Monticello and later used the same wood rib approach on the original dome on UVA's Rotunda*

<sup>36</sup> Harnsberger, "In Delorme's Manner," 249, 251; Brownell, "Laying the Groundwork," 51; Engineering Design Associates, "Siege Museum Structural Assessment," photos D144-D151.

## V. ARCHITECTURAL ANALYSIS - cont'd

The original character of the ground level has been the subject of speculation. Calder Loth writes in *The Virginia Landmarks Register* (1999 edition), “As originally constructed, the Exchange stood on an open ground floor where the products were displayed and traded.” The source or sources on which the statement is based have not been located. The 1839 specifications describe subdivision into “apartments” with a “Hall.” The hall may refer to the middle division of the interior, the structural bay that runs from the front of the building to the back, defined by the interior brick bearing walls. However, the word hall appears in the descriptor “Venitian (sic) Hall Doors.” Architect Cyril Harris, editor of *Dictionary of Architecture and Construction*, defined a Venetian door as “A door having a long narrow window at each side which is similar in form to that of a Venetian window.” Harris’s definition of a Venetian window is similar: a center opening flanked by generally smaller side openings, the center opening with or without an arched top. In other words, if the Harris definition of the term is the one used by the architect, the “Hall” had doors with sidelights. There is evidence in the granite thresholds of the six side-elevation ground-level openings for either doors with sidelights or double-leaf doors at those locations. The current openings through the brick bearing walls are not wide enough to accommodate doors with sidelights, nor are they shown as wide enough in the 1968 HABS floor plan. It is possible the openings originally existed and were narrowed in the 1927 remodeling or earlier.<sup>37</sup>

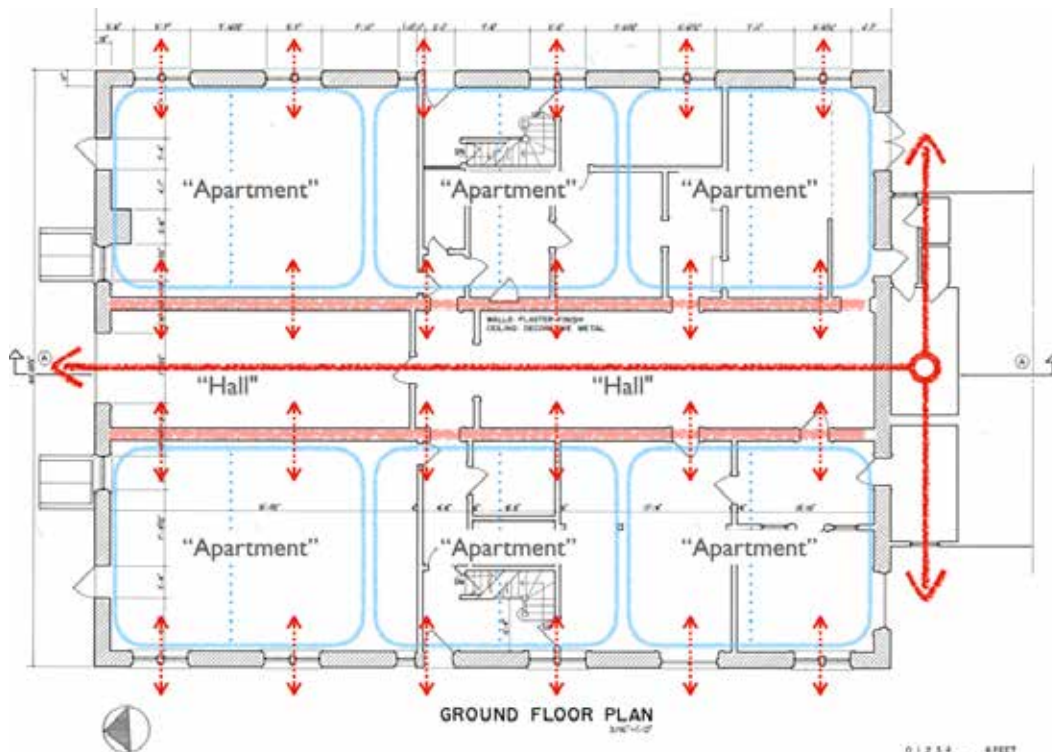


*Ground Floor plan of the Exchange Building from the 1968 HABS survey. This configuration shows the plan with what are, most likely, the major modifications made by Reuben Ragland when he purchased the building in the 1850's and converted it into commercial/business space for lease.*

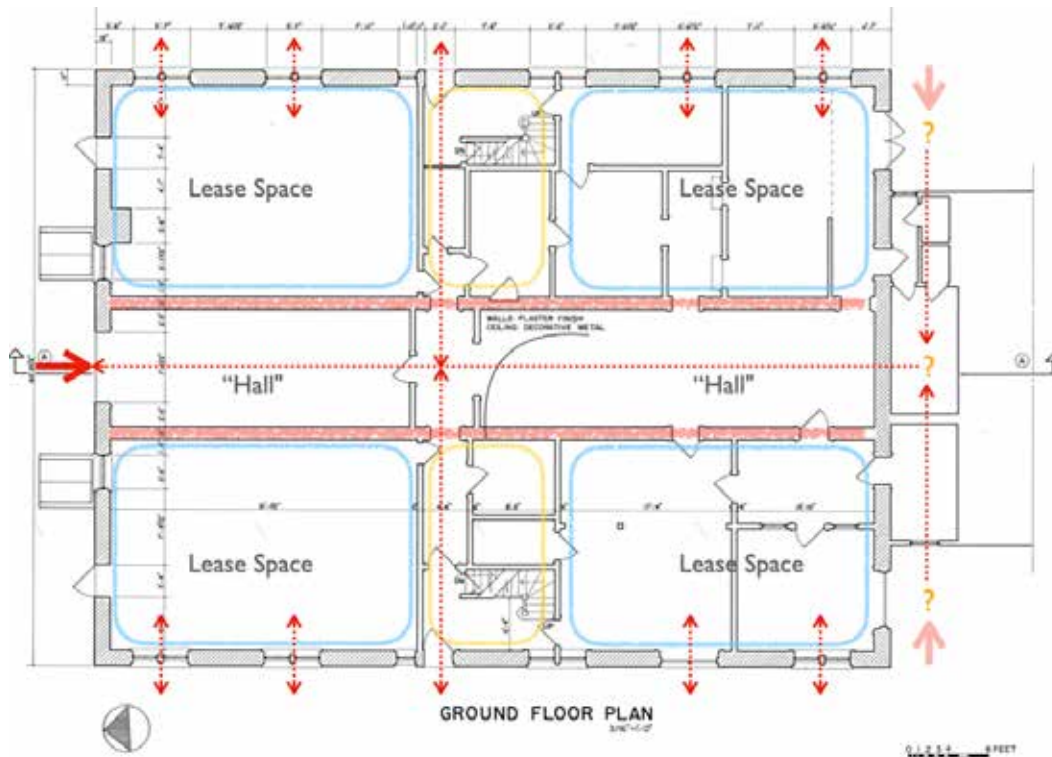
<sup>37</sup> “Carpenter’s Specification,” Loth, *Virginia Landmarks Register* (1999 edition), 377; “The Exchange,” Harris, *Dictionary of Architecture and Construction*, 527.



## V. ARCHITECTURAL ANALYSIS - cont'd



*The Ground Floor Plan as it may have worked in its original configuration with the center "Hall" accessed from the front and rear of the building under each portico along with access from the "Apartments" into the hall and directly to the alley on either side of the building for vendor operations*



*The current layout, with the east and west stair/room groups may have been a modification made by Reuben Ragland in the 1850s, basically turning what had been a market hall building into a leasable commercial tenant building. Access from the Front Portico may have been eliminated at this time.*

## V. ARCHITECTURAL ANALYSIS - cont'd

The specifications appear to refer to the former exterior doors and sidelights in a slightly garbled phrase that reads, “The flank Venitian doors as per elevation and plans.” Flank may mean flanking, as in side elevations, and the fact that the doors appeared in an elevation drawing indicates they were exterior. The specifications seem to suggest the partitions creating the apartments on the ground level had windows, which would have aided transmission of daylight from the outer doorways into inner areas. Various sidelights are described as having “pannelled (sic) shutters;” in one instance a shutter is described as being “fastened with two square sliding bolts.” “Folding doors” are also referenced (on this level and on the first floor). The description of the “Venitian Hall Doors” includes the phrase “in the folds,” which suggests the doors had folding leaves of some sort. That in turn might suggest that something wider than a standard door and sidelight configuration was intended for those door openings, which, if so, would mean openings that would have compromised the structure of the brick bearing walls, if that is in fact where the “Hall” doors were located. A separate heading “Venitian” calls for “Hall Doors, as per plan, with side and head lights.”<sup>38</sup>



*View of an original alley opening with a door and sidelight infill. Note the granite sill shows evidence of an earlier centered door.*



*Most of the original alley openings have been filled in with 20th c. windows with brick sills.*

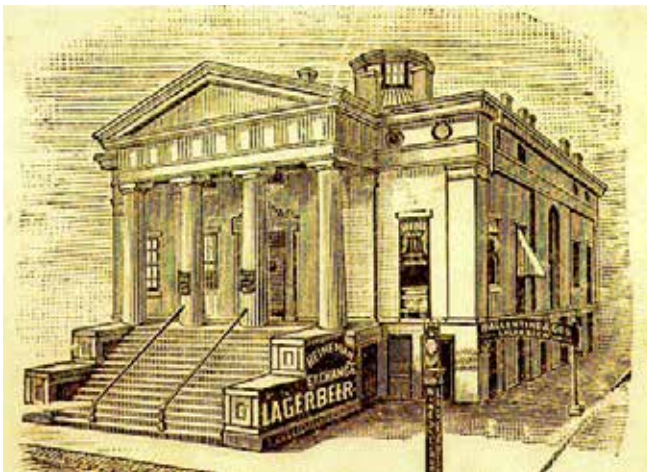
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<sup>38</sup> “Carpenter’s Specification.”

## V. ARCHITECTURAL ANALYSIS - cont'd

The missing drawings would likely provide clarity on this and other aspects of the building's design, but by interpreting the specifications and the surviving building fabric it is possible to guess at the general outlines of the character of the ground level, at least as it was intended in 1839. The impression of a flexibly partitioned interior with small spaces that could function separately or be combined to create larger spaces. There appear to have been provisions to increase natural illumination in the spaces, and to compensate for the security concerns that the extra ground-level glazing would have created with double-fastened shutters. Glazed exterior doors would have introduced even more light but would also have further compromised security, and there is no indication that glazed doors existed. The subdivision of the space, the apparent absence of freight entries except potentially at the back where the elevator tower now connects, and the apparent abundance of glass are factors that argue against the use of the space for the display and trading of bulk goods like tobacco or cotton. Tobacco in the postbellum period, for example, was typically auctioned in large unsubdivided interior spaces. The specifications and architecture suggest instead a space that could be rented to shopkeepers or tradesmen with varying space requirements. Whether, or to what extent, this arrangement was built, is unclear from the interior architectural evidence. Exposed structure was examined for traces of former partitions but no such evidence was found. It is known, however, that at least one businessman, barber Henry H. Elebeck, operated on the ground floor in the mid-1850s, which indicates some degree of partitioning during a period about fifteen years after the building's construction and before the first change in ownership.<sup>39</sup>

Images from the nineteenth century show a multitude of brick chimneys rising above the roof. The specifications call for "A handsome pilaster, wooden mantles, to all the fire places . . . with a hearth border to each hearth, well fitted and nailed." Disregarding the singular/plural disagreement, this refers to open fireplaces with standard Greek Revival pilaster-and-frieze mantels, presumably of wood and presumably with brick hearths. None of these fireplaces and mantels survive. An especially interesting specification is for "Six Circular windows in the Partitions . . . square frame on



*Heinemann's ad showing several chimneys on the east side of the building that no longer exist*



*Photo from the 1890's showing chimneys on the west alley side that no longer exist*

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid



## V. ARCHITECTURAL ANALYSIS - cont'd

the office side . . . a handsome circular architrave and back moulding on the exchange room side.” The windows were to be two and a half feet in diameter. By exchange room was meant the rotunda, so these would have been windows in the walls between the rotunda and adjacent offices on the first floor. There are four curved wall surfaces between the rotunda columns (the other four sections have large openings of various sorts), so how the six windows were arranged is a question. If one was on the southwest curved wall it would have lighted the otherwise dark enclosed stair on that side. A famous example of circular forms on the walls of a rotunda is the aforementioned United States Capitol rotunda, which elevates the Capitol as a potential influence.<sup>40</sup>

The general specification for windows calls for two windows of large size, as indicated by their having thirty-two panes of twelve inch by sixteen inch glass. An arrangement that would create a vertical window (four panes by eight panes) produces windows approximately four feet by eleven feet in dimension. These windows may have been located at the center of the side elevations at the locations now occupied by the tall Italianate windows. Though large, perhaps they were not considered large enough to adequately illuminate the stairwell spaces and sides of the rotunda behind them. If so, their replacement may be associated with the first change of ownership in the late 1850s, a period during which round-arched Italianate windows would have been the height of fashion.<sup>41</sup>

The specifications devote a section to the rear portico, which architectural traces and the various building footprints shown in the Mutual Assurance Society policies demonstrate was built. The portico had two tiers, “ceiled underneath each floor” with tongue-and-grooved pine boards and with “facia [fascia] nosing and scotia to the floors” indicating some degree of finish. The railings had rectangular-section wood balusters. “Piers” are mentioned but not described, though given the two-tiered design these were likely one-story columns or posts on each tier, with either wood or brick supports at ground level (though such supports are not explicitly mentioned). The “steps (sic) leading to the yard” had “moulded yellow pine steps, no risers,” handrails with balusters, and “locust fancy turned newels [newels] and caps.” The front portico is also described, and as originally conceived it was less substantially constructed as the portico was built. It was to have wooden steps, though reference to a separate estimate suggests an upgrade to stone or brick was being considered. The floor was also to be wood, and there is a suggestion the portico base was conceived as open rather than enclosed, with brick support only under the columns. Next to or under the rear portico were the two bulkhead entries, described in the specifications: “Rear Cellar: Doors as per plan, made with plank plained, tongued, grooved, beaded and battened, hung with strong wrought hook and hinges, and fastened with a hasp and pad-lock to each door.

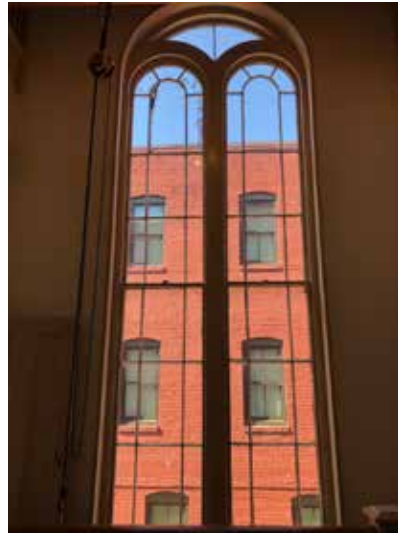
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<sup>40</sup> Ibid

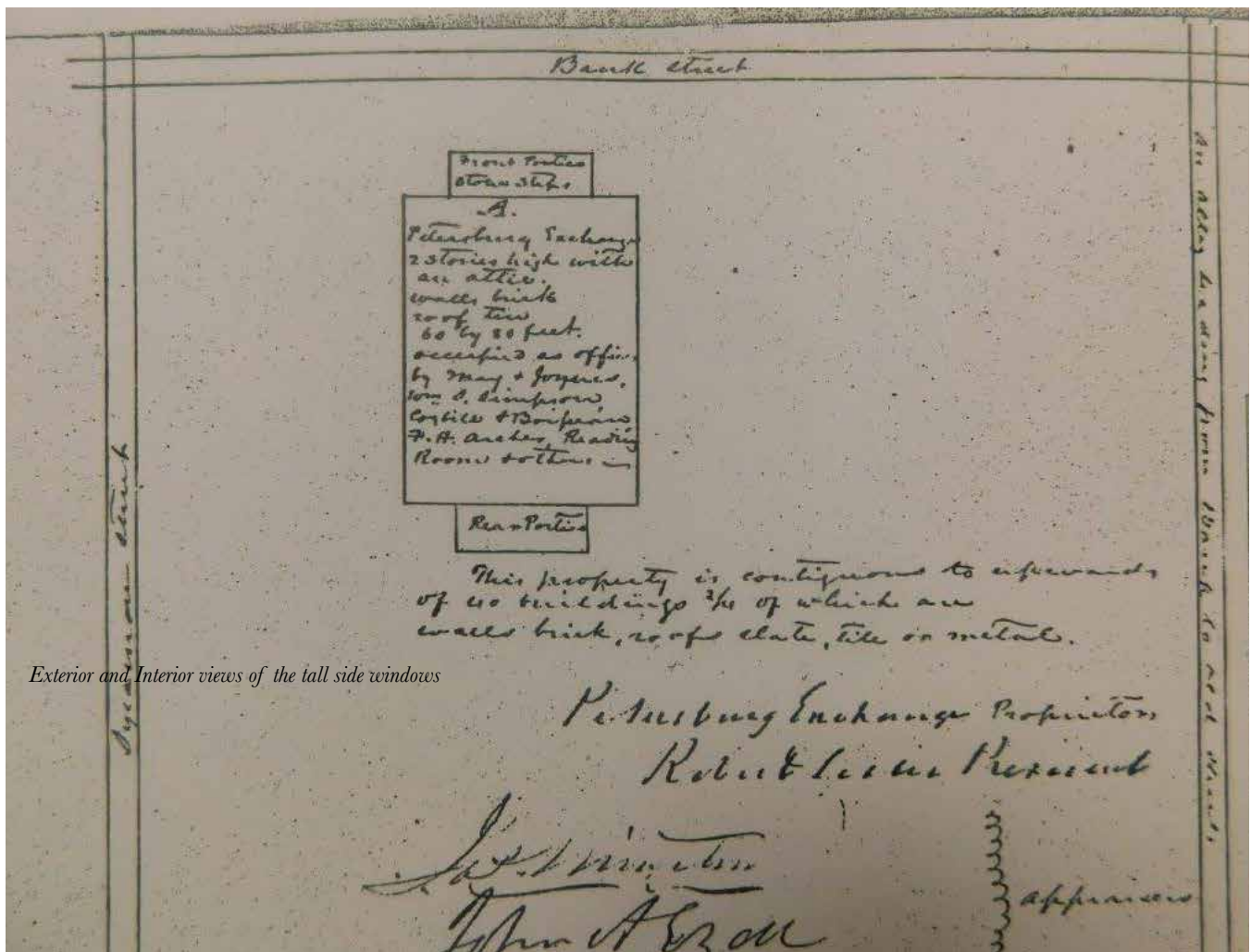
<sup>41</sup> Ibid

<sup>42</sup> Ibid Petersburg historian Dulaney Ward believes the rear portico was removed as a result of the later 1850s improvements to the building, based on a Mutual Assurance Society policy from the period (Dulaney Ward

## V. ARCHITECTURAL ANALYSIS - cont'd



Exterior and Interior views of the tall side windows



1844 Mutual Assurance Policy map showing the rear portico

## V. ARCHITECTURAL ANALYSIS - cont'd



*Evidence for the extent and location of the rear portico is clearly visible in the breaks at the First Floor belt course/window lintels as well as in the patching of the cornice and soffit where the portico roof was cut back*



*Symmetrical splices on both sides of the building's roofline with a stepped pattern most likely following the outline of the original cornice line from the portico as it extended out beyond the rear wall*

The “Gallery of the Exchange Room” was to have an “Ionic balustrade.” The balusters were to be four-inch square in section, and since there is no mention of them being turned (unlike the rear portico steps newels), the implication is either turned balusters were substituted during construction or the current turned balusters are a wholesale replacement. There was nothing particularly Ionic about the square balusters specified, which were a normative railing treatment of the period. Perhaps the rows of columnar square-section elements were thought to evoke the colonnades of a Greek temple. By gallery the architect appears to have meant only the elevation of the feature, since he refers to a “corridor” in connection with the gallery, noting: “For the number of balusters (sic), see plan of corridor.”<sup>43</sup>

The specifications make three references to painting. Under the heading “Painting” is stipulated: “All the wood and tin work, usually painted, to have two good coats of white lead paint and linseed oil of the best quality, and well put on. A stiff and good priming first. The front doors 3 coats, and grained oak color.” The risers of the front portico steps were to be “painted two coats and sanded as may be required,” a reference to sand being mixed with the paint, a formula known as sand painting. The front portico steps were not built of wood (or, if they were initially, they were replaced early on with granite), so the sand painting was presumably not done, though if it was considered for the building it seems possible it was done elsewhere.<sup>44</sup>

The 1839 specifications may include a fourth reference to painting. The alternative treatment mentioned for the dome interior—“pointing the dome in base (sic) relief”—makes little sense. Pointing refers to brickwork; bas-relief sculpture or plasterwork is not pointed. If “pointing” is a misspelling for “painting,” then the reference may be to trompe l’oeil (“fool the eye”) painting to simulate three-dimensional carved or molded bas-relief ornament, presumably in the form of coffering. This would have been a more cost-effective approach than true three-dimensional coffering. As for the building exterior, early images suggest a polychrome paint scheme. A painting by William Skinner Simpson se-

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<sup>43</sup> Ibid

<sup>44</sup> Ibid



## V. ARCHITECTURAL ANALYSIS - cont'd

nior or junior, reproduced in black and white, which appears to have been painted in the late antebellum period or very early postbellum period based on the clothing of the four figures shown in painting, shows at least three shades of color: lightest on the building's front walls and pediment, darker on the triglyphs of the portico cornice, and darkest on the columns and in the spaces between the portico triglyphs (the metopes). An 1865 panoramic photo of Petersburg shows a portion of the dome and suggests it was painted a dark color. The Simpson painting also suggests the dome was a darker color, though not as dark as the columns.<sup>45</sup>

The last section of the specifications contains standard provisions such as a requirement that the work be done in “workmanlike manner,” but it also hints at the individuals and groups involved in undertaking and reviewing the work. The “Master Carpenter,” who is unnamed, was to furnish the materials. The work was to be superintended by “[blank] architect, who shall have power to reject all materials or work that does not comply with the plans and this specification.” If the contract was drawn up by Calvin Pollard or someone in his office (given the many misspellings), it seems odd that the architect's name would have been left blank, though that seeming omission can be explained by the likelihood an architect other than Pollard was expected to provide on-site superintendence. Because the specifications describe the position of superintending architect, it would seem that individual was James Berrien. If so, then the master carpenter was another, unidentified individual, despite the fact Berrien was described as a carpenter in 1839. Or the reverse: Berrien's intimate association with the building as the master carpenter may have been remembered whereas the superintending architect may not have been remembered. The specifications also state, “All necessary plans will be furnished to the contractors by the architect for the committee,” and they note an 1839 completion date for the building was anticipated.<sup>46</sup>



*Mid 19th c. Simpson watercolor of the Exchange Building showing what may be a multi-color paint scheme*



*Early 20th c. photo showing darker colors on cornice and frieze details as well as on the fascia trim around the building*

<sup>45</sup> Ibid; Henderson, *Unredeemed City*, 371. Early plaster may survive under later plaster on the dome. If so it could be examined for signs of decorative painting.

<sup>46</sup> “Carpenter’s Specification.” The vague phrasing and numerous misspellings in the specifications suggest they were written by someone without the level of erudition suggested by the design of the building and its allusions to classical prototypes. Regarding the question of who was who in the design and construction of the building, it is interesting that there is a name-like element in the specifications, the initials N.B. Interpreting those initials gets into speculation, but it should be noted B is the surname initial of the one individual named in historic sources as having a close association with the construction of the building, James Berrien. The N initial does not work with his name, though it may be another misspelling.

## V. ARCHITECTURAL ANALYSIS - cont'd

Clues to the building's early interior character are found in Jody Lahendro's 1976 paint analysis. The analysis, as Lahendro noted in his report, was limited to a cursory visual examination due to time constraints, though Lahendro was able to determine a rough sequence of early color schemes in the principal first-floor spaces. The first two paint layers on elements in the rotunda were beige, which Lahendro interpreted as a primer coat under a finish coat. These were followed by a "very noticeable dirt layer," possibly a consequence of the neglect the building experienced in the 1850s when it was described in newspaper accounts as "forlornly dilapidated" and the city's worst building "in point of cleanliness." The third layer was brown followed by dark brown, a combination Lahendro interpreted as walnut-colored graining. Lahendro continued, "Layer 5 gives the visual and physical impression of brownstone. Paint layer 6 is a crude, but incredibly interesting attempt to mimic marble." In the itemized list of paint colors Lahendro described layer 5 as "brownish-red paint mixed with sand" and layer 6 as "light green speckled with brownish-gray and white." Lahendro's photo of the exposed layer 6 on a rotunda column shaft shows the speckled pattern but the color palette is a mix of browns with cream to dark brown speckles on a medium brown ground. The brown ground appears to be the result of uneven browning of the photo since there also appear to be areas with a ground of more greenish color. The stone the painter simulated may have been a Greek igneous rock known as lapis lacedaemonius or Spartan basalt, a prized decorative stone used in ancient times and later, though the stone tends to be darker than the color described and photographed by Lahendro. Another possibility would be green porphyry, another igneous rock (the speckling is porphyry-like). Either possibility suggests the work of a painter of considerable skill and knowledge. The brown tones preceding the greenish color, one simulating walnut and the other brownstone, relate to the dark interior color palette that was especially popular after the Civil War, the period architectural historian Lewis Mumford referred to as the Brown Decades. Lahendro's analysis of the rotunda wall plaster revealed a similar sequence, with light colors (yellowish white, beige) followed by mostly darker colors (reddish beige, brown, beige, greenish beige, beige, light brown). The first, yellowish white layer has "an identifiable glaze coat . . . and a dirt layer," the latter possible additional evidence of the building's 1850s neglect. <sup>47</sup>

Two aspects of the building deserve examination. The 1980 report on the building's rehabilitation noted, "When the existing lobby floor was removed to permit the installation of the slate, it was discovered that the joints [sic; joists?] underneath were packed with mud. No one is sure why this was done; it has been suggested that the mud may have served as insulation beneath the floor." The second aspect is the row of eight thin metal disks nailed to the lintel of the boiler room doorway in the basement. These disks, and a single nailed disk on the jamb, are associated with the good luck horseshoe affixed to the lintel and may be an apotropaic feature for protection against evil forces or bad luck. The disks are similar in size and form if not material to scraps of leather nailed to the sides of studs in the wall cavities of Mead's Tavern, a 1763 building in New London, Campbell County, Virginia. The Exchange Building disks may be an early or mid-twentieth century manifestation of a long-lived folk practice. <sup>48</sup>



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<sup>47</sup> Lahendro, "Interior Paint Analysis, Merchants' Exchange Building." 3-6.

<sup>48</sup> "Completion Report," 4.

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6

## VI. CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT



*I*n 2018-2019, StudioAmmons was asked to develop a project scope and grant request for the Save America's Treasures (SAT) grant program managed through the National Park Service and only available to National Historic Landmark eligible sites or structures. In September of 2019 a SAT grant was awarded to Historic Petersburg Foundation for the development of an Historic Structure Report (HSR) and the necessary survey, documentation and design for the remediation of water infiltration issues in and around the building including the replacement of the existing roof, as well as limited structural remediation of floor and dome framing conditions, with monies for the implementation of this remediation/repair work included in the grant. StudioAmmons was hired to provide the architectural and engineering services necessary to accomplish the scope of work described in the grant as well as the survey and design work currently underway. The conditions assessment and recommendations from the Save America's Treasures grant work scope is included in this summary of overall conditions and forms the basis for prioritized recommendations focused on the remediation of water problems and limited structural issues.



## VI. CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT - cont'd

### *Preservation Needs and Recommendations*

This Historic Structure Report concerns the Petersburg Exchange Building, a National Historic Landmark property that is one of the most important and intact examples of a 19th century market exchange building in the United States. This report has been designed (1) to document alterations and additions to the original structure and their subsequent history and (2) to evaluate the condition of all major building elements and the impact of major current policies and practices relating to the physical condition of the historic fabric, in order (3) to make recommendations for repair, conservation, and other changes needed to ensure the optimal preservation and interpretation of the Exchange for continued use providing visitor and museum services to the public.

Specific recommendations, in the context of the Strategic Vision, presented later in this report, are at the heart of this report. The discussion of the building's structural integrity is based on the attached structural engineering report by Engineering Design Associates completed in 2013 and recommendations contained in this report referencing the findings in the engineers assessment. The recommendations have been placed in the context of the history of the building and its site and the interpretation of their significance as a National Landmark Building. This report endeavors to clarify the historical process, and more recent decisions, that have led to the building's current use and condition. It also addresses future alterations that might further improve safety, and comprehensibility, not only as a historic site, but as an active part of a community, moderated by a realistic approach to maintenance that will best preserve the Exchange Building's historic for future generations.

The recommendations are based in a philosophy that emphasizes a light touch with historic fabric such as that codified in the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and more recent conservation theory. Under this approach, old fabric is rigorously conserved and repairs tend to be reversible and as modest in scope as is possible and prudent.

### *Overview*

The Exchange Building is a monumental Greek Revival style building located at 15 West Bank Street in Petersburg, Virginia and is one of only two National Historic Landmark buildings in Petersburg (Battersea being the other). The City of Petersburg has owned the building since 1927 and used it as the police station until the 1970's when it was renovated and converted into The Siege Museum, a museum focused on telling the story of life in the city during the nine-month Siege of Petersburg in the American Civil War. Our interviews with employees who worked for the Petersburg police force from the 1940's through the 1970's revealed that virtually no significant maintenance or repair work was undertaken on the building, its systems, or structure during their occupation of the building prior to the 1970's museum conversion. The 1974 museum project was a complete overhaul of the building's systems and finishes throughout approximately 90 percent of the building. It was occupied as the Siege Museum until being recently closed to the public due to significant structural and mechanical/environmental issues resulting from the deferred maintenance and upkeep as a result of the city's long-running financial distress. Fractured trusses supporting the dome, roof leaks, rotting wood and ground water issues have been evident for years and are creating an ongoing threat to the historic fabric of this National Landmark structure. Ultimately, in 2016, the city closed all of the city museums and museum properties due to a lack of management and operational funds. Shortly thereafter, a group of concerned citizens organized the Petersburg Preservation Task Force to provide volunteer support for re-opening the museums on a limited basis. They have been providing visitor center and limited museum operations at the Exchange Building since that time.



## VI. CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT - cont'd

The primary focus of preservation, for the Exchange Building, is the remediation of a variety of water and moisture issues that are currently causing extensive damage to historic fabric throughout the building. These recommendations in this report include the scope of work that is to be undertaken with funding from the 2019 Save America's Treasures grant awarded to Historic Petersburg Foundation and represent the building's most urgent stabilization issues. We have assembled all of the recommendations in this section of the report and prioritized them in context with cost estimates where possible. Proposed interventions and treatments will be broken out into those of short- and long-term significance, based on their importance within the maintenance and interpretive goals laid out in the Strategic Vision (found later in this report) and understanding the current scope of stabilization work defined in the Save America's Treasures grant — short-term recommendations addressing issues of immediate concern regarding ongoing damage to historic fabric and outlined in the Save America's Treasures grant scope, and long-term recommendations placed in the context of the Strategic Vision for the building's restoration and continued public use.

The ongoing "project" that is the Exchange Building should be undertaken as a public/private partnership (The Partnership) between the City of Petersburg, the citizens of Petersburg, and Historic Petersburg Foundation with the support of the volunteer efforts of the Petersburg Preservation Task Force. Ultimately this is a City owned public building and as such, the city holds the primary responsibility for seeing that this National treasure is preserved and well cared-for in perpetuity. This public/private partnership, as a public working group should:

1. Provide the Exchange Building with the greatest public access possible commensurate with the conservation of the building fabric and contents using current architectural and material conservation standards. This would include an improved standard of interpretive programming offering increased clarity concerning the appearance and use of the property over time. The importance of the Exchange Building is not limited to its original intended use as a market exchange, but is defined by the ways the Exchange Building has contributed to the development of Petersburg's downtown commercial district, ultimately evolving into a public amenity and architectural landmark in Downtown.
2. Ensure that the building's structure, envelope, and systems are maintained over time so that the building and contents are not subject to damage. In addition, wherever possible, the needs of the contents should be balanced against the care of the building. Solutions to questions regarding interpretive issues should take the unique requirements of the building into consideration.
3. The building and site should be made as safe and accessible as possible without compromise to its historic character. Excavation should always be accompanied by archaeological supervision.
4. Correction of structural and functional problems should be addressed within the context of a prioritized schedule. Minor repairs and adjustments of the structural and building systems should be made more promptly than projects that adjust interpretive goals or correct non-threatening architectural anomalies.

The conditions of the Exchange Building suggest several actions, each requiring capital outlay. Some of the recommendations involve repairing or restoring some elements, while others may require the undoing of past repairs in favor of more secure or less intrusive interventions. All alterations should meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and be approved by the Virginia Department of Historic Resources/NPS where Save America's Treasures funding have been used. The main issues effecting the building's condition are a result of (1) modifications made to the building over its history as its use has changed and (2) the lack of maintenance and appropriate upkeep over almost a century of City ownership — originally starting with the city's purchase of the building in 1927 for use as the Police Headquarters, and interrupted only once with the museum conversion in the 1970's, followed by another forty-plus years with little to no significant maintenance. The following is a summary overview of current conditions and proposed recommendations.

## VI. CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT - cont'd

### *Building Condition — General*

Currently the building is being used as a part-time visitor center for the city with one second floor office being use for a part time Tourism Director. The Petersburg Preservation Task Force is working on the removal of the 1974 Siege Museum exhibits and making preparations for the installation of new temporary exhibits on the building's first floor. Once construction work is defined, then work will be carefully coordinated with these public uses allowing for limited closed or down-time for operations when public safety issues are a priority.

The building's general condition appears to be good in the areas currently occupied and those areas most recently occupied with a range of minor problems in these areas being tended by the City and the Petersburg Preservation Task Force who provide just barely enough maintenance to allow limited areas in the building to remain open to the public. Unoccupied areas, throughout the building, used for mechanical systems or storage, have suffered from extended neglect and a lack of basic maintenance and upkeep for decades. It is in these areas where water damage is greatest and the imposition of mechanical systems has been handled in a most insensitive manner, destroying and damaging important historic fabric to make space for piping, ductwork, and fan coils.

The following assessment and associated recommendations are not intended to represent the work required for the full "restoration" of the building but are, focused on an approach to stabilization and the remediation of conditions that are causing continued deterioration to the structure and historic fabric of the building. An overview "big-picture" recommendations, in the context of a Strategic Vision for the building's preservation and future use will be provided later in this report.



*1968 HABS photo of the interior of the dome.*

## VI. CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT - cont'd



*View of the current Ground Floor exhibits and visitor center space.*



*Views of the Rotunda — exhibits have now been removed.*



*Interior spaces that have not been used or maintained.*





## VI. CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT - cont'd



*Water issues and deferred maintenance are causing deterioration of historic fabric.*



*Current view of the dome and cupola from the central Rotunda space.*

## VI. CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT - cont'd

### *Water Infiltration*

#### **SITE DRAINAGE**

The most critical problem facing the building is from the variety of ways water is infiltrating the building envelope causing damage to both exterior and interior finishes and the deterioration of historic building fabric. The most severe damage is being done by a combination of surface and sub-surface water draining from the site around the building. These problems were most likely created by the paving of the rear portion of the Exchange Building lot and the layered building-up of the alley paving around the building during its 1970's renovation. Before this, portions of the side alleys had been paved with concrete, most likely during the city's occupation. Before this time, their surface would have consisted of a combination of unpaved areas and cobbles or Belgian block set in sand and would have provided a pervious surface to absorbing much of the water before it became a large volume of concentrated runoff heading toward the building. In addition, today, the severity and frequency of storms due to climate change has increased the volume of water trying to get into the ground behind the building exacerbating these drainage problems and causing the building's basement to remain wet at all times.



*Views of the active water infiltration in the basement from ground water along the rear wall/parking lot. Standing water collects in low spots and fills up the Mechanical Room (two images below) when the sump pump is not working. The plastic on the ground in the basement helps with vapor but is installed over a build up of dirt that has accumulated on top of the original brick floor.*



*Basement moisture has caused spalling of structural concrete exposing and causing the deterioration of reinforcing steel.*



*Ground water at the building's northeast corner has kept the walls wet and caused the deterioration of original plaster and masonry.*



## VI. CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT - cont'd

### PAVING

Over the years, the alleys have been paved many times, and the grade around the building has been raised causing water to flow towards the building and find its way into the basement, saturating the basement walls that remain constantly wet. At some point in the past, the city installed a surface site drain in the alley to the northeast of the building but although seemingly well positioned, the configuration of this drain is either not able to accommodate the flow pattern or quantity of water it currently receives and is therefore unable to mitigate the amount or speed of surface runoff from the paved parking area and the alleys.



*West alley views from back to front showing brick damage from water splashing on the pavement at the building wall as well as how paving, over time, has raised the alley surface up higher than the downspout outlet.*



*(left) Site drain behind the building in the east alley is insufficient to manage the amount of water draining from all of the paved areas around and behind the building. (right)*



*Views of the lowered curb at the southeast corner of the site (left) and showing the build up of paving along the east side alley curb allowing large amounts of water to flow over the curb towards the building. (right)*



## VI. CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT - cont'd

### RECOMMENDATIONS: Water Infiltration

- 1) A new site drainage system should be installed to capture surface runoff and pipe it to the City's storm water system. This may consist of a French drain but other long term alternatives should be explored in planning for the reconfiguration of the parking area as a whole. It should be understood that simply trying to grade a slope away from the building may not be sufficient to manage the ground water effecting the building in such a tight urban condition with mostly paved surfaces.
- 2) All asphalt and concrete paving in both alley's and behind the building in the parking lot should be removed, the lot regraded with retaining walls installed as needed to reduce surface slope. New pervious paving should be installed as part of the design of a new rear entrance area to the museum providing limited but adequate service access to the adjacent buildings and limited through block alley access for service. The east alley might be closed to through vehicular traffic with service needs and access carefully negotiated with building and business owners along the alley. The new design for the parking area can also look at ways to manage trash so the alleys can be kept clear and presentable. New alley and sidewalk surfaces should be redesigned based on evidence and documentation from the HSR. [long term]
- 3) All downspouts, on both the east and the west alleys, should be piped to the city's storm water system at Bank Street.
- 4) Sump pumps in the basement should be used as an emergency measure knowing that it may not be possible to eliminate all underground water migration. Once a sufficient site drainage system is in place then interior moisture can be monitored and measured to determine if additional measures should be taken within the building's footprint to manage water and moisture.
- 5) If external measures cannot eliminate damaging water and moisture infiltration into the basement, an interior drain system should be considered. Its design and installation should carefully consider the impact it will have on any historic fabric including basement flooring or archaeology. [long term]

## VI. CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT - cont'd

### BASEMENT BULKHEADS

Originally two rear bulkhead basement entries existed. Only one remains today (on the northeast side of the rear wall) but its above ground structure is not original and has deteriorated to the point of allowing water infiltration into the basement along the entire northeast rear wall. This portion of the rear wall is also the point where the majority of the parking lot's surface water ends up and gets trapped by the inside corner created when the elevator tower addition was added during the conversion to the Siege Museum. Again, this may not have been a significant problem at that time, but the increased frequency and intensity of rain events coupled with continued repaving and raising of the grade around the building over the years, has exacerbated this issue which must be addressed to protect the historic fabric and structure of the building.

The bulkhead entrance on the northwest side of the building, which existed during the HABS survey of the building in the 1960's was removed when the new Siege Museum entrance was created at the rear of the building. Some water infiltration in the basement at this location is seen regularly and is partly the result of roof water from the elevator addition not being directed away from the building properly.



*Views showing original basement bulkhead entrance locations. (left) east side rear - the current bulkhead appears to have had its side walls partially poured with concrete at some point with the addition of steel doors. This location is a major source of water infiltration into the basement. (right) west side rear - the original basement entry was covered over when the building was renovated to be the Siege Museum and although it is not visible on the exterior, on the interior, surface and/or ground water continues to enter at this location.*

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) All bulkhead access ways and service access openings to the basement should be made water-tight until final determination is made in the context of the building's future restoration. Coordinate this work with new paving and drainage work in the alleys.
- 2) The west bulkhead should be completely replaced with a period appropriate bulkhead but designed to prevent water infiltration. The mechanical louvers should be relocated to a less visible location and the historic window restored. The east bulkhead should be restored in coordination with the reconstruction of the Rear Portico and new rear entry configuration. [long term]

## VI. CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT - cont'd

### COAL CHUTES, GRATES

There are three locations along the east and west sides of the building where there were once openings from the sidewalk or alley into the basement both for access and delivery of coal. All three of these side openings into the basement are partially bricked or closed up but these interior closures are deteriorated or were originally just "quick fixes" to keep water/air out of the basement. At these side alley locations the water is entering the basement at these openings from a combination of increased surface water running down the alley as well as water dripping from open seams in the gutter system at the roof line. The splashing of dripping roof water keeps this portion of the exterior wall damp and joins forces with the excess surface water flow in the alley to keep these foundation walls and adjacent basement areas wet or damp at all times. Water flow from the east side alley often comes into the basement at such a rate that it flows across the basement floor and pools in low spots as far away as the center bay of the building.



*Coal chute (left), and surface grate (right) along the east alley side. A similar grated opening into the basement exists on the west alley side but has been filled in and paved over. With water flowing over the now low profile curb condition in the east alley, these openings are allowing a considerable amount of water into the basement which is migrating all the way to the center of the building*



*Interior Basement views of the bricked up, grated opening on the east alley where a considerable amount of water is coming into the basement.*



## VI. CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT - cont'd



*(left) view of the west alley opening infill showing that the window sash may have been installed to allow light into the basement near the stair location.  
(right) Basement view looking down center bay showing how water from the east alley grated opening has migrated (dark areas on floor) all the way to the center of the building*

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) The two grated openings should be made water-tight at the sidewalk/alley level and the interior opening conditions should be stabilized to prevent water infiltration. Further investigation of the existing conditions may help determine an appropriate way to close the openings with properly sealed covers coordinated with restored curbing, stone, and brick work.
- 2) The existing coal chute should be sealed but left in place until a later assessment of the basement boiler room and its final configuration in the building's restoration. Leaving some remnants of the coal heating system in place for interpretation might be recommended after further research and planning.
- 3) On the interior of the Basement walls the brick infill areas should be removed along with the wooden sashes and frames. The wells should be restored and fully visible on the inside.
- 4) Further research should help determine the final configuration of the openings in the context of the building's restoration and interpretation. [long term]

## VI. CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT - cont'd

### GUTTERS

The guttering system around the building has not been maintained for years. At many locations, the continual dripping from open seams or joints is splashing at grade, keeping the foundation walls damp or wet for long periods of time. Due to the building's location, being surrounded on its east and west sides by alleys and other buildings, three sides of the building (one being the north side) do not get full sunlight for extended periods of the day and therefore, once wet, these walls have a tendency to stay damp for causing interior and exterior paint and plaster problems as well as more damaging spawling of the brick surfaces due to freeze/thaw cycles.

At the rear elevator addition, installed when the building was converted to the Siege Museum, no guttering system was installed on either the upper roofs or the entry canopy roof. All of the water is just falling at the rear of the building and splashing up onto the walls before going into the ground at the building's north basement walls.



*Views of existing gutters and poorly planned downspouts with leaking elbows and joints causing mortar and brick damage.*

## VI. CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT - cont'd



*Masonry damage from walls staying moist due to water dripping from leaks in the gutter system above and splashing on the concrete walk at grade.*

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) All gutters and downspouts should be removed and replaced. Roofing demolition will reveal if the short slope along the edges of the building roof have covered up original built-in gutters. If so, then the original built-in gutters will be restored allowing for the downspouts to drop from the soffit with no elbows. If no evidence of original built-in gutters is found, then a new system of half-round gutters and resized downspouts will be installed taking care to minimize joints and elbows to connect with new cast iron boots at grade.
- 2) New cast iron boots at all downspout locations will be tied into a new subsurface drainage system which drains directly into the city storm sewer at West Bank Street and designed as part of the site drainage design for the rear and side alleys of the building.
- 3) Future design for the alley surfacing should allow for diffusion of splashing water from elevated protruding surfaces like the cornice, window sills, and belt course.  
[long term]



## VI. CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT - cont'd

### EXTERIOR WALLS - EXTERIOR FACE

The building's exterior walls and finishes have suffered from a combination of water problems (as noted previously under Water Infiltration) and deferred maintenance related to wood trim, brick repointing and painting, and window repair. The current condition of the exterior walls reflects this lack of maintenance primarily within 4-6' of grade around the building, and at the cornice line around the building where rotted and deteriorated wood needs to be replaced along with a wholesale cleaning, re-securing and painting of the cornice, frieze and all associated trim. During its renovation in the 1970's the exterior brick appears to have been sandblasted prior to repainting.

- Note that to identify original paint and mortar throughout the building, both historic paint and mortar analysis should be provided. Final determinations for the use of mortar and paint in the field cannot be made until the findings of these reports are available.



*Water damage at exterior walls from splashing and damaged/rotted window sills and jamb members allowing water to get inside of the masonry walls and keep areas wet.*



*Views of cornice and frieze areas showing deferred maintenance and need for repair along with broken window panes.*

## VI. CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT - cont'd

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) Using recommendations from the historic mortar analysis, repair and repointing of all water damaged masonry on the lower portion of the exterior walls should be done with careful consideration for the protection and retention of original brick. Areas of the wall that are currently painted should not be repainted after repointing. Final exterior paint choices should be made following the recommendations of an exterior paint analysis.
- 2) In coordination with roofing work, make in-kind replacements for all damaged or rotted wood members in the cornice and frieze and repaint based on the HSR/paint analysis recommendations.
- 3) Existing soffit vents are to be removed and the soffits repaired at these locations. (note that new roof top vents should be specified to replace the inadequate soffit vents).



*View of Front Portico detail.*



## VI. CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT - cont'd

### EXTERIOR WALLS - INTERIOR FACE

The interior finishes on the building's exterior walls suffer from water and moisture damage from two sources: 1) rising damp from the ground water issues referenced in the previous Water Infiltration section of this report, and 2) water infiltration at window locations where deferred maintenance has allowed the migration of moisture into the masonry walls effecting the interior plaster around these areas.



*Views of interior plaster damage due to water infiltration (Left) along the west alley below the two story rotunda window and (Right) at the rear Ground Floor wall in the northeast mechanical room.*



*Interior views of plaster damage from sustained wall dampness.*

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) Interior finish stabilization should be done only after all work to remediate moisture infiltration is completed. All damaged plaster and rotted wood trim should be fully documented before removal down to sound substrate. Remove no more plaster than is absolutely necessary for future installation of new finish plaster system. Stabilize the surface of any exposed base or brown coat with a consolidate that will prevent surface damage and allow for future finishes to be applied.
- 2) In areas around windows in finished/occupied locations, plaster should be repaired and the areas repainted.



## VI. CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT - cont'd

### WINDOWS and DOORS

Windows throughout the building are in a general state of deterioration. Limited repairs have been made to the sashes over the last 20 years but little work has been done to restore damaged or rotted frames, sills, and stools. Several glass panes are loose or missing and muntin repair is needed throughout most of the original sashes. Newer sashes that were fabricated and installed, in the most recent round of repairs, were made from soft pine which is already showing signs of water damage from lack of maintenance and proper painting and glazing. The range of damage to window sashes has contributed to a variety of water infiltration problems causing damage to interior finishes around the windows - primarily interior plaster damage. Rather than make proper repairs, the sashes in the roof cupola were covered with plywood to protect them until they could be restored. Some of the plywood panels have been removed allowing light into the dome but now, with these panels off, the damage to the sashes and frames may cause damage to the interior dome finishes and must be addressed before any additional damage occurs.

All exterior doors, other than the Front Portico door were replaced during the 1970's museum conversion and these replacements may not have been taking the place of original doors, even at that time. On the north side, two historic windows were converted to doors and another infilled with mechanical louvers. All Ground Floor Exterior doors and frames are suffering considerable rot from a combination of splashing water at grade and being fabricated from lesser quality wood that could not hold up to the deferred maintenance noted in the introduction to this section. All of the openings along both alleys (now with infills of brick and double windows or window and door combinations) were referenced as "Venetian doors" in the Carpenters Specifications and would probably have been single doors in the center with sidelights. Although we do not know the original configuration of these doorways, the detailing of the granite thresholds support this theory. This configuration may have existed until the city's occupation of the building as the Police Headquarters in 1927 as security issues on the Ground Floor would have become paramount at that time.



*Typical exterior window views showing glazing that is falling out, broken panes and damaged sashes and sills.*

## VI. CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT - cont'd



*View of an original alley opening with a door and sidelight infill. Note the granite sill shows evidence of an earlier centered door.*



*Most of the original alley openings have been filled in with 20th c. windows with brick sills.*



*View down the east alley side (west is similar) showing original openings infilled with double windows and brick.*



## VI. CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT - cont'd



*Image of condition of tall arched windows (left), Historic window infilled with door (center), Historic window infilled with louvers (right)*

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) All window sashes are to be removed and repaired/restored in the shop including the replacement of any rotted or damaged materials and the resetting and glazing of existing glass panes. Any replacement glass must be reviewed next to original glass to determine the appropriate "wavy" value Blendheim glass to use for replacement. Modern flat glass should be identified for replacement with a more historically appropriate Blendheim glass. Damaged or rotted areas of sash frames should be repaired with a sandable and shapable wood epoxy and prime and painted per the recommendations of the historic paint analysis report.
- 2) All frames are to be assessed for rot and damage and members repaired in situ where possible with wood epoxy and consolidant prior to the reinstallation of restored sashes. Note that final paint color will be determined after future paint analysis is undertaken.



## VI. CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT - cont'd

### ROOF

The historic building's current roof is a painted terne metal roof with galvanized gutters and downspouts. The original carpenter's contract for the building states that the original roof was to be painted tin, or terne, so the look of the current roof is most likely in keeping with the original roof's appearance. The roof is in fair condition but in many locations is worn thin and leaks have been patched over the years. Of particular note, the dome roofing appears, to possibly, be original to the building, using a short pan tapered construction, where the majority of the main roof is a later installation using long pan soldered construction which has significant oil canning in many areas. At some point, likely when the City purchased the building and converted it to the Police station in 1923, or later in the 20th c., the original terne (or lead-coated) roof was replaced and original built-in gutters possibly covered up and roofed over creating a slope change around the perimeter of the main roof and allowing for the installation of exterior half-round gutters and hangers. Downspouts, which would have originally just dropped straight down from the soffit, now twist around at the building corners with multiple elbows and turns in an attempt to reach the boot at grade or just an at-grade outlet. The addition of multiple pieces, elbows, and joints in the downspout system is a contributor to water problems in and around the four main corners of the building. (see previous Gutters and Downspouts section of this report).



*Views showing general condition of the roof. Dome panels appear to be original but other larger roof areas have been replaced with continuous panels that lack the ability to adequately deal with thermal expansion and therefore show considerable oil canning which contributes to the deterioration of surface coatings. As the roof was always a tin roof with copper gutters, a new painted copper roof will provide the best quality replacement with the look and fabrication of the original roof.*



## VI. CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT - cont'd



*Details of surface conditions on existing roof.*

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) The dome roofing should be considered for restoration rather than replacement since it is a primary character defining element of the building and its roof and the tapered short panel roofing may be original to the building's construction. This portion of the roof should be evaluated with historic roofing professionals during stabilization work to determine the best approach to restoration and if that is not feasible, to matching its construction, in-kind, if replaced.
- 2) The existing metal roofing should be removed and replaced with a new copper roof painted to match the original color (note that an attempt will be made to find the original roof color when paint analysis is undertaken). All decking will be inspected for deterioration and replaced in-kind and new step flashing and crickets will be installed at all penetrations and access hatch curbs.\*
- 3) Existing external gutters and downspouts will be removed and original internal gutters and downspouts will be restored as fully soldered copper with painted straight downspouts leading to new boot locations tied in to the city storm drains. If at-grade splash is required on the west side of the building as an intermediate solution, then surface drainage in the alley must be assessed to insure proper flow away from the building. A new gutter and downspout system should be installed at the modern elevator addition at the rear.
- 4) Two new roof hatches should be installed allowing easier access to the roof for maintenance purposes
- 5) Thermostatically controlled roof fan/vents should be installed, at non-visible locations, to exhaust hot air from the attic.
- 6) The lantern structure should be carefully restored with the replacement of all rotted/damaged wood structure and trim.

*\* It should be noted thatterne roofing is no longer available since Folangsbee, the last manufacturer of this product, stopped making it almost ten years ago. Most of the terne metal roofing that was made in the last few decades of its manufacture was made to a different temper than the original tin roofing and seams and pan forming, although soldered and similar, tend to look slightly different from original roof fabrications. This is a key supporting reason for attempting to rescue the dome roofing if at all possible.*

## VI. CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT - cont'd

### *Interior*

#### STRUCTURE

A complete structural assessment was conducted by Engineering Design Associates in 2013. Other than the limited demolition of flooring on the Second Floor to assess floor deflection issues, since that time, no additional testing or remediation work has been attempted on the building. StudioAmmons conducted a visual inspection of the building, at the time of this report, to assess the structural concerns noted in the 2013 report and to identify any new structural issues that have occurred since that report and determine appropriate recommendations for remediation/repairs. No additional concerns were found to add to the 2013 report other than the continued deterioration of walls and wood due to moisture infiltration throughout the building. The concerns reflected in the 2013 report are summarized as follows:

##### Basement

- A range of temporary supporting conditions exist as interim repairs for rotting Ground Floor joists at their bearing in the exterior masonry walls due to moisture in the walls.
- The primary building foundation structure including brick and stone exterior foundation walls and the two center brick arched walls are in generally good condition.
- Footings were placed at four steel columns installed to shore up four of the dome's supporting columns. No attempt to "right" the deflection was made at the time, therefore, the deflection visible on the interior is not a sign of continued movement, just fixed as it existed when the new support posts were installed.



*Basement views showing temporary 4x4 supports (left) and powdering mortar from both the stone and brick wall areas (right).*

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) Careful repointing of unsound mortar at all basement walls and supports.
- 2) Repair all deteriorated joist bearing conditions.
- 3) Repair existing structure in order to remove temporary shoring.
- 4) Eliminate water and moisture in the basement (see previous section on water infiltration).



## VI. CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT - cont'd

### Ground Floor Framing (First Floor framing in the 2013 report)

- Some ground floor joists have deteriorated at the bearing locations.
- The areas of concrete floor, installed in the 1970's renovation, are not failing but show signs of spawling concrete on the underside exposing steel reinforcing which is deteriorating due to the continued moisture and standing water present in the basement.
- The supporting structure added to shore up the dome appears to be fine and no further dropping or deflection is evident.
- Some deflection can be seen around the stair openings between the Ground Floor and the Basement, most likely due to the aforementioned deteriorated bearing conditions at the exterior and interior masonry bearing walls.



*Deteriorated joist bearings (left), spalling concrete and rusting supporting steel beam (right).*

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) Repair all deteriorated joist bearing conditions.
- 2) Repair stair framing along with joist repair to provide sound and stable opening.
- 3) Repair and patch areas of spawling concrete ceiling throughout. See recommendations for eliminating moisture and standing water.
- 4) Provide full termite treatment (boracare) in and around the building. Insure that this is continued as part of long term maintenance for the building.

## VI. CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT - cont'd

### First Floor Framing (Main Floor in the 2013 report)

The 2013 report notes that some First Floor framing is under designed for the load that is placed on them (carrying some of the dome weight). Although the engineers report recommends adding new steel beams under the existing floor joists, they do not note any actual problems in this area, just that the joists are under designed. This condition should be reviewed again by an engineering firm that specializes in historic materials to determine the best and most sensitive way to reinforce the floor framing, if in fact this is necessary. Some of the concern over visible deflection might have resulted from localized loads placed on the floor caused by the exhibit installations in the 1970's renovation which included industrial equipment and large cast iron pieces. Some of the added basement supports relate to these installations in a few locations.

Although the 2013 study noted that full access to the new bearing locations where inserted steel columns now support the original 8x8 dome columns was not possible at that time, verifying these conditions should be a priority for future restoration efforts.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) Further examination of the weight-bearing capacity of the existing structural members should be analyzed to determine, not if they meet "modern standards" but to determine if they are sufficiently designed for current and future loading scenarios. A more specific look at wood species and cut will help this evaluation and prevent generalizations based on the properties of modern construction lumber and its grading. Any recommended repairs or "stiffening" measures should be undertaken with care so as not to negatively impact the existing historic fabric or the potential for the restoration of original character defining spaces within the building.

### Second Floor Framing (Main Floor in the 2013 report)

The damage and failure of floor framing in the southeast corner of the building is documented in the 2013 report and notes that a significant amount of flooring and First Floor ceiling plaster will need to be removed in order to make the repairs. The floor in this room has been sagging for years as evidenced by the floor dropping away from the baseboard along the curved wall that separates the southeast room from the mezzanine walkway. In addition to the engineer's evaluation, we feel that water is also playing a role in the deterioration of 1) joist bearing conditions at the southeast exterior wall, and 2) condensation from HVAC units concealed in the wall along this portion of the curved walkway have kept conditions wet and have possibly contributed to rot or deterioration in concealed wall and floor areas. Investigative work was undertaken in these areas, we assume for the engineering report, but the work was not careful and not easily repairable to its previous appearance.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) The removal of existing flooring and plaster ceiling should be kept to a minimum as the full extent of the joist/girder failure is assessed. No removal of historic materials should be authorized without the review and approval of the project's historic architect and the Virginia Department of Historic Resources.
- 2) Although column settling has occurred in the past, They appear to have been stabilized by the installation of the four steel posts under the columns that had dropped. We recommend the ongoing monitoring of the column elevations for the life of the building.

## VI. CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT - cont'd



*Images of investigative demolition at the southeast room on the Second Floor (left) and mechanical equipment inside corridor walls (right).*

### Dome Framing

Over the years there have been many repairs and alterations to the roof/dome framing due to the failure of individual framing members and the installation of mechanical systems which make access to much of the structure difficult.

The 2013 report notes that the main trusses supporting the location where the dome framing meets the roof framing is in "fair condition" with some cracking/splitting in truss members.

Some rot and deflection of under designed framing members is evident and there is at least one location where the primary dome framing is only bearing on about 2" of the 8x8 column intended to support it.

Although the engineer's report recommends the complete replacement of the cupola, we feel the cupola structure can be restored and every effort should be made to preserve its original historic fabric including all re-usable components of the windows and framing.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) Repairs to the dome framing should follow the recommendations from the structural engineer's report. Although there does not appear to be a warning of any imminent danger from the visible damage (the steel columns installed under the four 8x8's probably stopped the movement causing much of the damage) these issues should be remedied as soon as possible with accessible repairs made first. If the roof repair/replacement precedes planning for the full structural scope of work, then money should be allocated, during the roofing tear-off, for further investigation and access for repairs to these conditions, particularly the primary truss members.
- 2) Sufficient bearing at the column mentioned should be restored, or established, following the recommendations from the structural engineer.
- 3) The cupola should be repaired and restored saving as much original material as possible. Any new material should match the existing in-kind. This work should be coordinated with the roof repair/replacement. Note, this cupola recommendation is included in this section due to it being part of the scope of the 2013 structural engineering report.



## VI. CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT - cont'd

### INTERIOR FINISHES

The condition of interior finishes varies from fairly well maintained, in occupied areas of the building open to the public, to very poor, in areas that either have not been occupied as part of the public museum programming or that were never fully renovated during the 1970's museum conversion. We know from interviews with former Petersburg Police officers that during the Police's tenure in the building, there was little to no building maintenance and the building was in a state of severe deterioration in 1967 when the city moved the Police out and began planning for the museum renovations.

#### Basement

The basement finishes are composed of primarily the unfinished masonry (stone or brick) walls of the exterior foundation and supporting central arched walls. Although the original bulkhead entrances and vent location are still present, no original architectural finishes still exist at these locations other than the masonry openings itself and in some cases, wood frame and window sash infills that area severely deteriorated.

The basement has a brick floor that is covered by 2-3 inches of dirt in most locations and was most likely destroyed in the northeast quadrant of the building when systems were upgraded. The Boiler Room often floods and has standing water for long periods of time causing most of the wood framing in the room to deteriorate and rot. In the 1970's renovation a new Mechanical/boiler Room and Stair was located above this area and the original Ground Floor floor system removed and replaced with a poured concrete floor.

The two stairs down from the Ground Floor show significant signs of deterioration and rot due to the ground staying wet where the stringers land at grade.



*Basement views showing stairs from Ground Floor and brick piers deteriorating at their base.*

## VI. CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT - cont'd



*Basement views - original brick floor revealed at filled in northwest bulkhead (left), view toward northwest bulkhead entry, beyond, now filled in (right)*



*View of the entrance to the boiler room in the northeast corner of the Basement (left), and view of mold on Ground Floor joists and subfloor (right).*

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) Moisture remediation - see previous recommendations in this report.
- 2) Thorough cleaning of all basement surfaces to remove the presence of mold and mildew.
- 3) Cleaning and repointing of all masonry using mild detergents and mortar based on mortar analysis.
- 4) After thorough investigation, restore brick floor being careful to allow original brick to remain in situ where possible. Assess the viability of documenting and carefully removing existing brick to install a vapor barrier prior to planning for reinstallation.
- 5) Restore bulkhead and vent areas.
- 6) Once basement is dried out, remove poured concrete stair landings and repair stair to land properly at the floor level.
- 7) Remove all modern, extraneous wiring, conduit, and piping not determined to be historically significant and nor currently being used.
- 8) Plan for the re-routing of all HVAC runs, ducts, sprinkler piping, etc. as part of a full, future restoration.

## VI. CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT - cont'd

### Ground Floor

About 2/3 of the Ground Floor is, and has been continuously occupied as a visitor center and exhibit space along with supporting toilet and stair spaces. The toilets and stair were installed in the 1970's renovation and have modern finishes mixed with original plaster, windows and trim visible at the exterior walls. Moisture issues area evidenced by spawling plaster and wood rot around windows.

The visitor center and exhibit spaces are conditioned with modern, office style, finishes including new drywall, lay-in acoustic tile ceilings, and down-lighting, all in visibly good condition.

Three areas on the Ground Floor contain early, if not original finishes, the current Mechanical Room, the rooms under the Front Portico, and the rooms along the southwest alley side of the building. These areas appear to have never been significantly updated during the city's use as the Police Headquarters or as the Siege Museum except for the installation of new mechanical systems. With further investigation, these areas may provide the best opportunity for understanding the building's early finishes and Ground Floor use.



*Ground Floor views showing current visitor lobby (left) and central corridor (right)*



*Ground Floor views showing modern bathrooms inserted in the building during the 1970's renovations*



## VI. CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT - cont'd



*Unimproved areas on the Ground Floor where early or original finishes still exist.*

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) Recommendations for this floor will depend heavily on the approach that is taken to renovation v. restoration once the program is determined for the building. Using the evidence that may be found in the southwest rooms, the Ground Floor could be restored to a configuration that would be very close to its original plan (or a very early version of it).
- 2) Once water mitigation is complete, all areas with early finishes should have the finishes stabilized and secured to prevent further deterioration. Extensive investigation should be undertaken on these areas using paint analysis and in-depth study of the layout and residual trace evidence on framing members.
- 3) The currently utilized areas with modern finishes just need regular maintenance as a preventative measure. HVAC systems should be kept on at all times throughout these areas to prevent the build up of moisture or severe temperature changes in concealed spaces.
- 3) Historic finishes damaged by moisture infiltration should be restored, in-kind, using traditional methods and materials where possible.

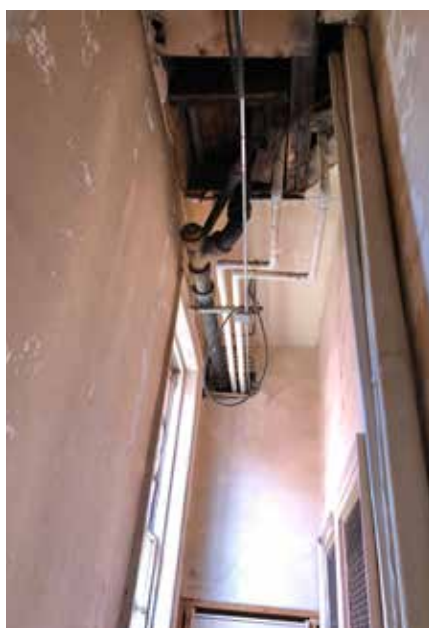
## VI. CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT - cont'd

### First Floor

The majority of First Floor spaces were fully renovated in the 1970's museum conversion with the exception of a small back hallway on the west side of the building where early finishes (pre-Petersburg Police Headquarters) still exist. Wall, floor and ceiling finishes, throughout the museum areas are in good shape with some localized water damage visible—a combination of the exterior envelope issues discussed previously in this assessment and condensation from HVAC ducts and units hidden within the curved walls surrounding the central Rotunda space. Some floor settlement is evident but floors appear to be sound and movement has been stabilized by the insertion of steel columns to support four of the original dome support columns.

During the 1970's renovation a new CMU stair tower was inserted in the northeast corner of the building along with some reconfiguration of the plan in the north center of the building to create small toilet rooms a janitor's closet, and a corridor passage to a modern elevator tower added to the center of the north (rear) side of the building. The rooms at the northwest corner of the building have been used as office/storage areas with finishes remaining from renovations in the 1970's and '80's for use as the city tourism offices and museum storage.

At the time of this report, the exhibits from the 1970's museum renovation have recently been removed and temporary exhibits have been installed in main Rotunda space. No repairs have been made as exhibits have been removed. Limited areas of ceiling plaster in the southeast room have been removed to assess the structural issues identified in the 2013 structural assessment.

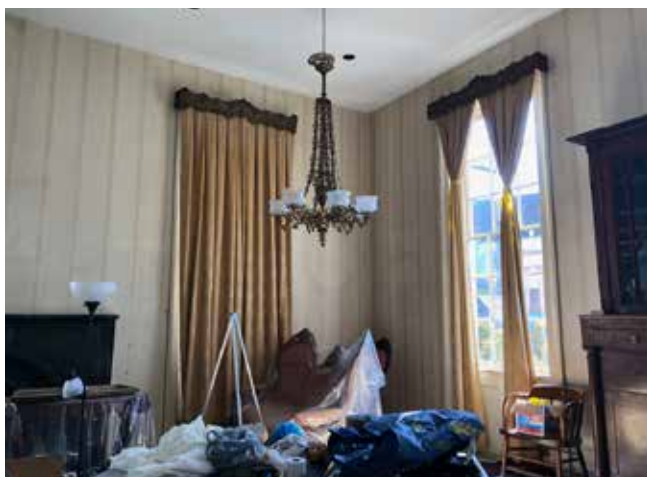


*Views of the back hallway on the west side of the building where early or original finishes still remain.*

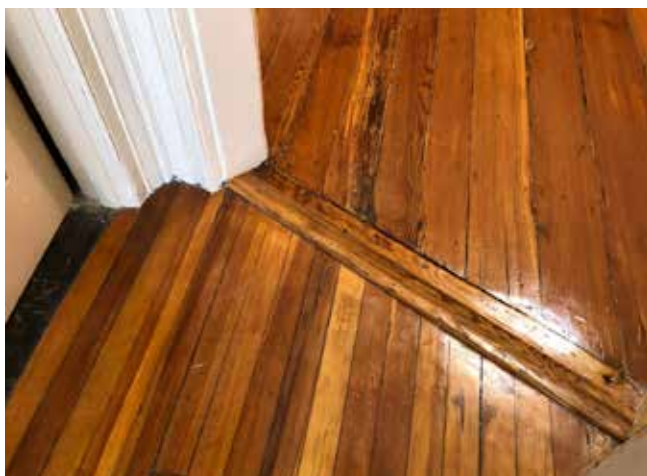
## VI. CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT - cont'd



*Views of the southwest room previously used for exhibits.*



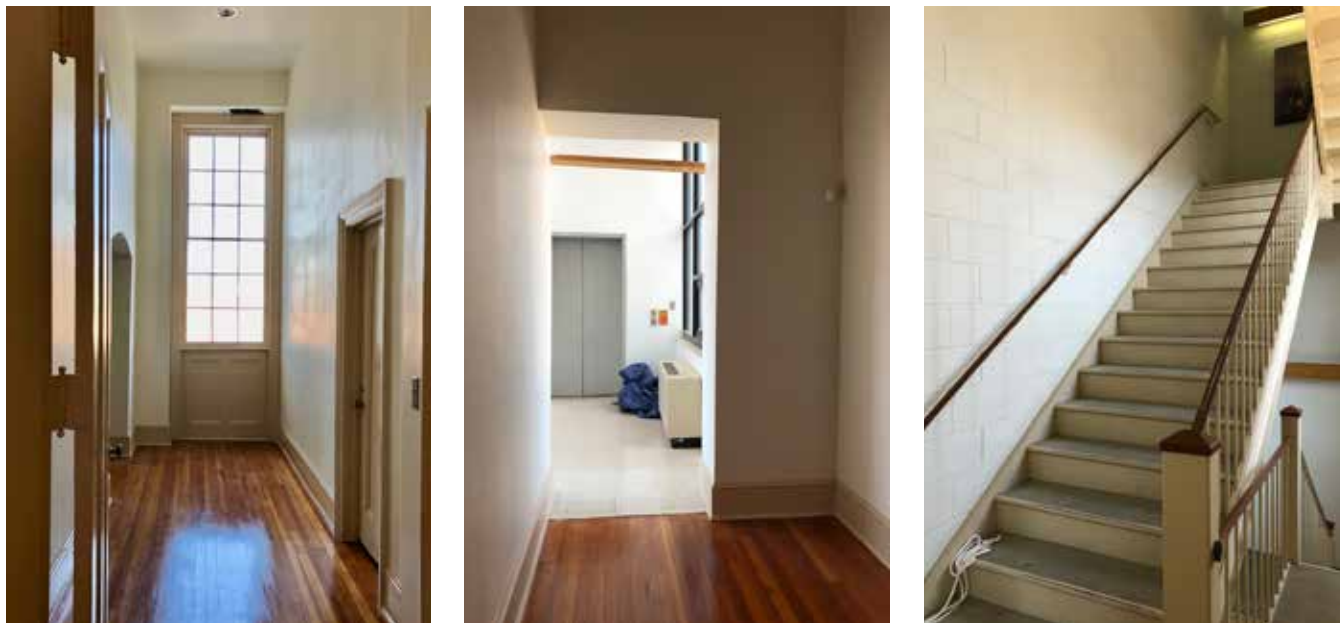
*View of the southeast room previously used for exhibits.*



*Detail of original and late 19th c. flooring between the Rotunda and back hallway (left) and view of offices in the northwest corner of the building (right).*



## VI. CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT - cont'd



*Views of hallway leading to the elevator tower (left and center) and the modern stairwell in the northeast corner of the building (right).*



*View inside the Rotunda space showing Second Floor mezzanine, arched opening that originally led to the Rear Portico, and exhibits in the process of removal.*

## VI. CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT - cont'd

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) Recommendations for this floor will depend heavily on the approach that is taken to renovation v. restoration once the program is determined for the building, particularly related to consideration of the 1970's modern intrusions into the historic building fabric such as the stair, office and mechanical areas, and toilet rooms.
- 2) Repairs to original finishes should be considered at all locations where exhibits were removed or finished damaged.
- 3) Early finishes in the west back hallway should be protected until fully for information that may be used in the restoration of other First Floor finishes.
- 3) Historic finishes damaged by moisture infiltration should be restored, in-kind using traditional methods and materials where possible.

### SECOND FLOOR (MEZZANINE)

The Second Floor consists of a circular gallery or balcony corridor overlooking the Rotunda with supporting rooms/spaces around the perimeter, all accessed from the gallery. Modern interventions on the Second Floor include the CMU stair tower in the northeast corner, the addition of a small orientation theater on the north side allowing access to the stair tower and its connecting corridor, and the installation of mechanical systems in the southwest room. The southeast room has been used as a conference and meeting space for many years while the remaining rooms on the northwest side of the building are currently used as the city's tourism director's office and storage. The Second Floor was originally accessed by a single back curved stair leading from the First Floor southwest room up to the west side of the Second Floor gallery.

Early or original finishes still remain in the Mechanical Room while all other finishes were repaired/updated in the 1970's and 80's as the city tourism department used this floor for office and conference room space. The theater was added in the 1980's and has not been updated since.



*Views of the Second Floor Gallery.*

## VI. CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT - cont'd



*Views of back stair leading from the First Floor southwest room up to the west side of the Second Floor gallery.*



*Views into the Mechanical Room showing evidence of early or original finishes in an area that has had little maintenance over the years.*



## VI. CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT - cont'd



*View from the theater (video room) out into the gallery corridor (left), and view of the theater seating and doorway to the elevator tower (right).*



*Views of moisture damage in the areas around mechanical grills and concealed ductwork around the Second Floor gallery.*



*Southeast gallery location where floor has dropped and structural framing repairs are necessary (left), and moisture damage to arched plaster gallery ceiling (right).*

## VI. CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT - cont'd



*View of the southeast meeting room (left), and tourism director's office in the northwest room (right).*

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) Water damage at walls and ceilings from mechanical systems and roof leaks should be repaired and coordinated with any new or upgraded systems.
- 2) Mechanical Room finishes should be protected until they can be fully analyzed to determine the date of the finishes and how these spaces will be used in future programming.
- 3) Prioritize structural floor repairs in the southeast room. Bring the room back to usable condition with repairs to walls and floor. Repair associated damage to baseboard and wall finishes in the gallery.



*View from the Second Floor gallery looking north to south.*

## VI. CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT - cont'd

### FRONT PORTICO

The Front Portico sits on a masonry substructure composed of two granite faced cheek walls flanking granite slab steps. The Portico floor is flagstone set within a granite perimeter and is supported by a partial brick vault supported by curved timber beams and extending full width from east to west which would have been the original ceiling for the access corridor that connected the two original entrances, on each side of the Portico base, to the central hall on the Ground Floor (a similar configuration can be seen in the ground floor plan of the Charleston Market Hall but with a center entrance since its portico steps are accessed from each side). The interior spaces, under the Portico, show signs of plaster finishing and partitioning from an early phase in the building's development if not original to its construction.



*Views of the east room below the Front Portico showing curved wood beams and vaulted brick ceiling along with the remains of plaster finishes. The CMU infill of the original east doorway can be seen in the photo on the right.*

Some settling has occurred in the steps and cheek walls causing the large granite steps to appear to have "slid out and down" opening up gaps where the horizontal and vertical surfaces of the slabs meet. It's not known whether the stone steps are set on masonry or sand. This settlement is also evident at the cheek walls where the dressed stones appear to have dropped towards the street with the concrete sidewalk poured up to the wall as it has settled. It's not known whether there is still any active settling or if the visible drop toward the street happened a long time ago and has stabilized since then. This shifting is allowing water into the cheek wall mortar joints, Portico floor joints and the joints between the granite steps causing continued shifting and settlement as well as the rotting of the wood beams holding up the vaulted floor structure below.



*Views of the Front Portico west cheek wall with probable original infill in lighter stucco (Left) and granite steps detail showing settling and shifting (Right).*



## VI. CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT - cont'd



*Views of flagstone floor and stucco on brick Doric columns showing deteriorated finishes..*



*Shifting granite facing stones (left), and cast iron newel and railing with granite patch at mounting (right).*

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) Portico floor stones should be repointed and repaired where damaged.
- 2) Portico columns should be inspected for structural soundness prior to repairing stucco fluting on columns and painting.
- 3) Granite steps should be reset, secured, and fully pointed.
- 4) Granite cheek walls should be inspected for ongoing movement and settlement and stones reset to be plumb and square. This work should be done in coordination with the restoration of the internal structural masonry below the portico and steps.
- 5) Additional investigation should be undertaken to understand the large openings that existed under each side of the portico to determine the appropriate course for restoration.
- 6) Fire department connections and utilities entering this area should be reassessed to see if they can be moved to a more discrete or less invasive location as it relates to the ultimate use of the building.

## VI. CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT - cont'd

### ELEVATOR TOWER

The elevator tower appears to have had little maintenance since its construction in the 1970's renovation. The exterior stucco finishes have cracked and water is infiltrating the walls. There is no longer a seal at grade and ground water is infiltrating the foundation. Although no visible sign of settlement is apparent, there has been no monitoring of this condition. The insulated windows, set in a bronze anodized storefront system, show signs of broken seals causing fogging and condensation build-up inside the windows reducing clarity and visibility through the glass. The roof and entrance canopy are a modern, prefinished, standing seam roof. The prefinished roof coating is peeling exposing the metal underneath.



*Exterior views of the elevator tower added in the 1980's museum conversion.*



*Interior views of the Second Floor of the elevator tower connector showing the condition of the glass and lack of integrated HVAC systems.*

## VI. CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT - cont'd

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) Until a decision is made about the scope of future restoration/renovations to the building, where the elevator tower might be removed, the elevator must remain operational and the tower and connector weather-tight.
- 2) The installation of gutters and downspouts on the tower roof will help control water and moisture infiltration at the ground.
- 3) Windows should be kept water tight until a final decision is made regarding the fate of the tower.
- 4) The elevator tower should be removed and a new elevator installed as part of a future Rear Portico addition. [Long Term]

### MECHANICAL SYSTEMS - LIFE SAFETY

The Exchange Building's mechanical systems, installed during the 1970's museum conversion, are nearing the end of their life and no longer operate efficiently while causing significant damage to the building's historic fabric due to moisture and condensation created by, and forming on, system components concealed within the building's walls, particularly the curved walls of the Rotunda. Mechanical runs are also located in the space surrounding the base of the dome with diffusers cut into the base of the dome around its perimeter. The current systems were installed without careful consideration of historic fabric assuming that the systems "mess" would be mostly hidden in the First Floor Mechanical/Electrical Room and the Second Floor Mechanical Room. Because these spaces were considered secondary, or even tertiary, finishes were never upgraded in these areas and the damage left by the installation of system components and ductwork was never repaired. Because early or original finishes in these areas were not "improved," they may be able to be used as a guide for understanding finishes in the early phases of the building's occupation. Additionally, the Ground Floor rooms located on the west alley, south quadrant of the building were used for the indiscriminate running of mechanical piping with little regard for the historic fabric it cut through. Although historic fabric was damaged by the systems install, these areas were not planned to be occupied and therefore still retain their early or original finishes. Further analysis in these areas might shed more light on the building's original Ground Floor layout and its approach to the market hall plan.

The elevator tower is served by fan-coil units that do not appear to be operating properly as a window air conditioning unit has been carefully installed for additional cooling. (see Elevator Tower photos in previous section)

Although a pump system appears to exist in the basement and a Siamese connector is visible on the east side of the Front Portico at sidewalk level, no comprehensive sprinkler system exists throughout the building. There is a fire detection and alarm system as well as a keypad security system at the building's rear (elevator tower) entry. There are fire extinguishers located at several locations inside the building including the Electrical and Mechanical Rooms, the center Hall on the Ground Floor, and in the Second Floor Projector Room.



## VI. CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT - cont'd



*Fire department connection at the east side of the Front Portico (left), and Mechanical/Electrical Room on Ground Floor (right).*

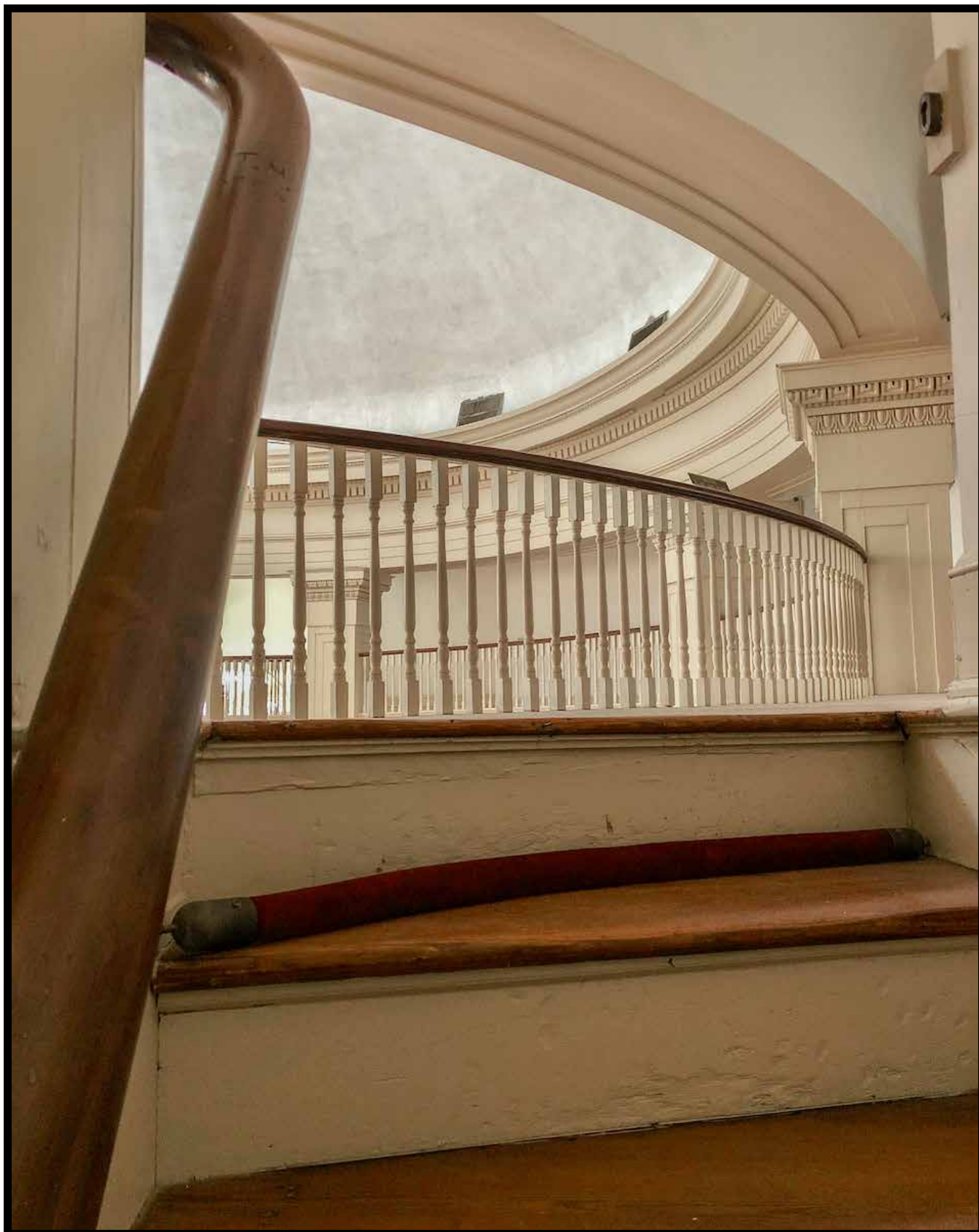


*Mechanical piping running through the southwest rooms on the west alley side of the Ground Floor.*

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) Existing systems should be kept operational until new systems are installed at some point in the future. Where there is visible evidence of condensation, piping and ductwork should be insulated to reduce dripping and moisture build up. All in-wall units should be inspected and maintained to prevent condensation and moisture build up. All filters should be kept clean.
- 2) New systems should be installed throughout the building with museum level humidity controls. [Long-term]
- 3) A new fire suppression system should be installed throughout the building, sensitively installed to reduce negative impacts on existing historic fabric.

## VI. CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT - cont'd



7



## VII. STRATEGIC VISION



**D**eveloping a strategic vision for a National Historic Landmark is a process...a community process.

Telling the whole story of Petersburg's history is a process...a community process.

Being responsible citizens and good stewards of the city's history is a process...a community process.

The goal of this report has been to provide the citizens of Petersburg with an over-arching plan for the Exchange Building's stabilization and stewardship, including recommendations for its interpretation. Since its acquisition by the city in 1927, the building has been continuously occupied but with little to no significant maintenance. Its architectural significance is clearly evident by its monumental presence on West Bank Street and the understanding, through its form and structure, that it was a building of importance when it was designed and built — connected to Petersburg's history as a city of trade and commerce. With the waning of its operation as the Siege Museum, its future relevance to the city has been left undefined. This "lack of purpose" is most evident when inviting the public into what is clearly an important landmark building, only to find it partially occupied and in need of significant maintenance and upkeep. In the public sphere, visible neglect communicates a stronger message to visitors than the best visitor center or exhibits you might construct.

## VII. STRATEGIC VISION - cont'd

A heroic restoration of the Exchange Building should be possible to fund, given its national significance as the most intact remaining mid-19th century market building in the country, as well as its singular importance as an example of monumental architecture that once did, and still can, represent the city's aspirations — an expression of hope and ambition constructed in the wake of the 1837 market crash and in the two decades preceding the American Civil War. From what we know of its operation, in hindsight, it may have been more successful as a symbol of the importance of trade and commerce than as a trade center itself. Perhaps this symbolic role can be revived and given new life today as the community re-envision its role in the economy of a diverse and inclusive 21st century city.

The most important purpose of this report is to provide background and context for our understanding of the Exchange Building, its evolving purpose and function over time, and its significance for Petersburg and the Nation. Understanding its place, or role, in the development of Petersburg will help guide us as we construct a future purpose for the building that is integrated into the planning for and re-envisioning of Petersburg's future.

Currently the Exchange Building is being operated as the Petersburg Downtown Visitor Center and a location for temporary or changing exhibits. The intention, expressed by both Historic Petersburg Foundation and the Petersburg Preservation Task Force, in preparation for this report, is that a portion of the building continue to provide visitor services while the remainder of the building be programmed for interpretation as a museum that is focused on telling the "whole" Petersburg story. Although as the Siege Museum, even though its exhibits tried to focus on life during the siege, it was more often perceived as a "Civil War Museum" with the assumptions that come with that label — interpreting strategy, battles and leaders as most Civil War Museums have done. What it actually tried to do was tell a broader story of the human cost of the war by focusing on what life was like for the residents of Petersburg during the nine-month siege. There was only one nine-month siege, during the war, which made Petersburg uniquely qualified to tell such a story and focusing on the lives of the people effected was unique among Civil War sites and museums at that time. The Exchange Building can, once again, take on the role as a history innovator as we rethink its purpose, exhibits, operation and its role in the Petersburg community.

## VII. STRATEGIC VISION - cont'd

### *The Opportunity - "Telling the Whole Story"*

"Telling the Whole Story." This phrase has been used to describe how some folks we've met with have been articulating their desire for a more inclusive museum experience at the Exchange Building. This phrase is easily tossed into conversations today as we search for ways to build more accessible and inclusive museums for new and more diverse audiences but what does "telling the whole story" even mean?

Telling the whole story begins by acknowledging that much of our story remains untold and unknown, and that the story we have been telling reflects the biases and intentions of the public storytellers. The records that have been used to support the story we've told, up to now, often favor the legacy of European settlers and their descendants, while the assumption is made that information about the other folks...mainly Native Americans and free, freed, and enslaved African Americans is, to a large extent, either unknown, or unknowable due to the lack of similar records or primary source materials. While there is some truth in this lack of similar records and sources, to "tell the whole story" means we must embark on a journey of discovery using new methods of investigation — archaeology, science, digital research, etc. — to level the playing field a bit and find new perspectives and points of view for looking at Petersburg's history with fresh eyes and giving new shape to the stories we tell. In this way, by reshaping the storyteller's responsibility, and building on new and better research, it will be possible to understand history as a story that is ever evolving, intersecting with, and building on itself. To create a history museum today, with intention, is to take on the role of public storyteller. In this way, our understanding of history can evolve, as our story continues to evolve, with new research by new generations expanding these stories for decades to come.

"Telling the whole story" takes work. It is not as easy as just introducing more stories of free, freed, and enslaved African Americans, Native Americans or the Scots into the museum. (the Scots were just one of the white immigrant groups that were foundational in the development of the city of Petersburg as a center of trade and commerce. Note: the location that became the city of Petersburg had been a center of trade and commerce for centuries before European settlement) The Exchange Building Project offers the whole community an opportunity to take responsibility for, and play a role in, the telling of its story. A strategic vision intended to "make story-tellers of us all" will strengthen community bonds and identity like no other program or economic plan can.

The Petersburg Story belongs to everyone. The opportunity, presented here, is to change how we perceive ourselves in the context of how we tell the whole story of our history. To approach history not by taking what we know apart to analyze and categorize it, but to find the threads and pathways of a shared history through public storytelling — reinforcing our community identity as we share in the research, investigation, and the telling.





## VII. STRATEGIC VISION - cont'd

### *Idea: The Petersburg History Exchange*

**The power of place, the power of history, and the power of storytelling,** are all brought together in a new entity called The Petersburg History Exchange. An organization, for lack of a better term, including Petersburg citizens and residents, working alongside local government and a consortium of local organizations and businesses utilizing the Exchange Building as its central workspace and the symbol of holistic community story-telling. So how can the Exchange Building best serve as the “headquarters” (it’s been called that before...) of this new effort? We can start with an understanding of a few foundational ideas:

- “The Exchange” is both a place and an action.
- The Exchange must be welcoming and inviting to all.
- The Exchange was built for market exchange and its architecture still speaks to this original purpose.
- When constructed, the Exchange Building was likely intended to be a symbol of ambition and economic growth as Petersburg came out of the 1837 market crash. The Petersburg History Exchange can be this symbol today, representing the community’s shared ambitions for growth and identity built around a new, more inclusive story.
- Inherent in the concept of “exchange” is the framework for understanding fairness, justice, reciprocity, and value, forces that shape all economies built on trade and commerce.
- The Exchange Building was, from the start, a multi-use building designed to impress, with spaces for business, trade, commerce, and gathering. The Petersburg History Exchange will need to accommodate a variety of functions including spaces devoted to non-profit work and local government support, as well as leased space for supporting business use. This three part approach to occupying the building can provide a framework for providing income for the building’s operations over time through a mix of City support, operational grants and tenant leases.
- The Exchange Building, as the Siege Museum, has for decades, been a place of Petersburg storytelling, perhaps with the storyteller in absentia. That can be fixed.
- The Rotunda at The Exchange can be used for public meetings making the general public feel welcome and invited to workshops, lectures, and other public gatherings.
- The Exchange can be the place to make important proclamations related to our redressing of historical events as we move forward in our understanding of our history and the context of past events and actions.
- The Exchange can partner with the Appomattox Iron Works to create Market Days where the adjoining alleys are closed down and become a regional craft market adding another dimension to Downtown visitor activities while connecting with the history and legacy of the Exchange Building. It may be possible to eventually close the alleys to traffic, making them “loading access only” so they can serve as public space surrounding the Exchange. During larger Downtown festivals, these alleys help connect the Old Street corridor with West Bank Street tying events and festivities together.

## VII. STRATEGIC VISION - cont'd

- The Exchange can re-take the role it once served as the centerpiece for the city's downtown Christmas celebration with West Bank Street closed for the evening and a grand piano rolled out with hot cider and cocoa being served as live music and activities take place in and around the Exchange Building.
- The Exchange can be a place where changing exhibits provide fresh and creative ways to present focused stories and new historical research, expanding our understanding of the Petersburg story and the people who lived it.
- Family Story-time in the Rotunda: A program in partnership with the Petersburg Public Library using the Rotunda for weekday and weekend story-time with a focus on developing new stories based on Petersburg history. During the week, moms and dads with small children at home, could have a place to go that provides a bit of a pre-school environment where their children can experience stories of real people in Petersburg's history.
- The Rotunda could become the location for an immersive video presentation that would make it a destination draw for tourists.
- The Exchange can have an area focused on Petersburg archaeology and a local Summer family archaeology program can be developed and headquartered at the Exchange. What if families that came to Storytime in the Rotunda also heard about the Summer family archaeology program and decided to sign up. That would be a great thing for Petersburg and for archaeology.
- In partnership with the Petersburg Library, The Exchange can become the go-to location for digital information, archives, and programming on the web about Petersburg history, making the exchange of information and knowledge accessible to the widest possible audience inside and outside the Petersburg community. A dedicated, funded and staffed IT initiative would be able to build support, partnering with organizations, schools and colleges to become a part of a larger national conversation about history, storytelling and interpretation.

### *Possible Interpretive Ideas and Themes: A Strategic Plan for Petersburg Museums*

The Petersburg History Exchange should not be a one-stop shop for Petersburg history. It needs to play an important role in the Petersburg museum system where real places throughout the city are used to tell their unique stories engaging residents and visitors as they explore new and familiar locations throughout the city. Rather than trying to fit the "whole story" into one museum at one location, the city and its citizens would be better served by utilizing the whole city as the context for telling its story using authentic physical locations that still resonate with the lives and achievements Petersburgers. For instance, the economic system of slavery is certainly a relevant topic to interpret in the context of the Exchange Building as a part of the 19th century market economy of Petersburg, but there are other significant locations within the city that would be more appropriate for interpreting such stories as Reconstruction, Transportation, Civil Rights or the 20th century. In order to know how to play an effective role as part of the museum

## VII. STRATEGIC VISION - cont'd

system, a public planning process should be implemented to create a **"Strategic Plan for Petersburg Museums."** One of the most important goals of a **Strategic Plan for Petersburg Museums** would be to determine which themes and stories could be best told at which locations — identifying which themes are most appropriate for interpretation at The Exchange would be developed in this planning process.

As an overarching theme, the story of trade and commerce — "exchange"— is a good framework to use for beginning to tell a more inclusive and responsible story about all peoples who played a role in Petersburg's history. The Exchange could tell the story of trade and commerce beginning with the Native American tribes who lived and traded here long before European settlers arrived. Exhibits can be developed with a revolving focus on local industry, commerce, and business — partnering with local business and industry to fund and support these ongoing efforts.

Using the overarching themes inherent in the idea of "exchange," the following list is presented to help begin the process of prioritizing ideas for relevant interpretive themes that might be presented best at The Exchange, and included in the Strategic Plan for Petersburg Museums:

- Living Along the River - The Appomattuck's
- Native American Trade - impact of European Settlement
- Native American Diaspora - Relocation in Virginia and Beyond
- A Failure to Comprehend - Treaties and Agreements with Indigenous Peoples in Colonial Virginia
- Early European Trade and Commerce in America
- Fort Henry and Trade on the Frontier
- The Merchants Arrive - What Did They Bring?...Architecture, Goods, Customs, Religion, etc. What Did They Do? How Were They Received?
- Trade, Tories, and the American Revolution
- Free, Freed, and the Enslaved - Manumission, The Quakers and The Methodists in Petersburg
- The Great Fire - Building Back
- The Development of Bank Street
- Petersburg, A Market Town
- The Economy of Artisans and Craftspeople
- The Business of Horse Racing
- The Slave Trade in Antebellum Petersburg
- The Exchange of Cotton and Tobacco



## VII. STRATEGIC VISION - cont'd

- Urban Life in Antebellum Petersburg
- The Lighting of the City - Petersburg Gas Works
- Greek Revival Architecture in Petersburg
- The Keziah Affair
- History of the Exchange Building (more complete version)

### *Big Picture Recommendations*

#### **BIG PICTURE GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS:**

Develop a **Strategic Plan for Petersburg Museums**.

Create the **Petersburg History Exchange**.

Reach out to the entire Petersburg community and invite them to participation in The Exchange project.

#### **BIG PICTURE BUILDING RECOMMENDATIONS:**

##### **Site:**

Restore the alleys to historic materials; Remove the existing elevator tower addition and reconstruct the Rear (north) Portico based on archaeological and physical evidence. New Rear Portico would contain a new elevator and stair and provide accessible entry from the rear; Develop the rear alley spaces to connect The Exchange Building, the Appomattox Iron Works and the walk-through to Sycamore Street, into a public piazza that provides additional opportunities for the sustainable collection and management of storm water.

##### **Basement:**

Create access to the basement with the new elevator to allow limited interpretation of the historic basement functions and architecture; Restore brick floor where possible in areas that can be interpreted; Restore basement bulkheads and make visible in the design of the new Rear Portico; Restore coal chutes and other ally access ways into the basement based on archaeology and further research; Basement should be assessed as a location for new HVAC and control systems throughout the building; Secondary Basement spaces might be used for building maintenance and management.

##### **Ground Floor:**

Remove the 20th century infills at the original alley doorways and replace with 19th c. "Venetian" style doors with sidelights; Open up both entrances on the sides under the Front Portico and reconnect them with the Center Hall through the building; Investigate the location and configuration of interior doorways along this hall; The Exchange should always provide some level of visitor services as an anchor in the city's museum system but the main Downtown Visitor Center should be moved to a more visible and accessible location; Reconsider the best location for toilets in order to restore the current Ground Floor toilet room spaces to their original layout; Consider reconfiguring the building's

## VII. STRATEGIC VISION - cont'd

mechanical and electrical systems and moving the existing modern stair into the new Rear Portico addition to restore the original “apartment” spaces along the east alley; Restore the Front Portico, resetting granite and checking foundations and supports; Consider the possibility of a Ground Floor addition, to the north, allowing for more service areas to be located outside of the building’s historic footprint.

### **First Floor:**

Restore and repoint Portico floor, steps, and railings; Assess the reconfiguration of mechanical systems throughout the building to reduce their impact on historic fabric; Restore and reconfigure north rooms to their original configuration with the central north hallway leading to the vertical circulation in the new Rear Portico.

### **Second Floor/Dome:**

Remove theater and associated spaces and equipment in order to restore 19th c. room configuration and to create a better circulation path to the new stair and elevator in the Rear Portico; Restore dome finishes by removing HVAC diffusers and ductwork where possible; Install new railing around the gallery walkway for safety.

## *Big Picture Project Priorities*

### **1 - Save America’s Treasures Grant:**

Build on the stabilization and repair work that is currently included in the scope of the Save America’s Treasures grant being managed by Historic Petersburg Foundation. The limited funds in this grant are focused the remediation of the building’s water infiltration and moisture problems that are currently causing the continued deterioration of historic fabric. At the time of the writing of this report, conditions in the economy related to the COVID19 pandemic have pushed material and construction costs up significantly, as much as 200% in some locations, and the scope of work covered by the SAT grant has had to be cut back to insure that the most critical issues are addressed in their entirety leaving some important repairs and fixes for future funding from other as of yet, unidentified sources.

Estimate of Probable Costs for additional repair/remediation work = \$250,000

### **2 - Organization and Ownership:**

For the success of The Exchange it is imperative that the city take interest in the project again and see it as the centerpiece of its public museum program. This is not a project that should belong to any one organization. The Petersburg History Exchange coalition should be formed and organized to take on the project long-term and start to oversee the process of strategic planning and fundraising. This coalition should plan an important role as a partner in any Downtown planning processes that are undertaken by the City.

### **3 - Stabilization and Repair:**

Raise the money necessary to complete the stabilization and repair work that was not included in the Save America’s Treasures grant.

Estimate of Probable Costs = \$250,000

### **4 - Strategic Plan for Petersburg Museums:**

Utilize a public planning process to develop a **Strategic Plan for Petersburg Museums**. Instead of thinking about each site as its own “museum,” think of the city, as a whole, as

## VII. STRATEGIC VISION - cont'd

the museum where historic buildings and sites as well as green space and parks are seen as part of the network, alongside other partners like the Petersburg National Battlefield, as an integral part of the planning and organizing for how to “tell the whole Petersburg story.” The **Strategic Plan for Petersburg Museums** should accomplish the following:

- Identifying resources that can be included in the museum network including buildings, sites, collections, parks, archaeological sites, repositories (libraries, archives, etc.),
- Assess current and proposed facilities for accessibility, highest and best use for storytelling, and condition/repairs/maintenance needs at each location.
- Assess collections and policies for artifacts and archiving.
- Review and plan for staffing and operations at City owned sites.
- Identifying underutilized resources (not currently used) that could be used to tell the story.
- Plan for integration of interpretation throughout the City — Museum in the Streets concept.
- Develop ideas for integrating City owned sites with private resources.
- Recommend strategic partnerships and opportunities for cooperation.
- Make recommendations for maintenance and upkeep of key sites.
- Develop a Visitor Experience Plan (within the Strategic Plan) which will then define needed visitor services.
- Develop an Interpretive Plan for the City (within the Strategic Plan). An interpretive plan includes identification of target audiences, Interpretive concepts and approaches, current and future locations, interpretive themes, as well as resources and funding strategies.
- Make recommendations for marketing and promotion.
- Identify the role the Petersburg History Exchange should play in this new “strategy” for telling the whole Petersburg story.

**Consultant Development of Strategic Plan for Petersburg Museums** (including the Interpretive Plan and Visitor Experience Plan: Estimate of Probable Costs = \$75,000

### **5 - Exchange Building Program, Scope, and Budget:**

Develop program and budget for the Exchange Building project. This initiative should be led by the Petersburg History Exchange coalition/organization after working with the public to determine how the Exchange Building can work best to accomplish the goals set out in the Strategic Plan for Petersburg Museums and historic sites.

### **6 - Architectural and Exhibit Design:**

The Petersburg History Exchange should be the contact point for the hiring and management of the design team consisting of museums and preservation specialists as well as exhibit designers working together on one team to provide a unified approach to



## VII. STRATEGIC VISION - cont'd

the renovation and fit-out of the Exchange Building.

Estimate of Probable Costs: Design costs will vary depending on what is included in the final scope of work developed by The History Exchange (see Build-out Budget Summary below). For budgeting purposes assume the following:

- (1) Architectural and Engineering - 12% of total project costs
- (2) Exhibit Design - 30% of exhibit fabrication/installation costs (can vary greatly depending on the use of technology and interactive in the exhibits)

### 7 - Petersburg History Exchange Build-out:

Full or phased build out of The Exchange. The costs for the full build-out will depend on several key factors, (1) how the economy either recovers or readjusts after the effects of COVID19 have passed, and (2) whether or not additional funds have been used for completing the stabilization and repair work not originally included in the 2019 Save America's Treasures grant.

## BUILD-OUT BUDGET SUMMARY

There are too many variables and unknowns at this time to produce a working budget for such an undefined project but a Total Project Summary, excluding owner soft costs, might look like this.

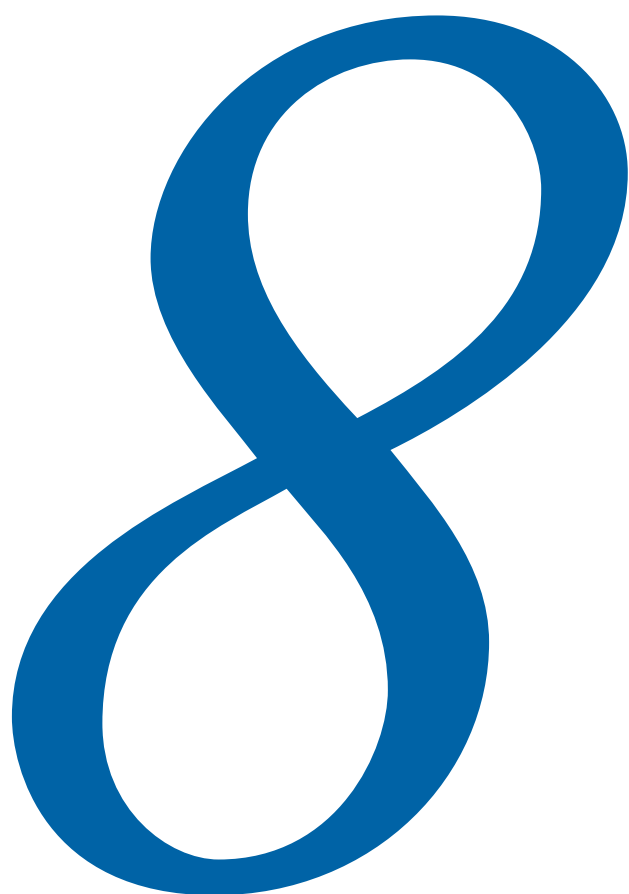
\* Note: we are using a range of \$250-\$300 / square foot at this time based on the significant increases we have seen in materials, labor and the general construction industry while the effects of COVID19 may still be a factor.

Basement	\$ 250,000	
Ground Floor	\$1,200,000	
First Floor	\$1,440,000	
Second Floor/Dome	\$1,200,000	
North Portico	\$ 720,000	
Construction Subtotal	\$4,810,000	
Contingency 10%	\$ 481,000	
A/E Fees at 12%	\$ 577,200	
TOTAL	\$ 5,868,200	
Exhibit Fabrication/Installation	(5,000 s.f.)	\$1,500,000
Exhibit Design		\$ 450,000

## VII. STRATEGIC VISION - cont'd

### *Recommendations for Future Explorations*

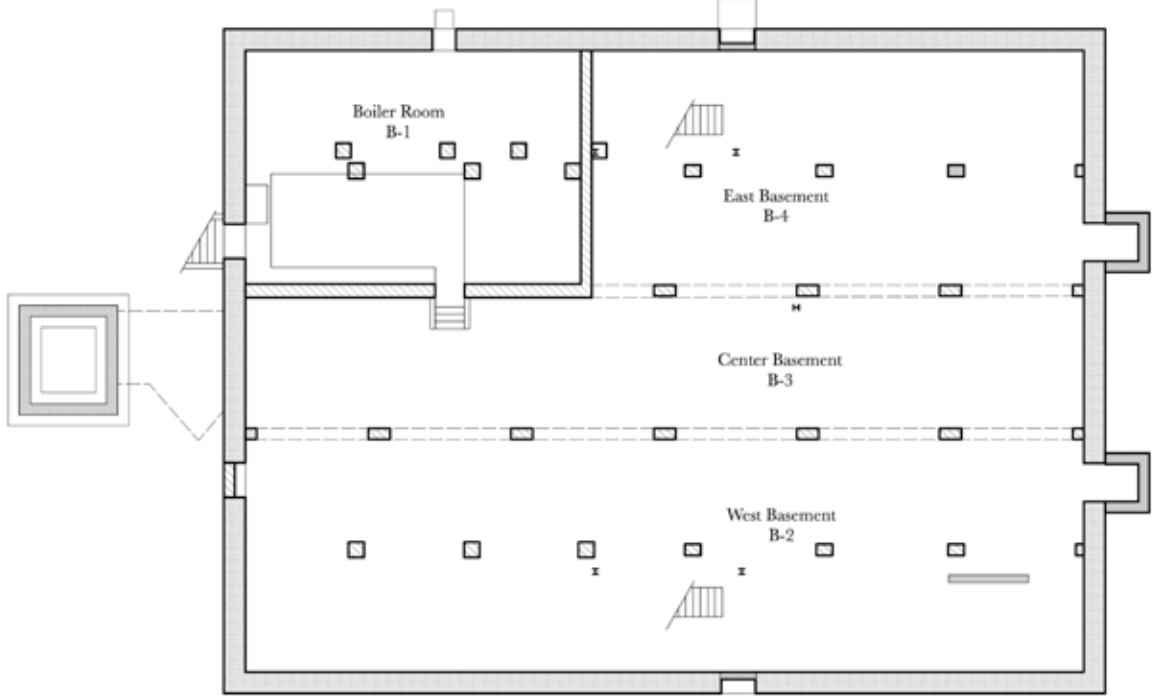
1. Determine the original ground floor layout by removing wall finishes on the interior “hall” bearing walls to determine if there were ever “venetian” doors separating “apartments” and exactly where the original divisions of the “apartments” were. This would also help identify whether the two stairs and associated rooms near the center of each side were original or were added, possibly by Reuben Ragland when he purchased and renovated the building in the 1850’s. This is also the most likely time that the Italianate, arch-top window modifications would have been made to the tall windows on the east and west sides of the building which also line up with the aforementioned interior stair/room groups.
2. Conduct archaeological investigations on the north/east sides of the building (as part of the SAT grant work), before the sitework begins for the drainage project, in order to identify the extent and location of the original rear portico. Much of this area will have been disturbed by the construction of the modern elevator tower in the 1970’s but it may provide the best opportunity we’ll have to assess and establish the layout of this original feature in order to inform its possible reconstruction. All future archaeological work should be coordinated with the Virginia Department of Historic Resources.
3. Further investigation of the infilled doorways under both sides of the Front Portico to see if there was an original access into the center “Hall.” If so, then the ground floor plan would be very similar to the plan of the Charleston Market Hall with access at the front and rear of the central “Hall” and doorways into the “apartments” or business stalls, located along this hallway.
4. Further research into the Reuben Ragland renovation to the building in the 1850’s as this may have been the first and most significant set of changes to its original, as-built, layout.
5. Since we do know that drawings existed and that Calvin Pollards records are archived, a further search for the original drawings for the buildings may turn up information that would be helpful for interpreting the “Specifications” and resolve some important questions regarding the original layout of areas specifically related to its original use as a market.
6. Conduct full cross-section microscopy paint analysis on the interior and exterior finishes to determine original finishes throughout the building.



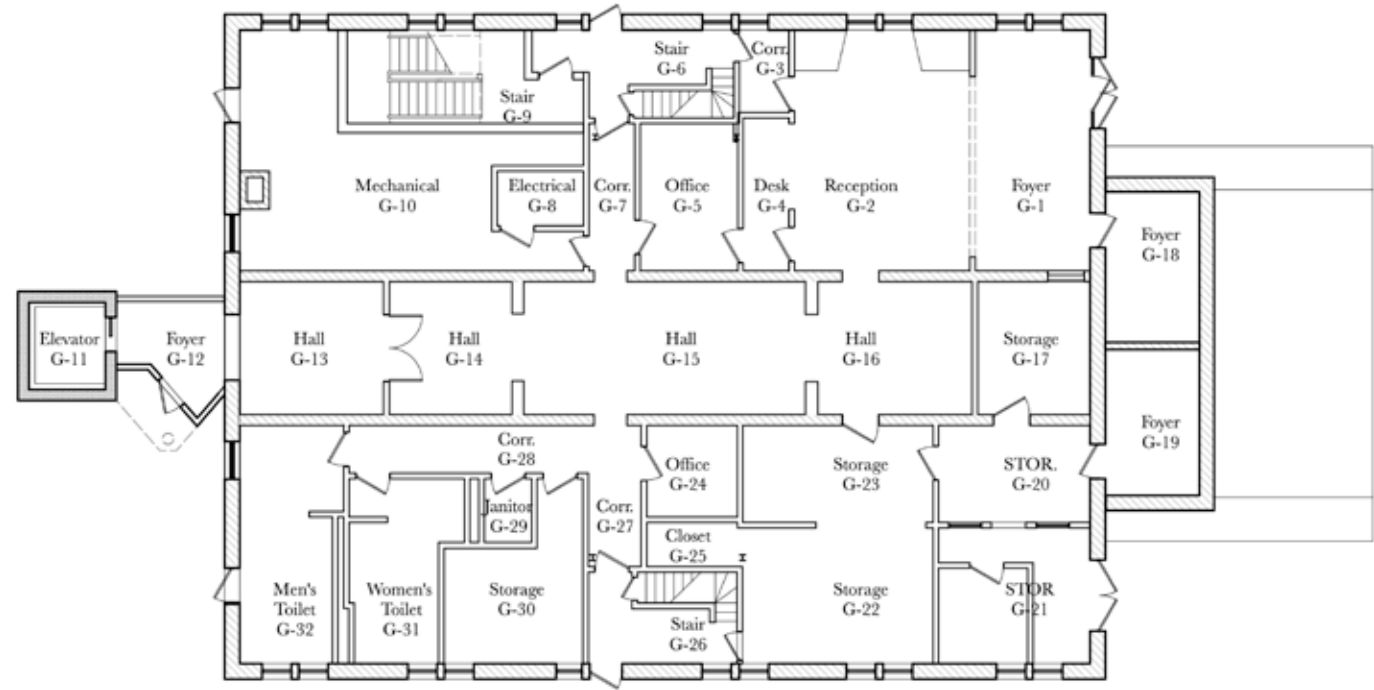


# VIII. APPENDIX "A"

## *Existing Conditions Plans & Elevations*



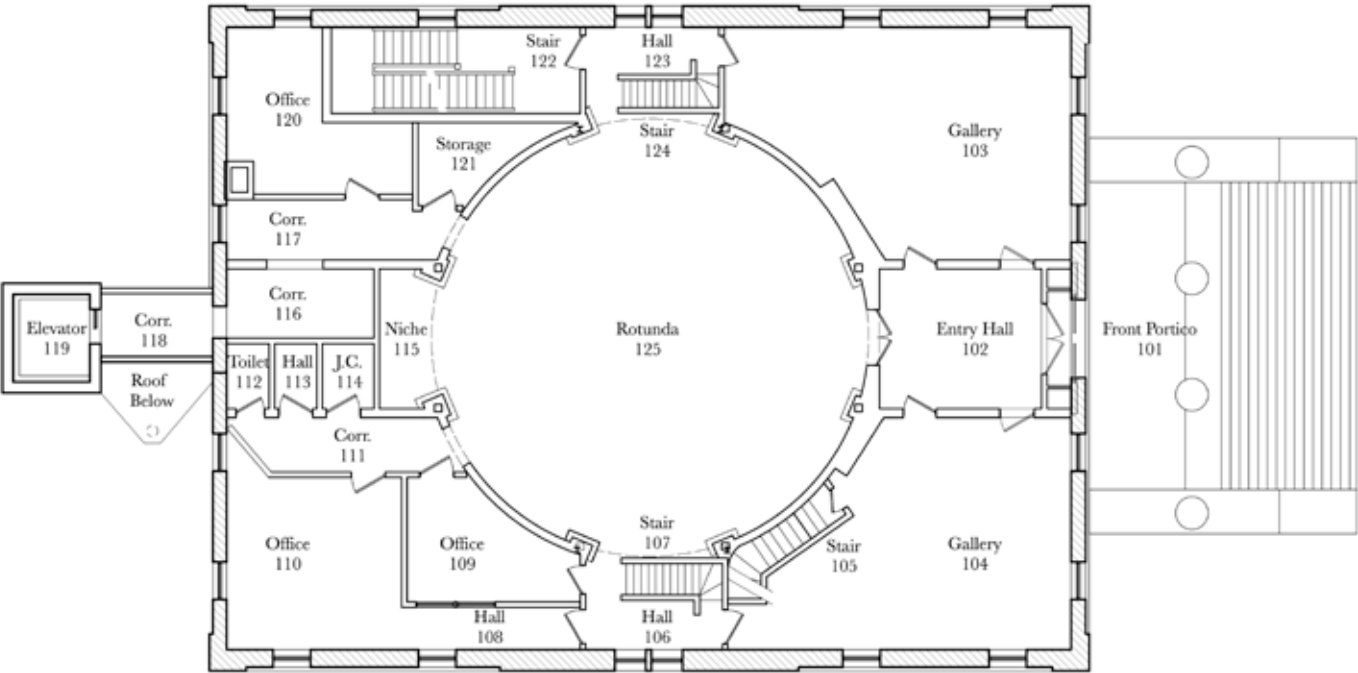
**BASEMENT PLAN - c. 202**



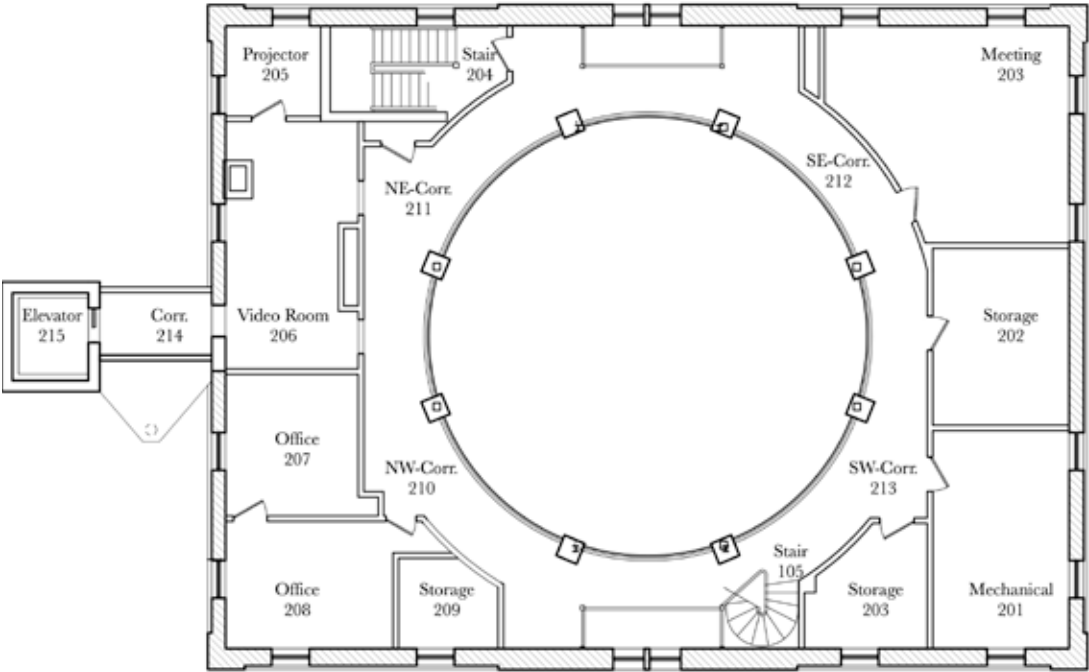
**GROUND FLOOR PLAN - c. 2021**



VIII. APPENDIX "A" - cont'd



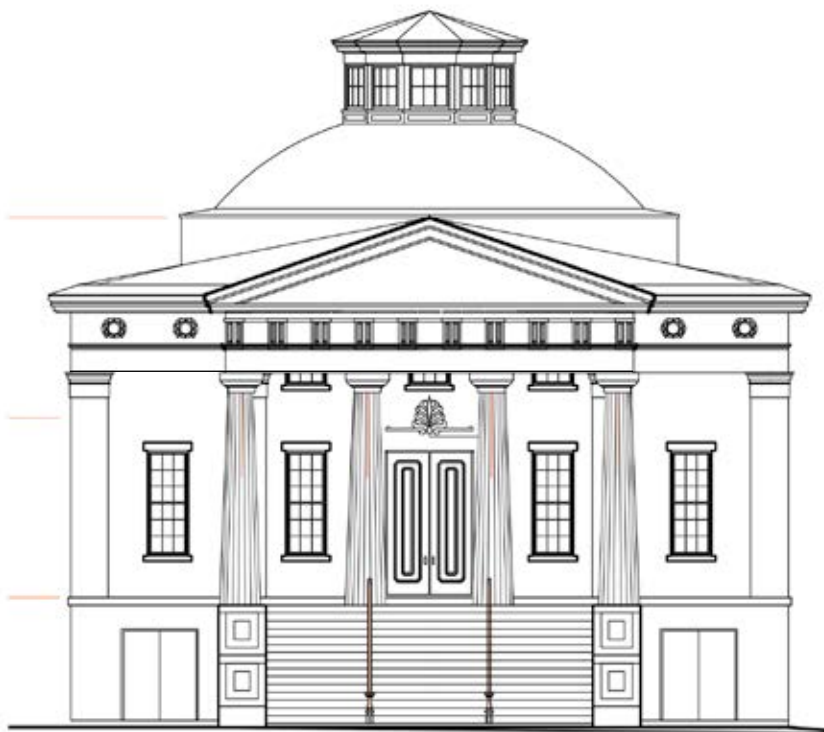
FIRST FLOOR PLAN - c. 2021



SECOND FLOOR PLAN - c. 2021



VIII. APPENDIX "A" - cont'd



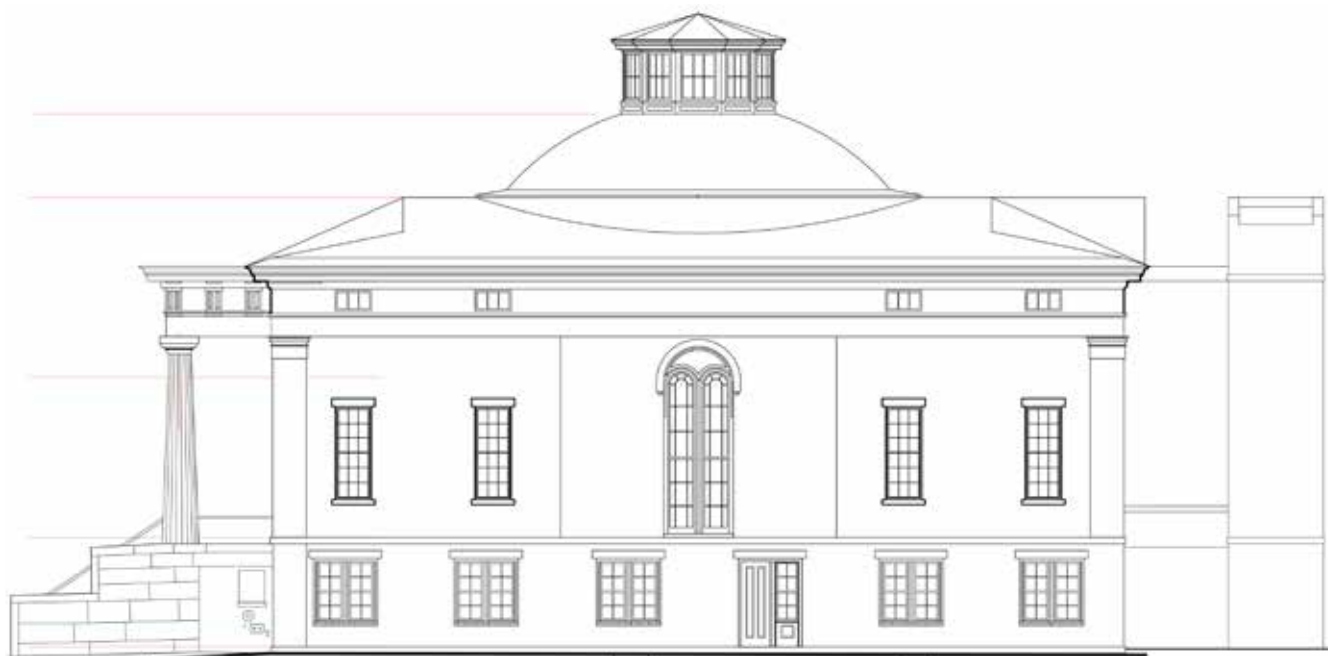
**SOUTH ELEVATION**



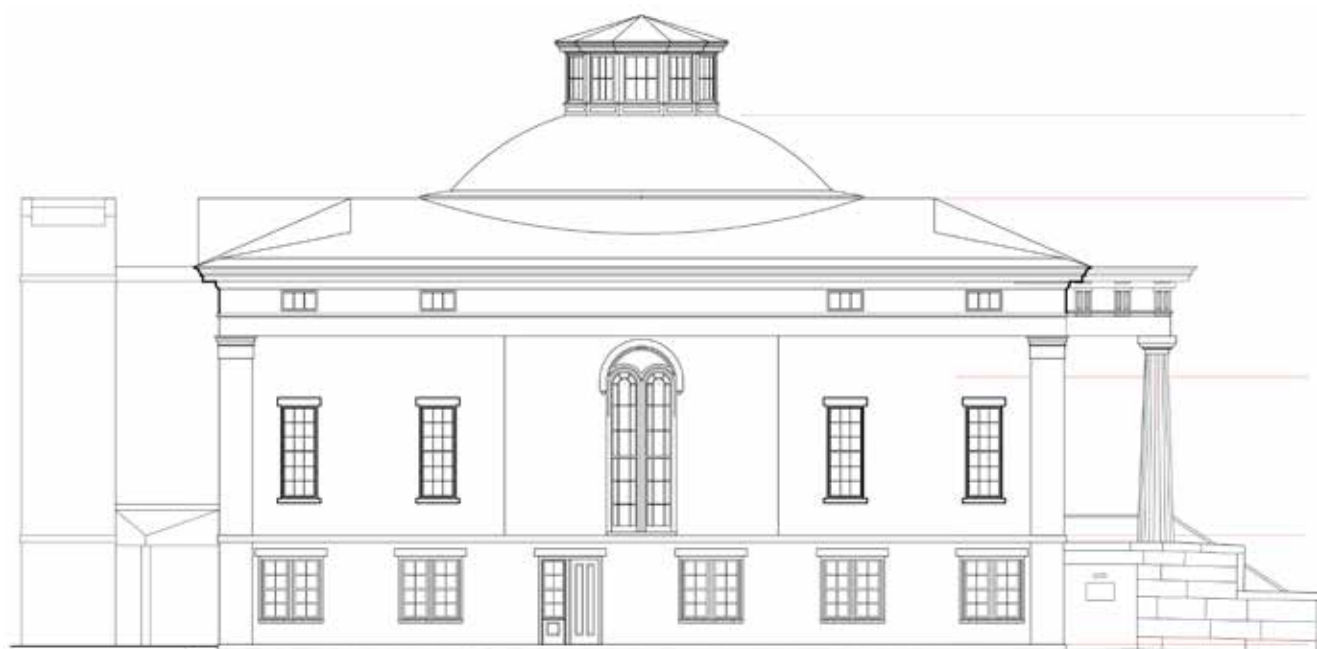
**NORTH ELEVATION**



VIII. APPENDIX "A" - cont'd



**EAST ELEVATION - c. 2021**



**WEST ELEVATION - c. 2021**





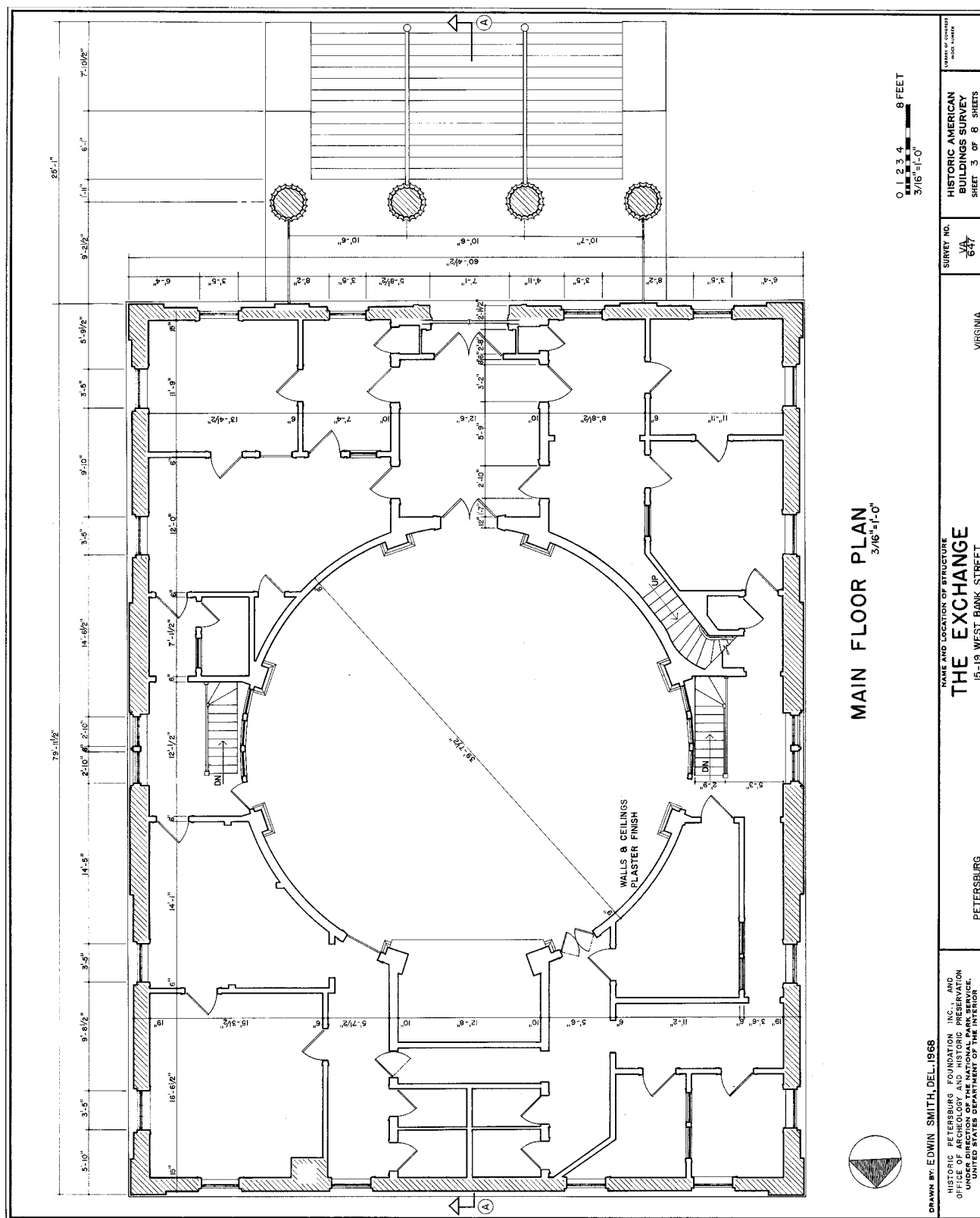




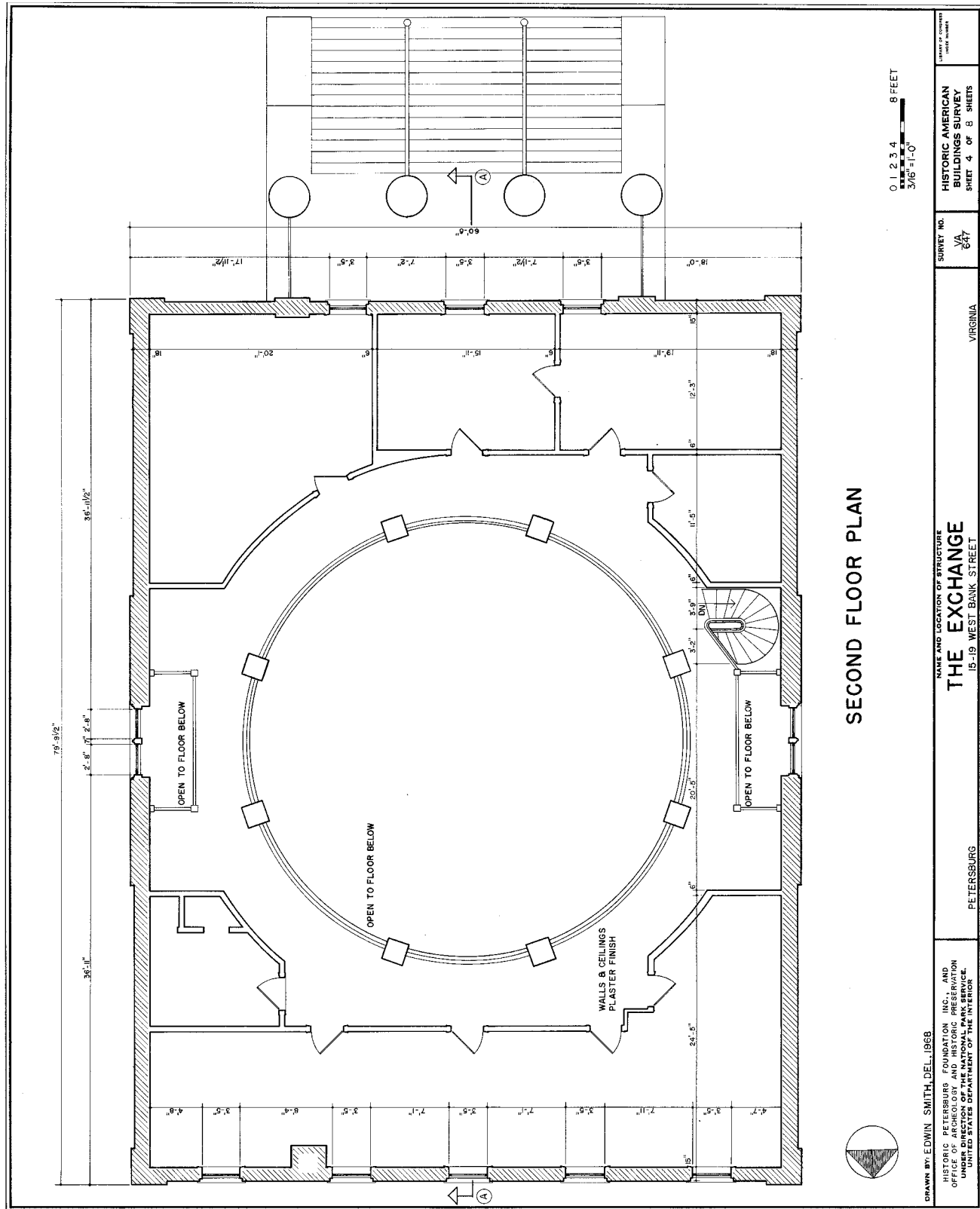
*1968 Historic American Buildings Survey Drawings  
and Images*



## IX. APPENDIX "B" - cont'd

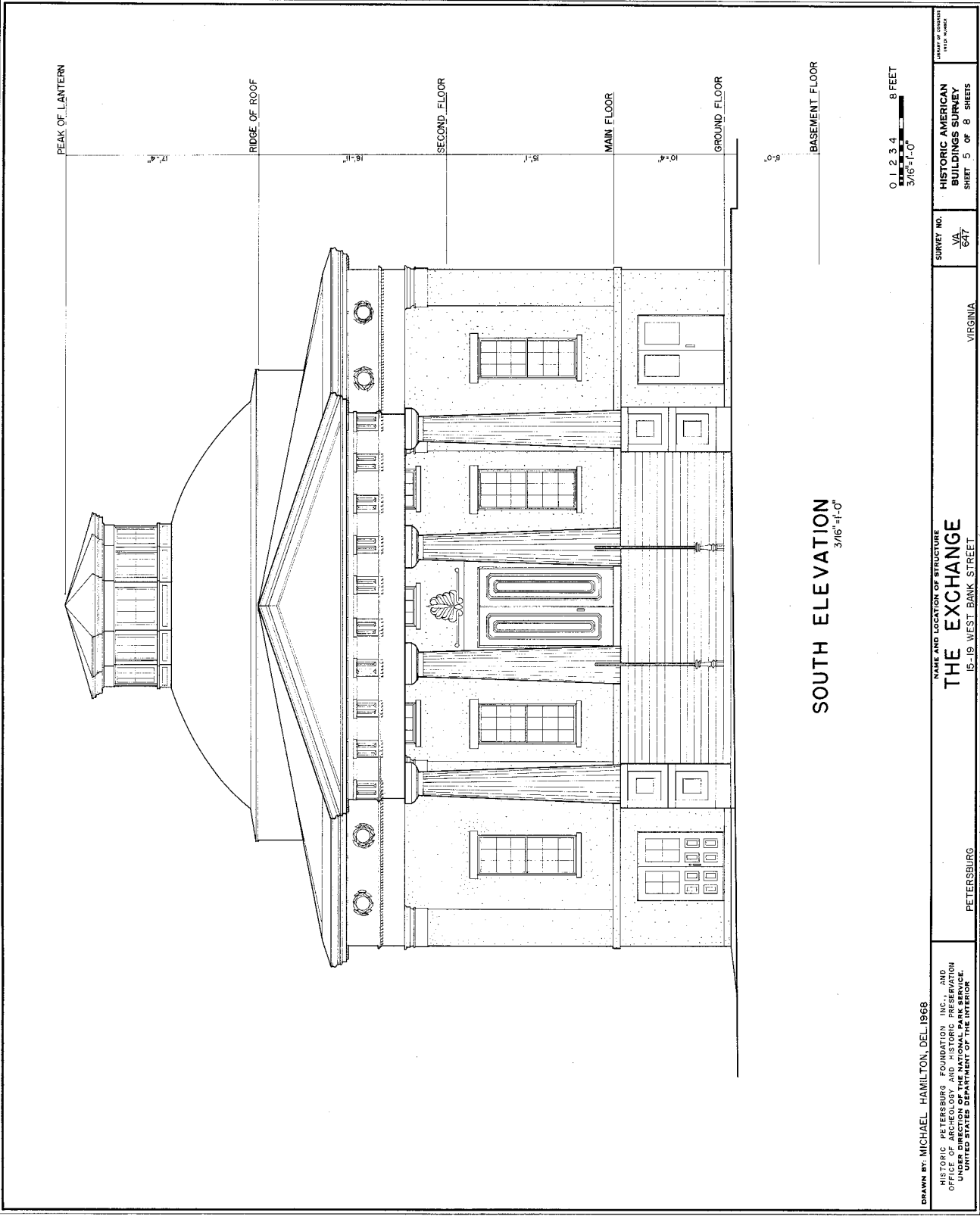


IX. APPENDIX "B" - cont'd

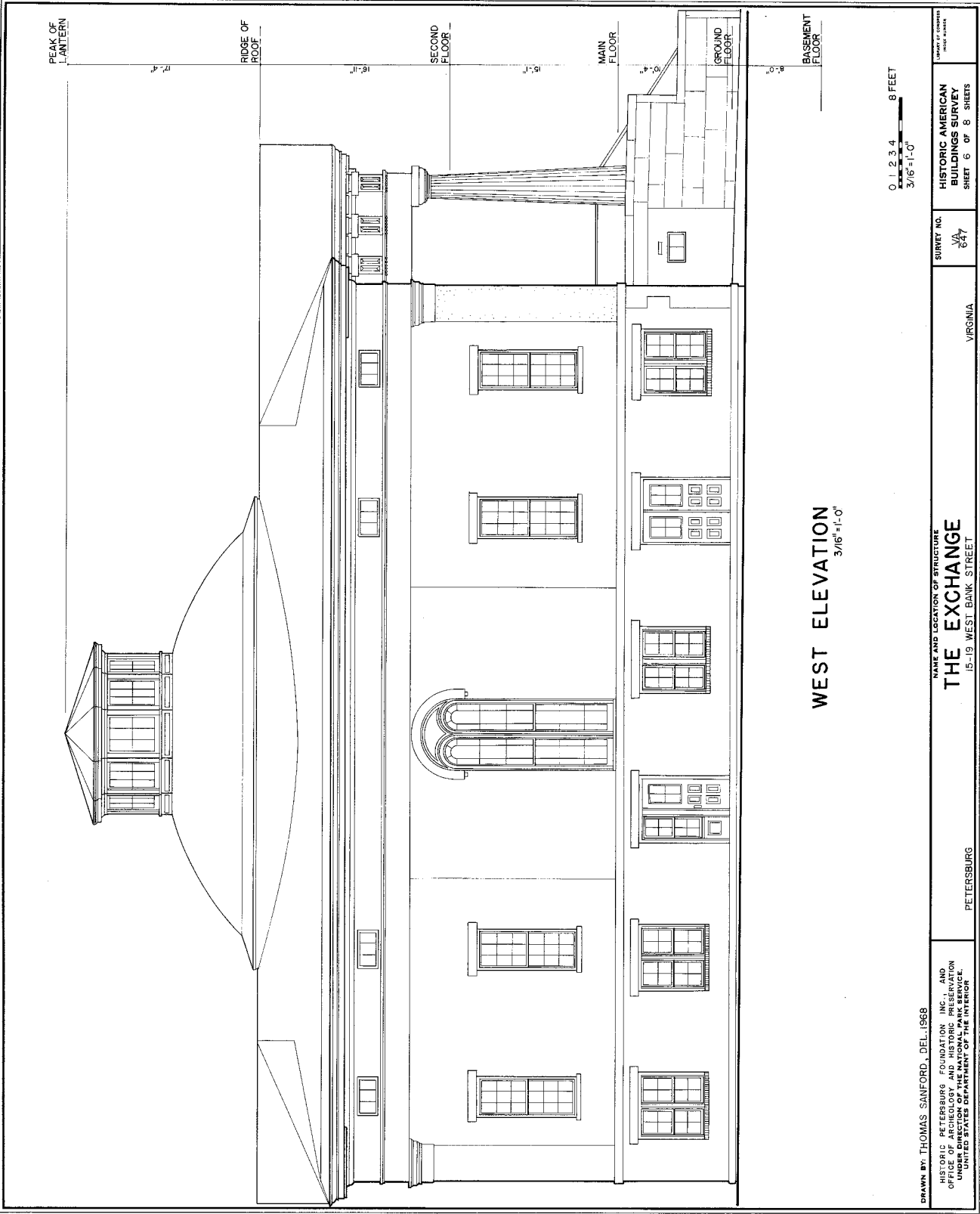




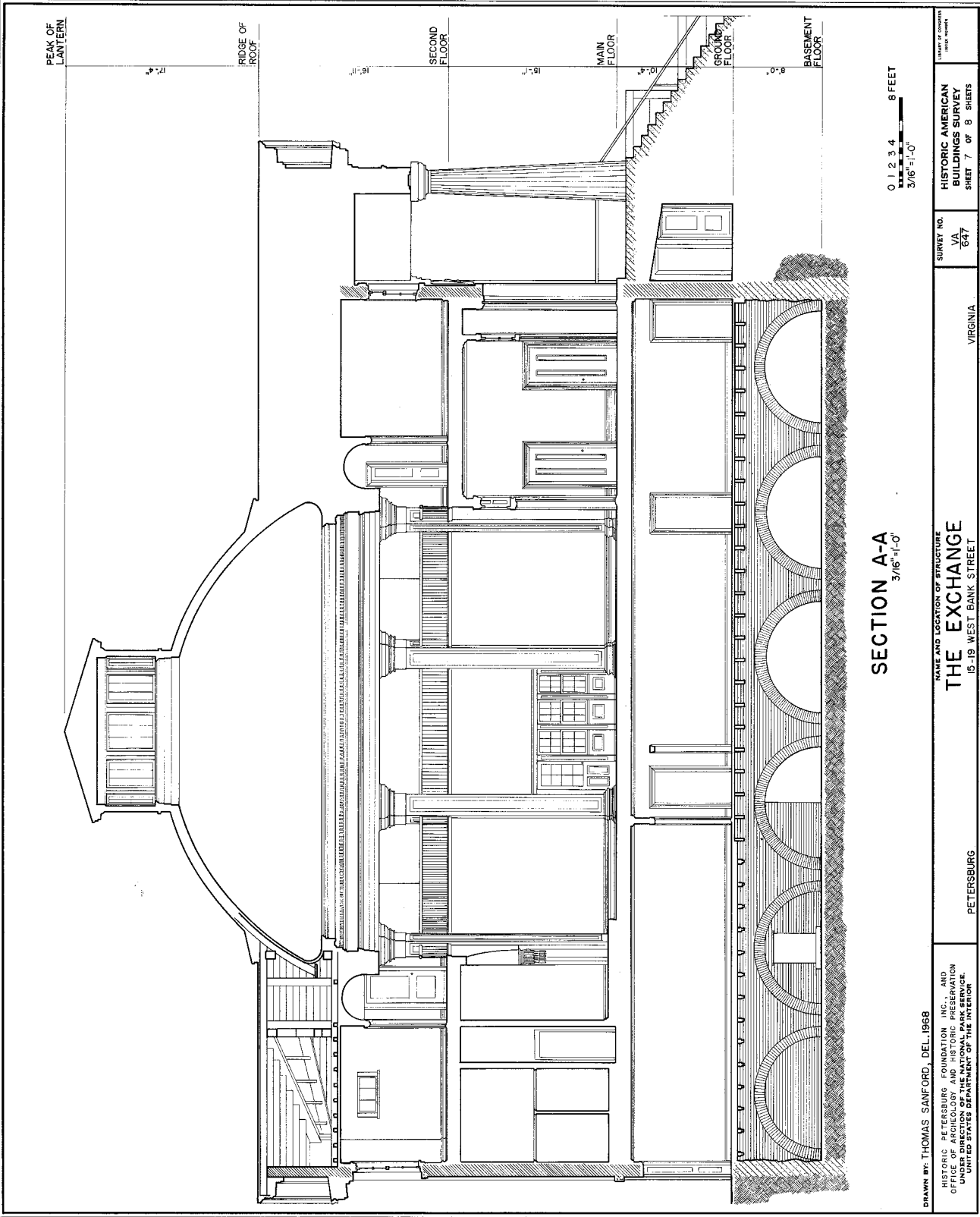
IX. APPENDIX "B" - cont'd



IX. APPENDIX "B" - cont'd

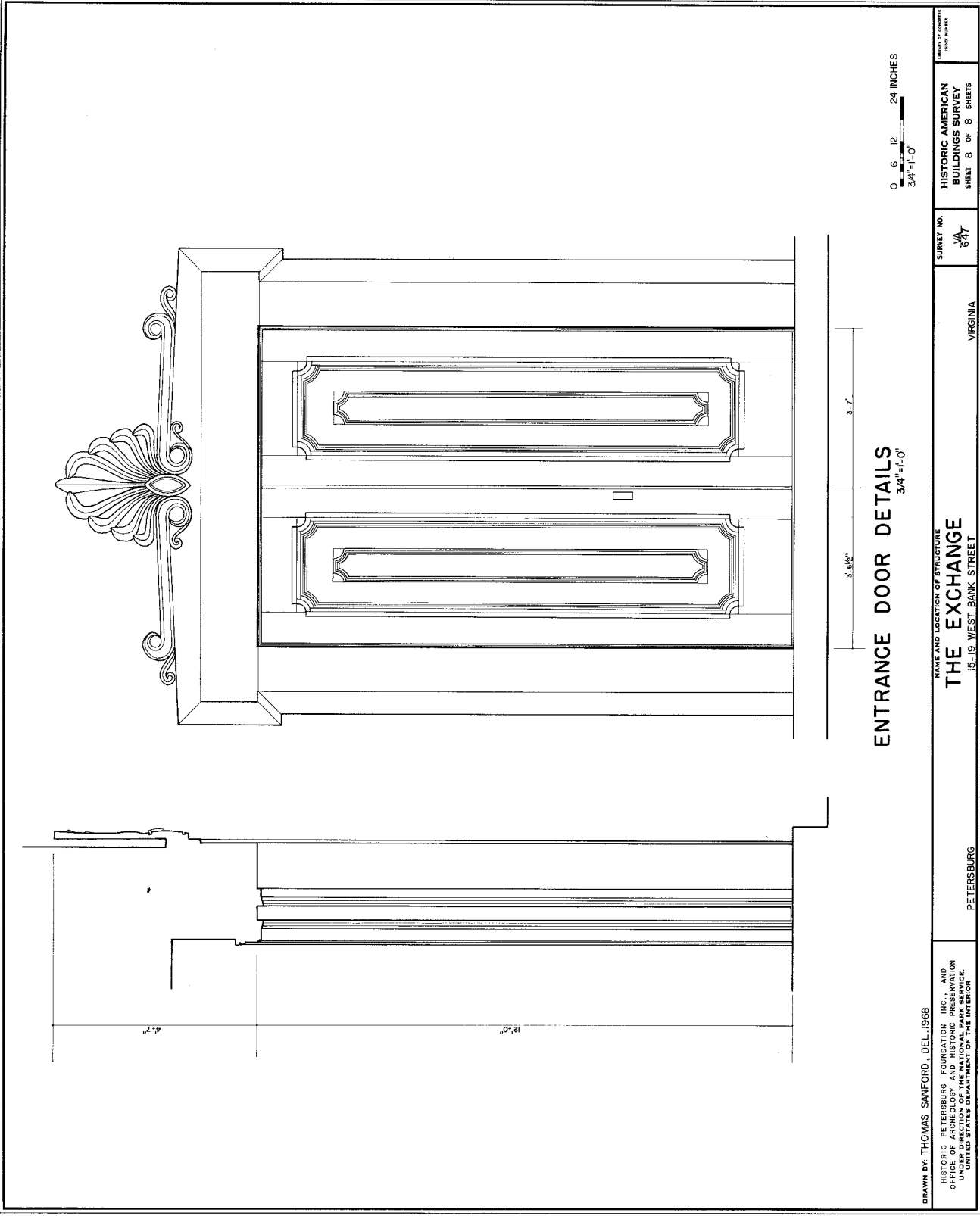


IX. APPENDIX "B" - cont'd





IX. APPENDIX "B" - cont'd



IX. APPENDIX "B" - cont'd



IX. APPENDIX "B" - cont'd





IX. APPENDIX "B" - cont'd



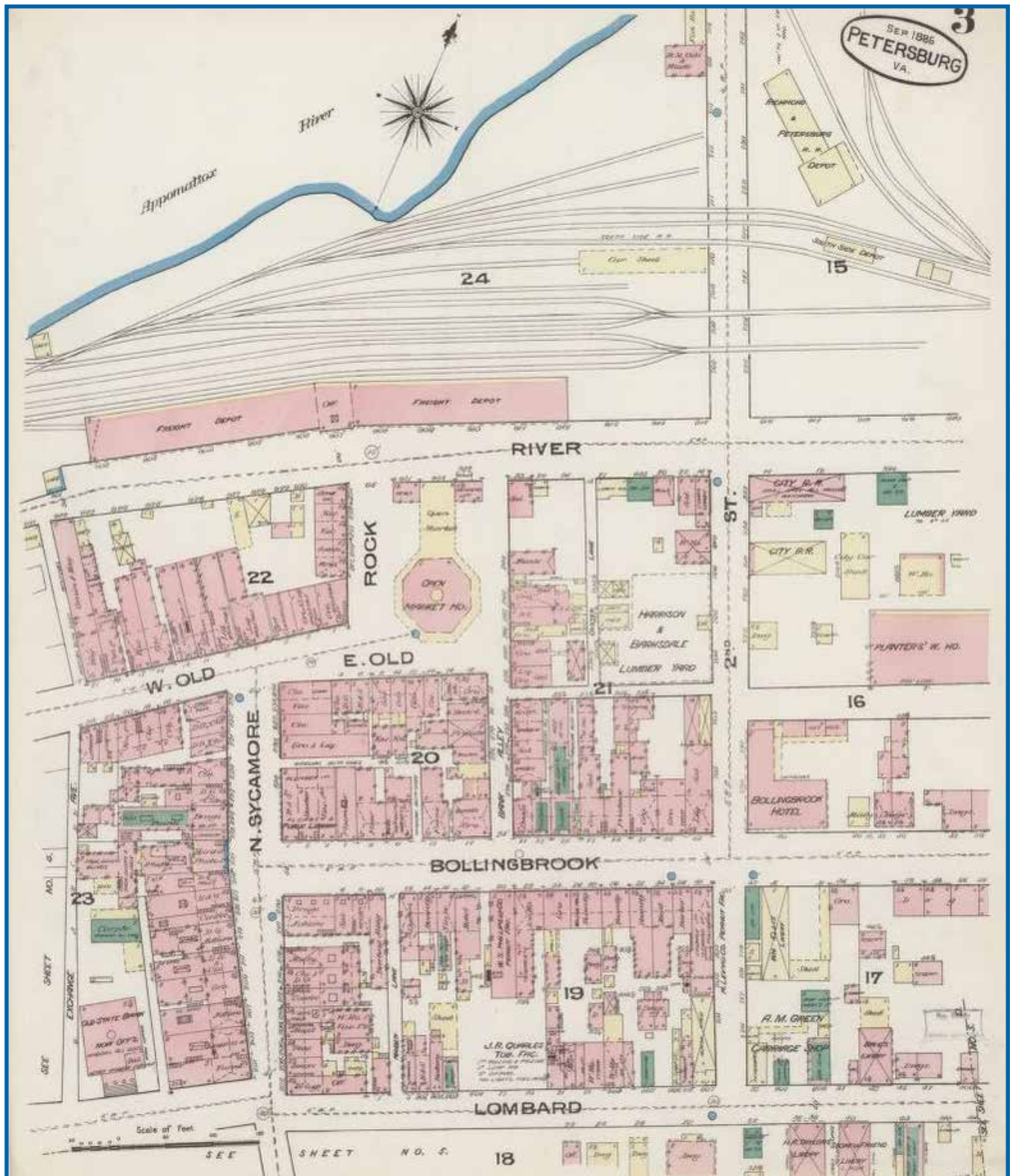
IX. APPENDIX "B" - cont'd



10

# X. APPENDIX "C" - ADDITIONAL MAPS

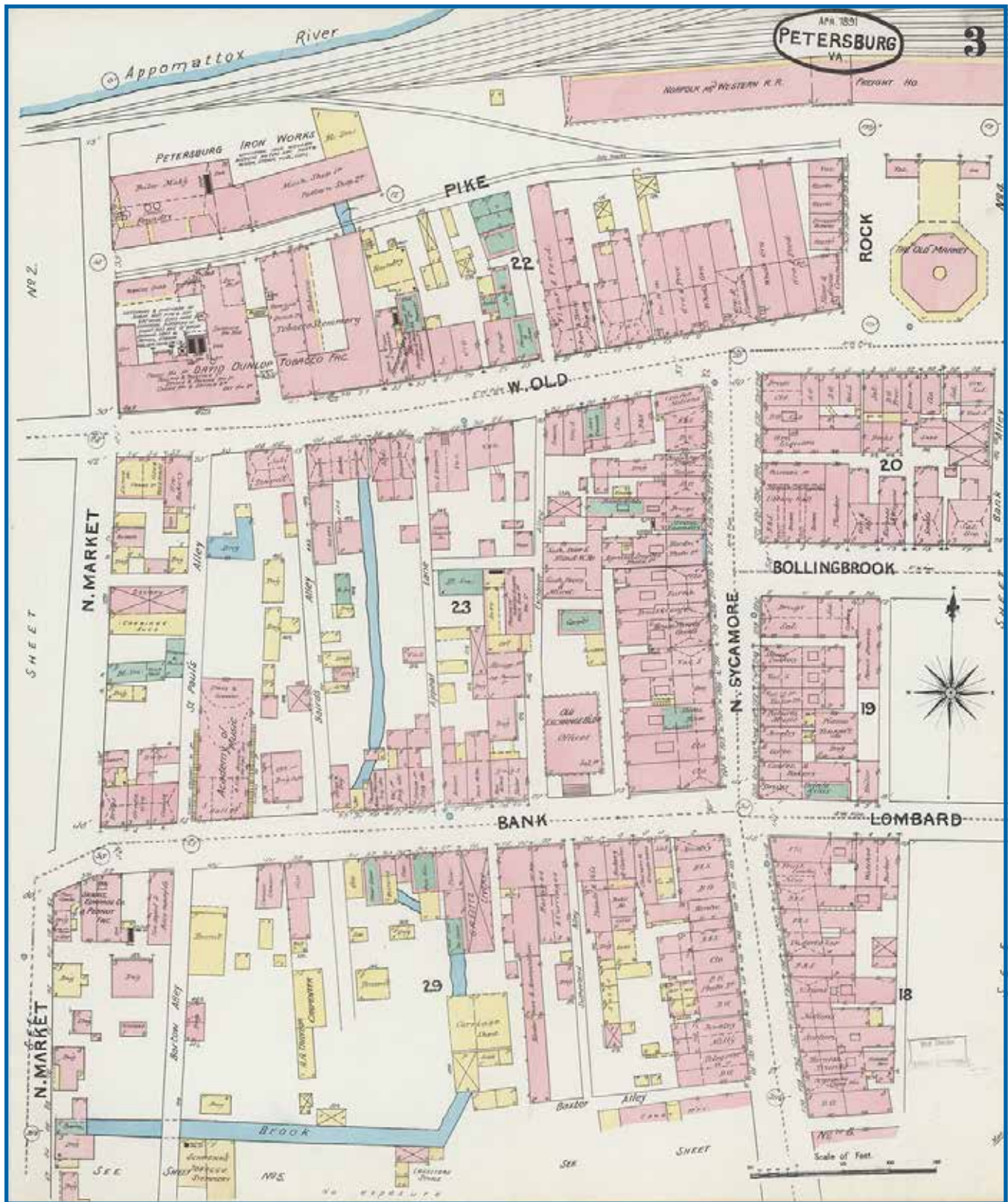
## *Sanborn Insurance Maps*



1887



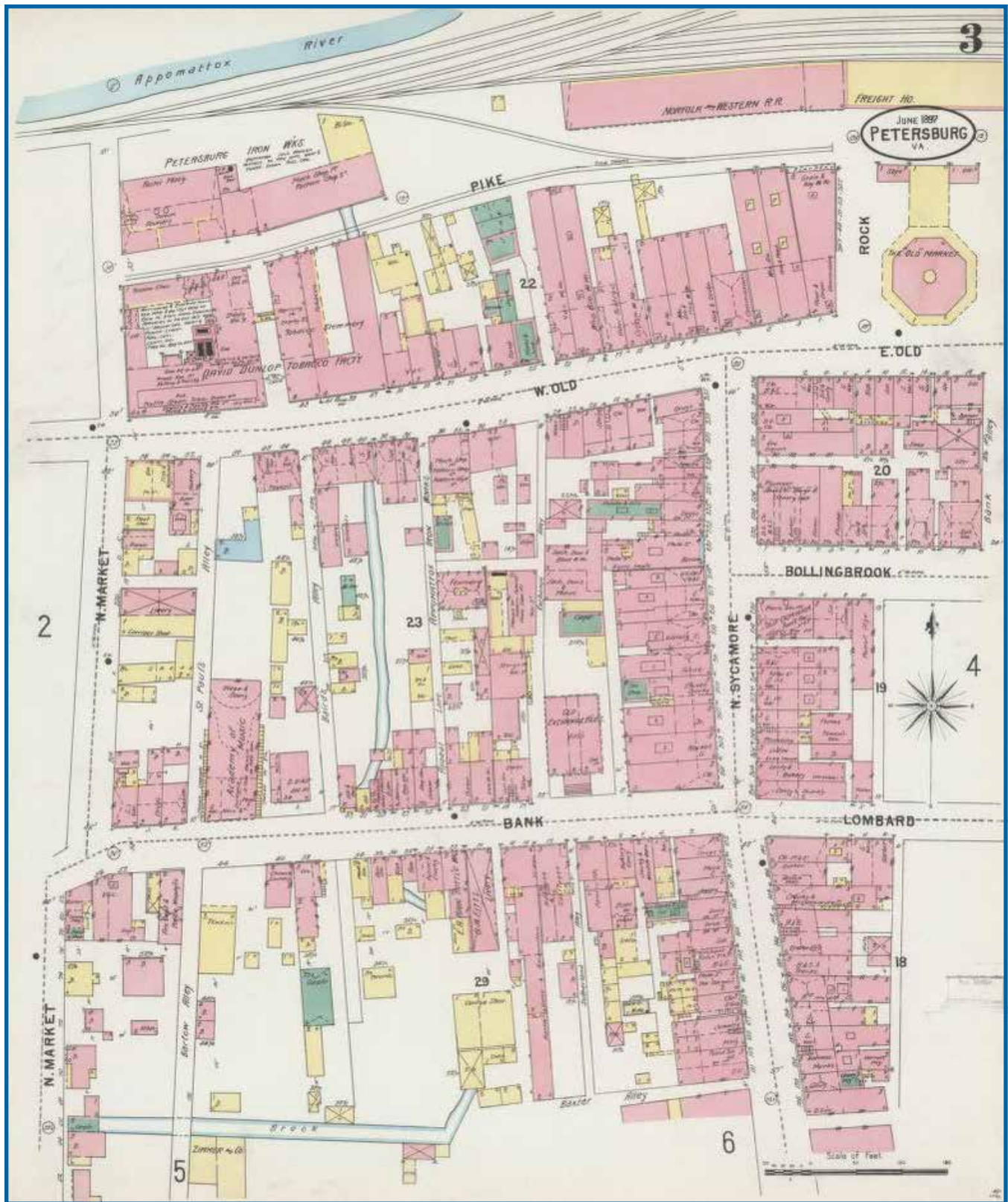
## X. APPENDIX "C" ADDITIONAL MAPS - cont'd



1891



## X. APPENDIX "C" ADDITIONAL MAPS - cont'd



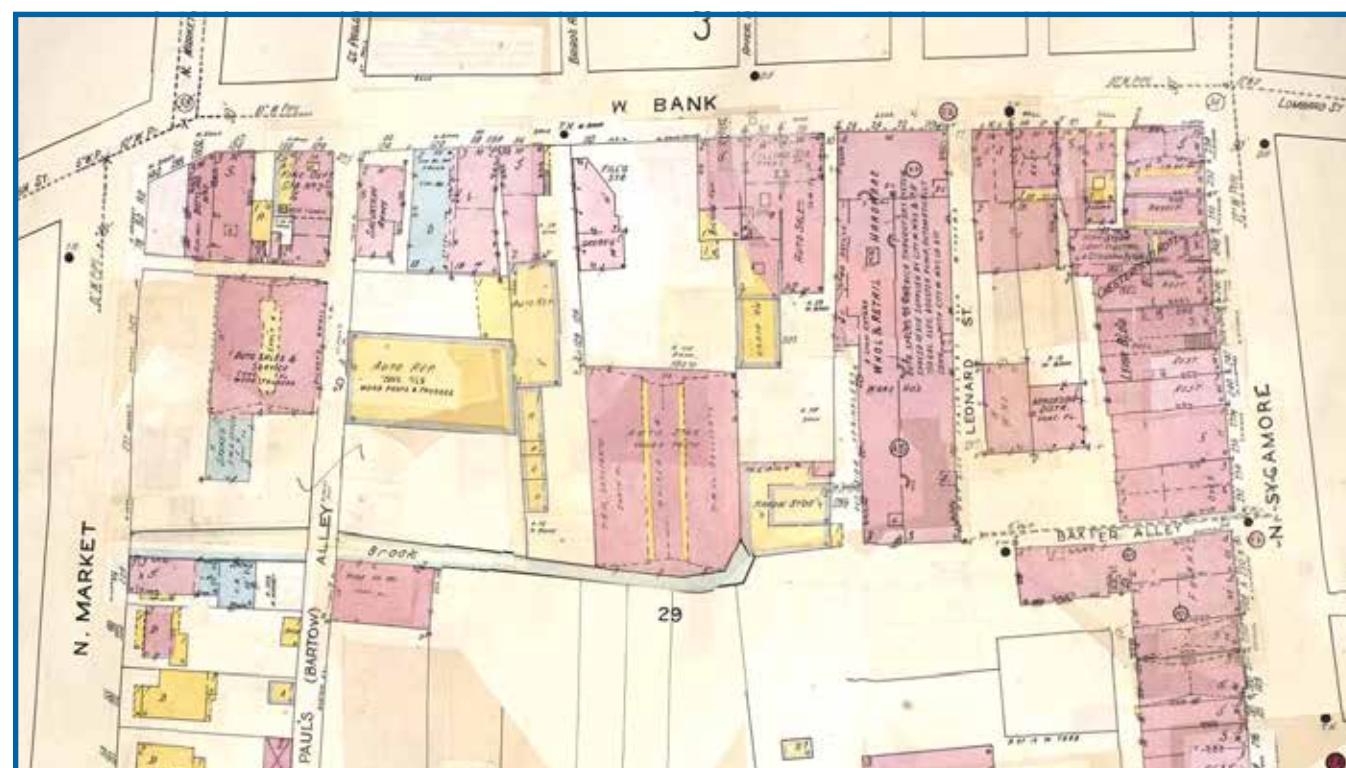
1897



## X. APPENDIX "C" ADDITIONAL MAPS - cont'd



1915



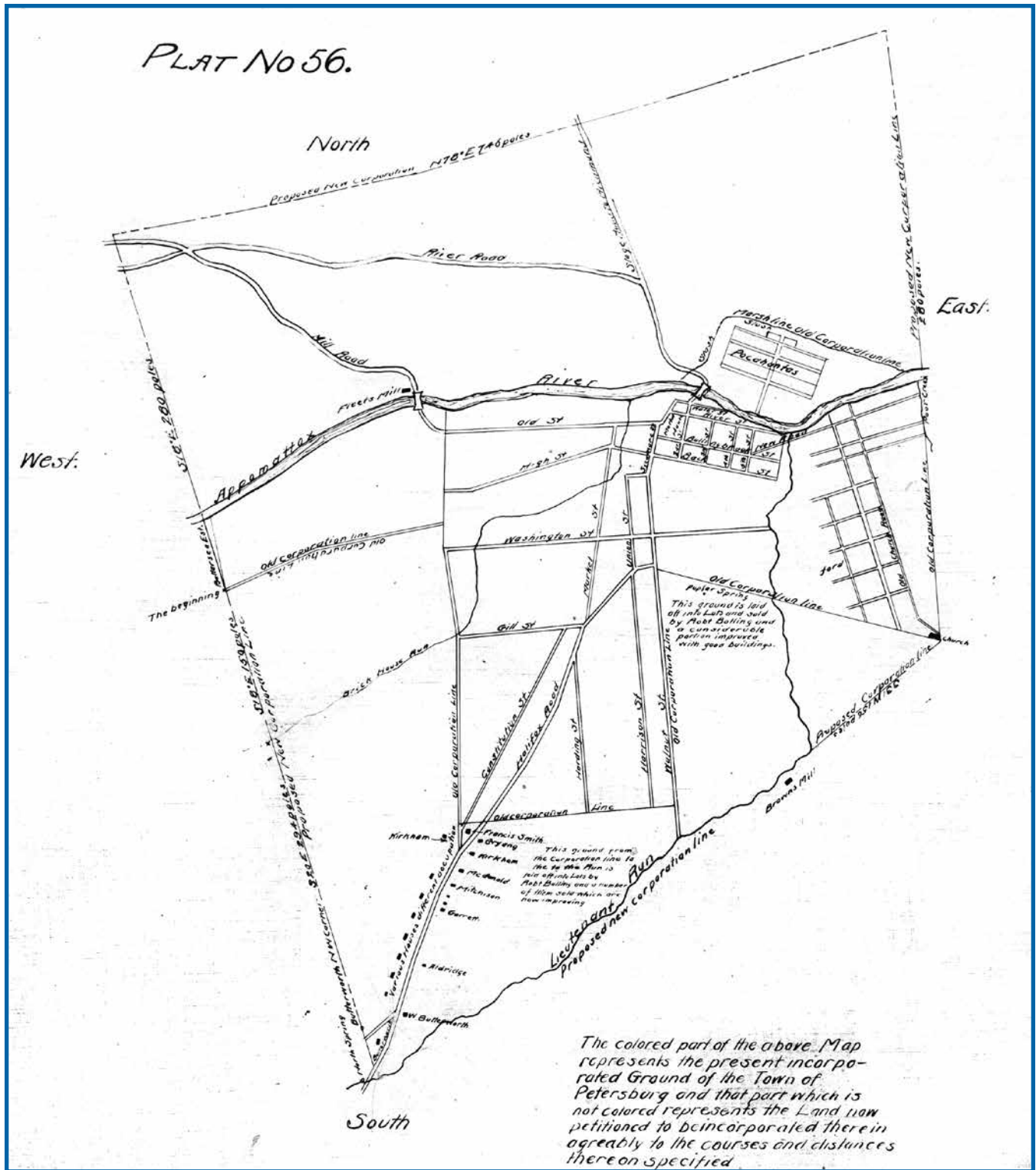
1941

## Historic Map References



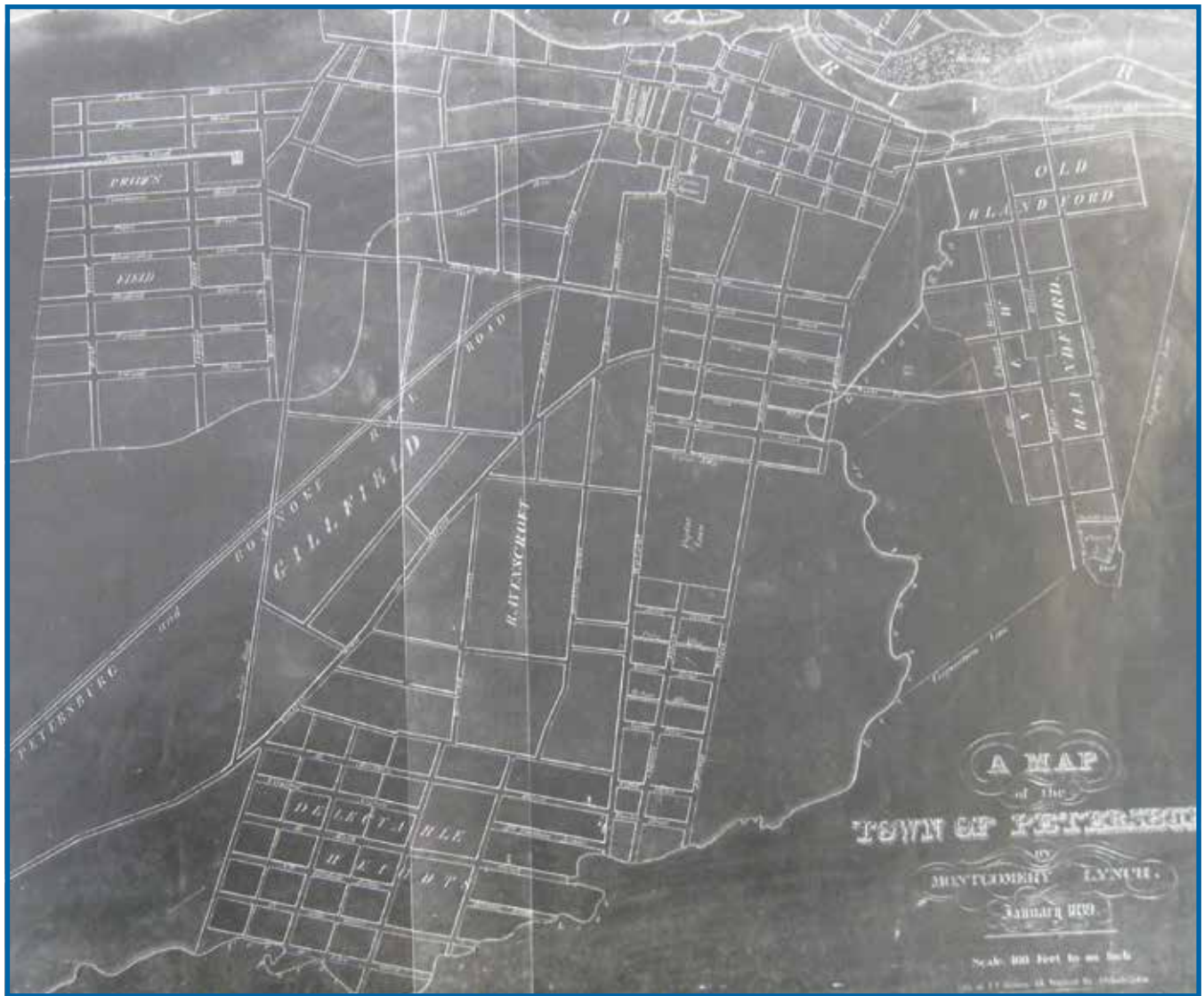


## X. APPENDIX "C" ADDITIONAL MAPS - cont'd



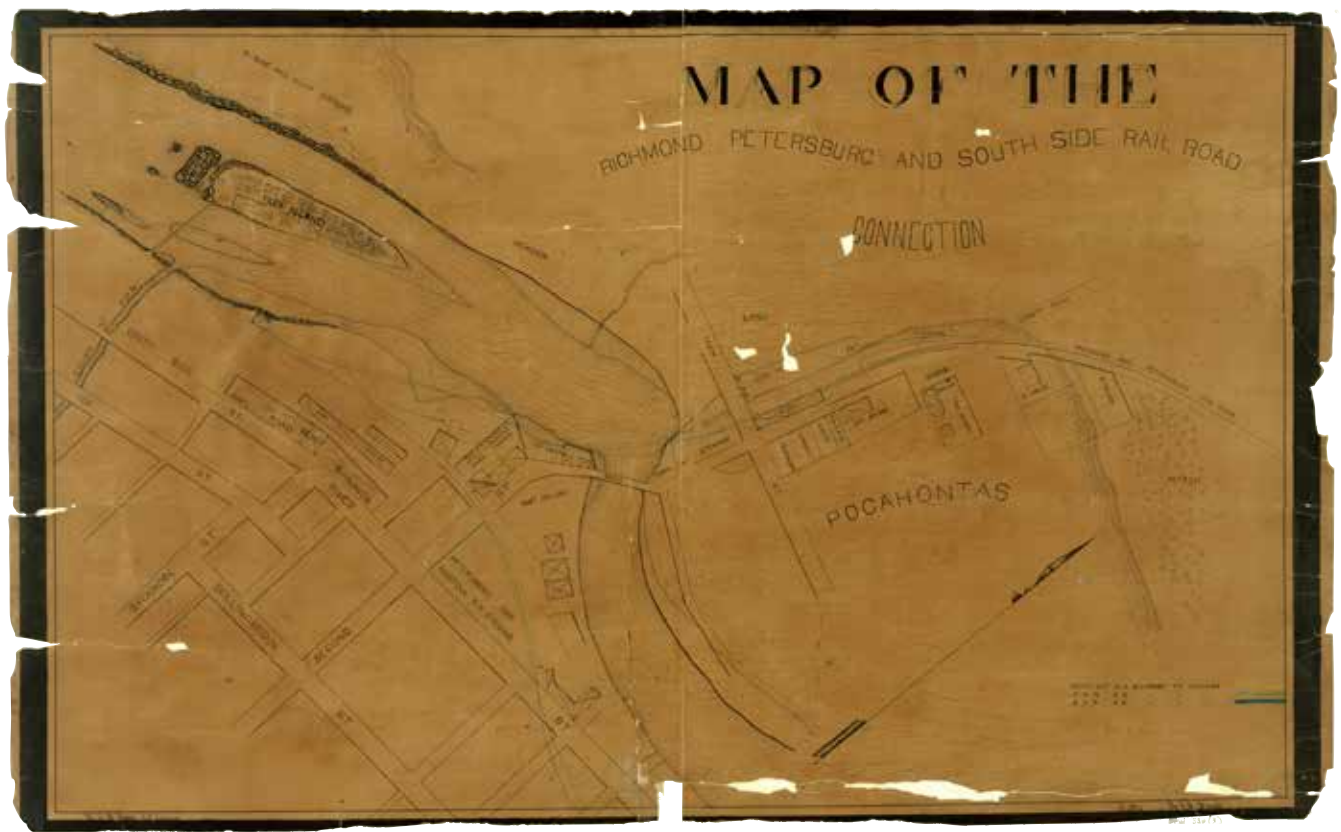
# 1815 Full Map

## X. APPENDIX "C" ADDITIONAL MAPS - cont'd



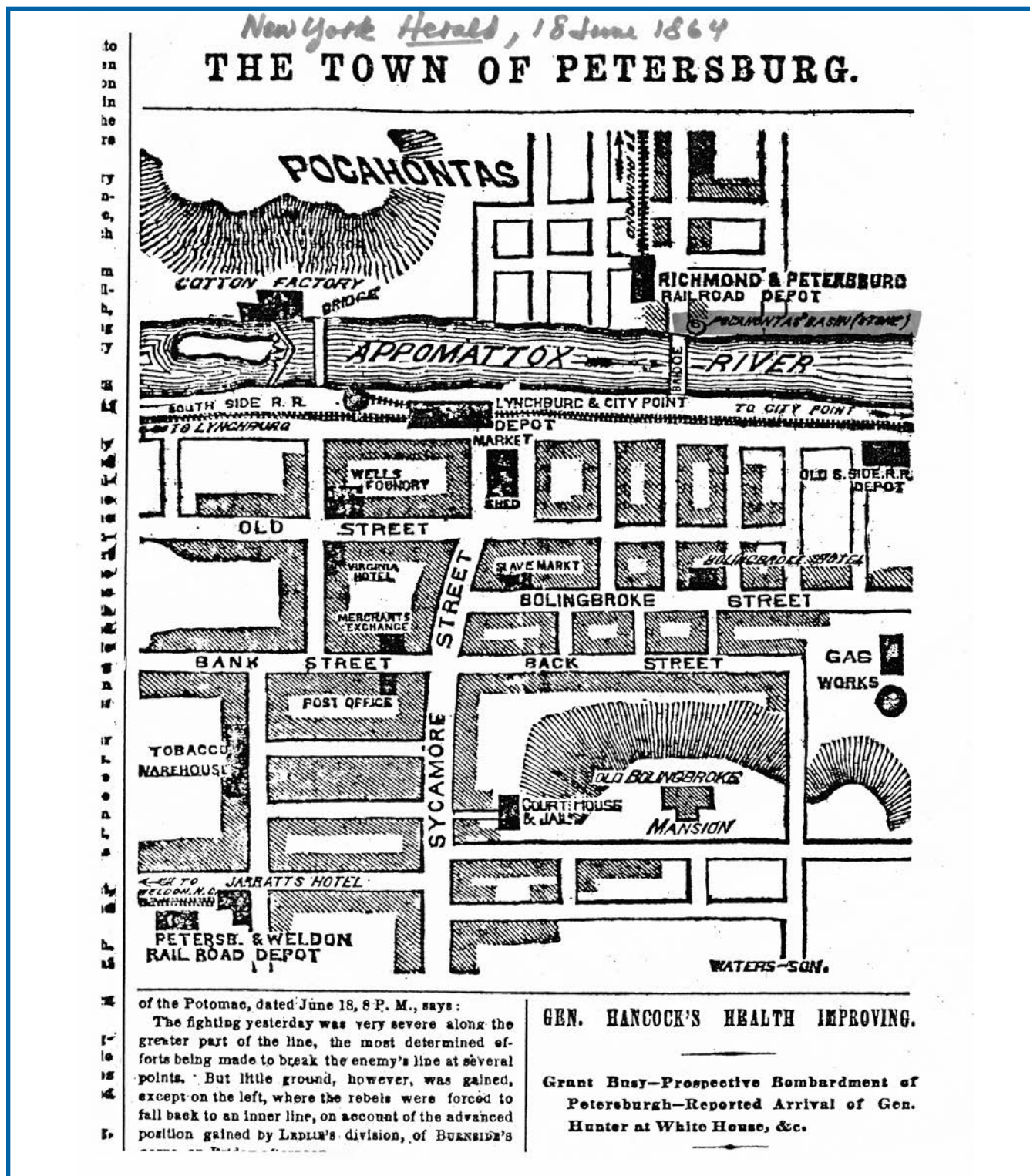
## 1839 Lynch Map

X. APPENDIX "C" ADDITIONAL MAPS - cont'd

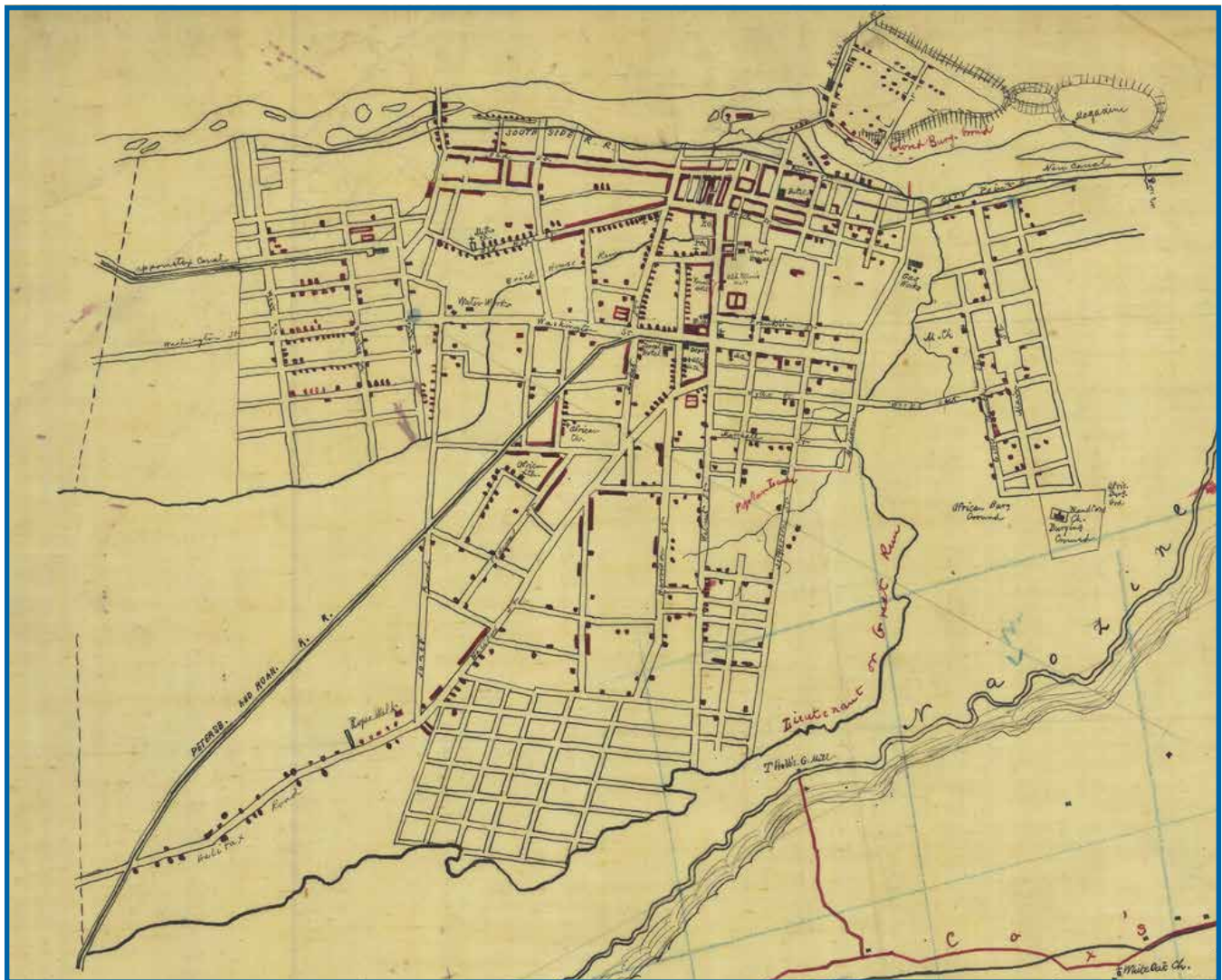


## 1856 Railroad Map





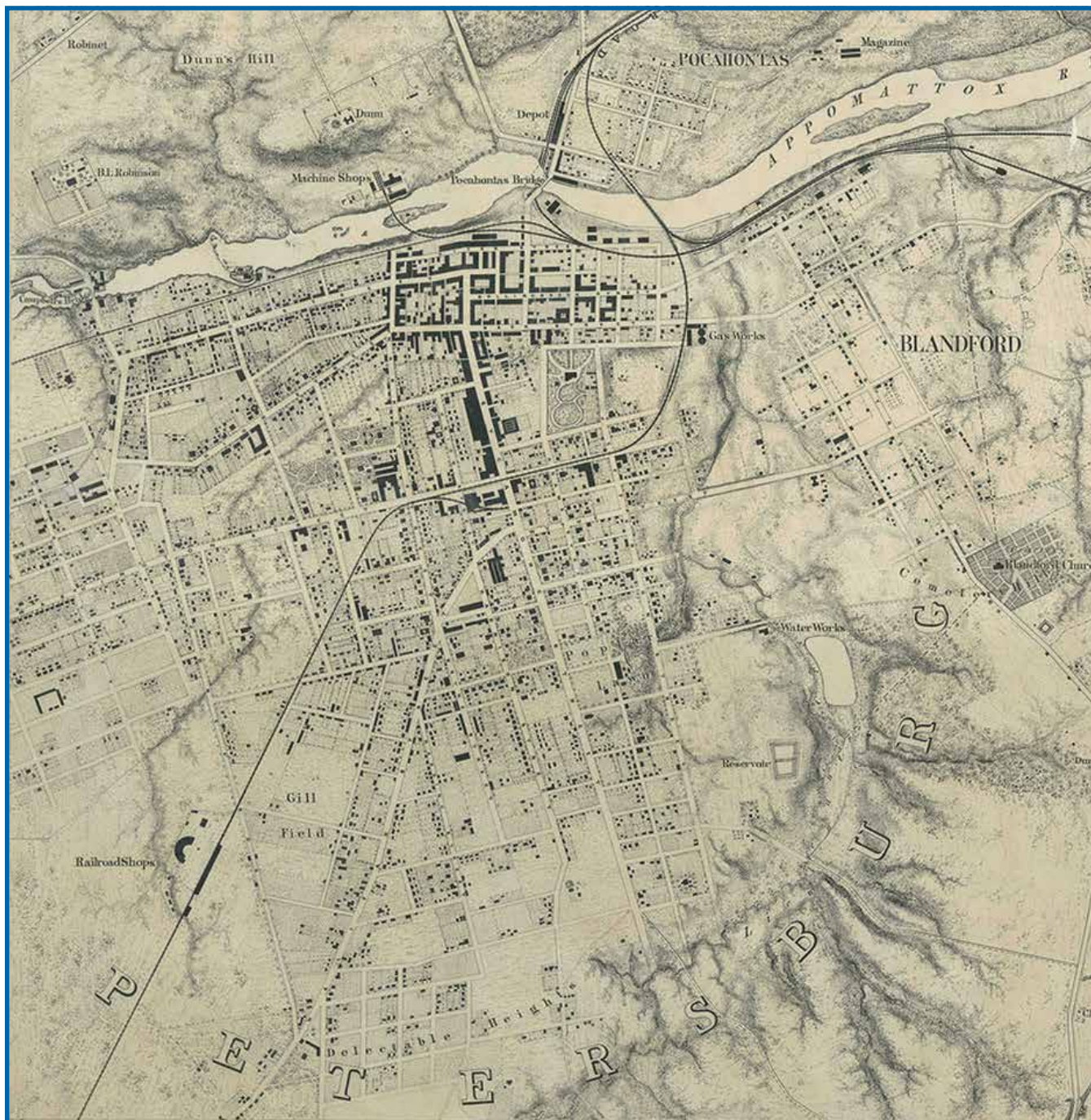
## X. APPENDIX "C" ADDITIONAL MAPS - cont'd



1864 - Copy of Keily Map



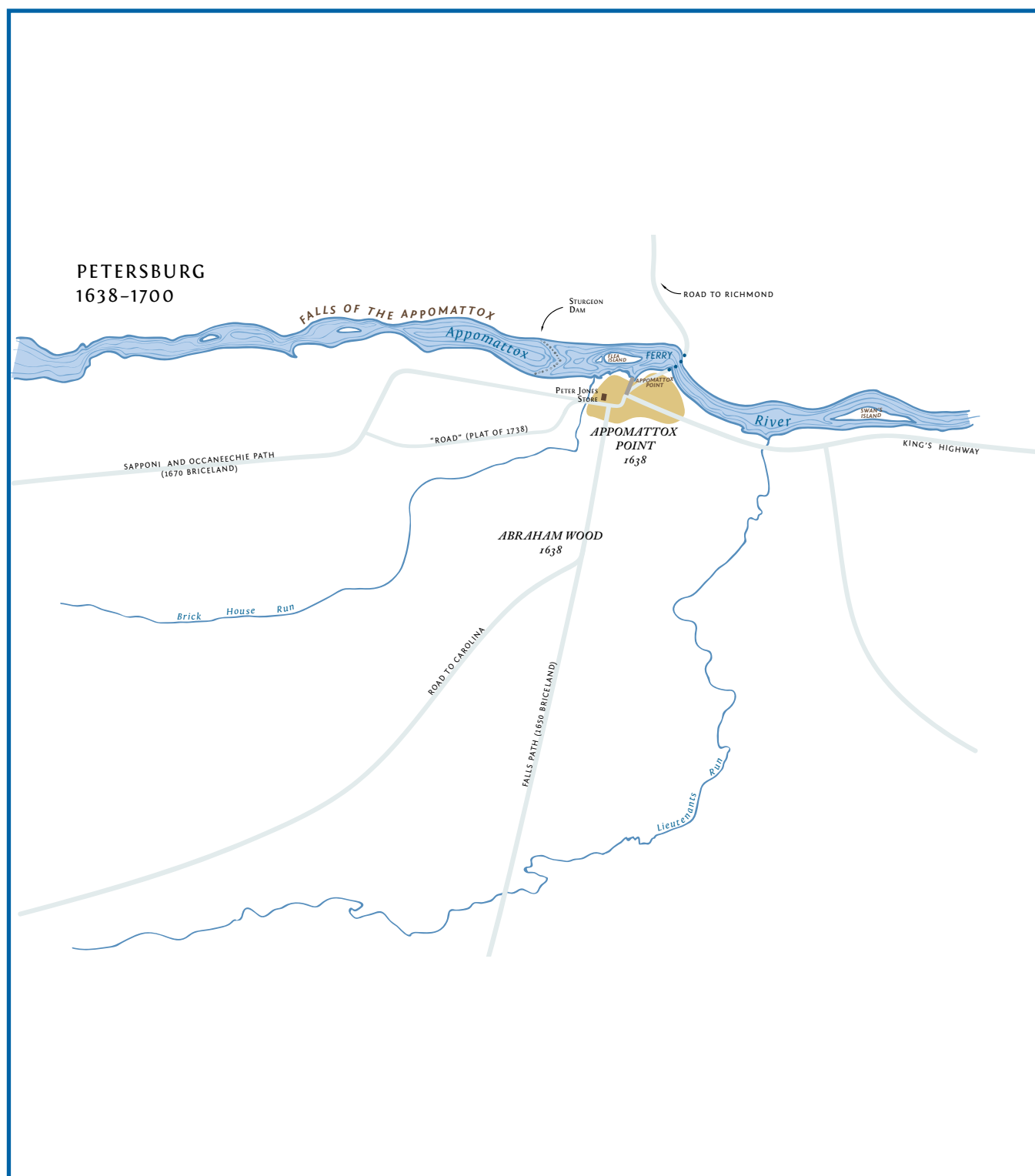
## X. APPENDIX "C" ADDITIONAL MAPS - cont'd



## 1865 - Michler Map



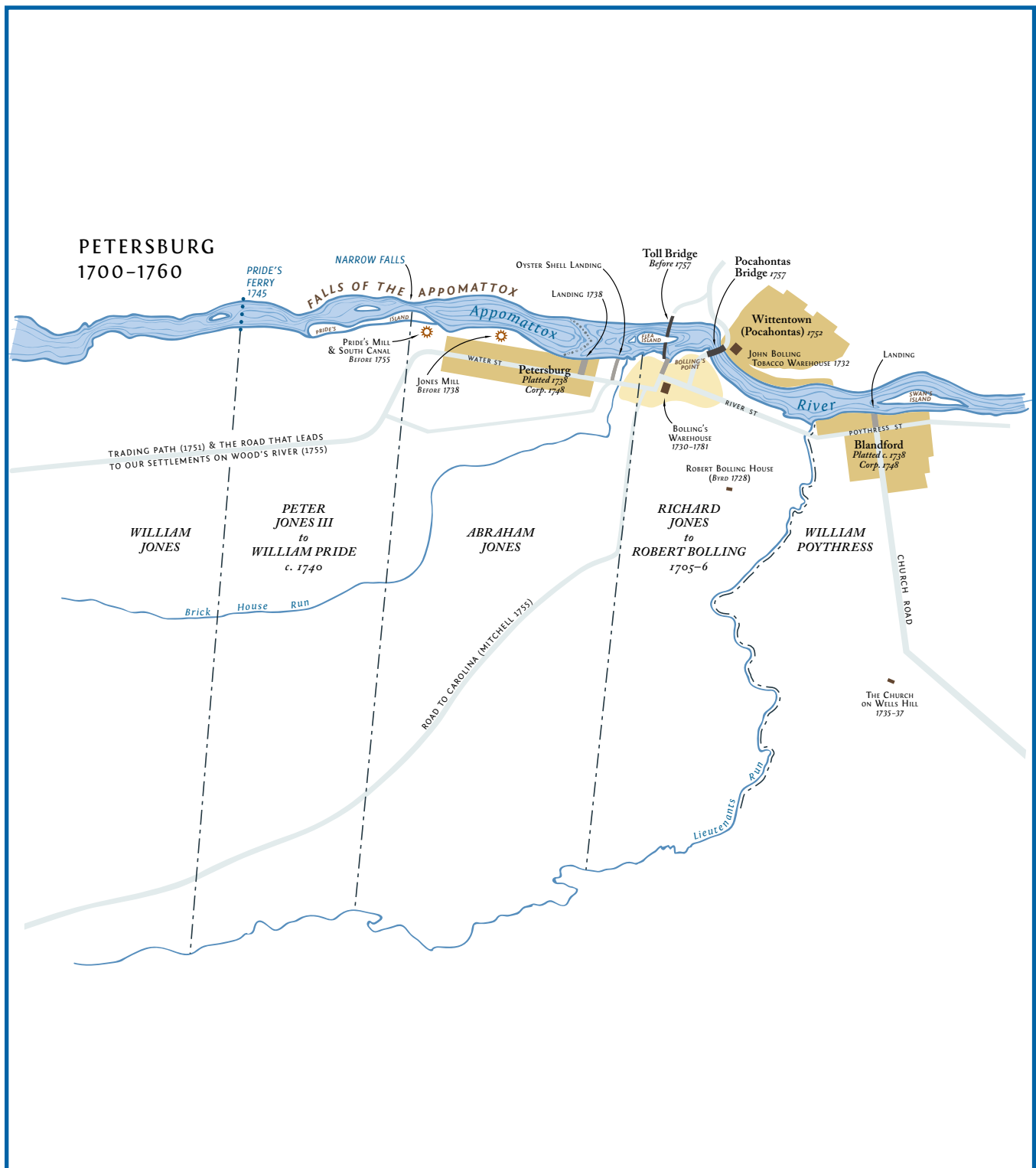
## *StudioAmmons Petersburg Development Maps*



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# 1638-1700

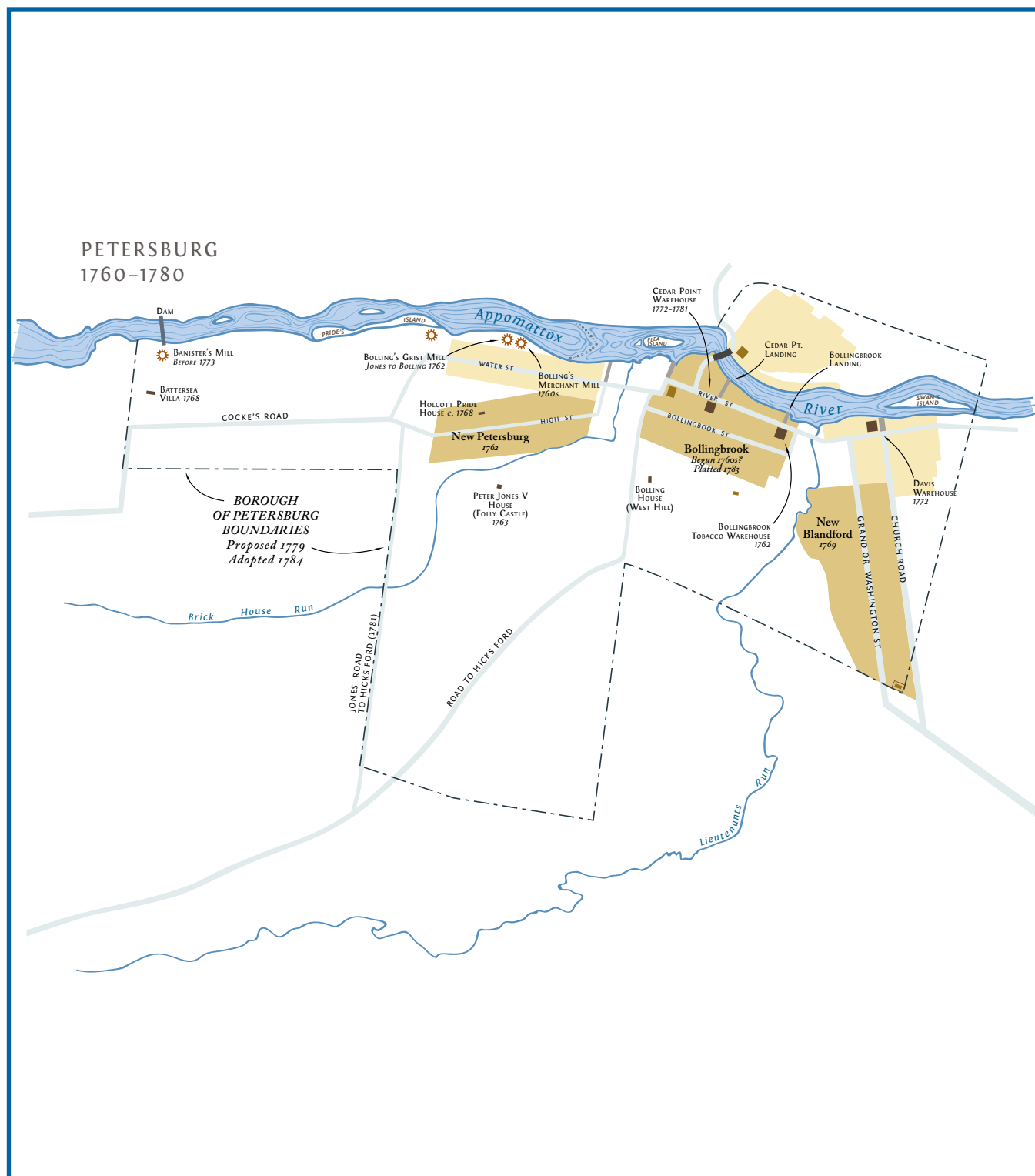
## X. APPENDIX "C" ADDITIONAL MAPS - cont'd



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# 1700-1760

## X. APPENDIX "C" ADDITIONAL MAPS - cont'd

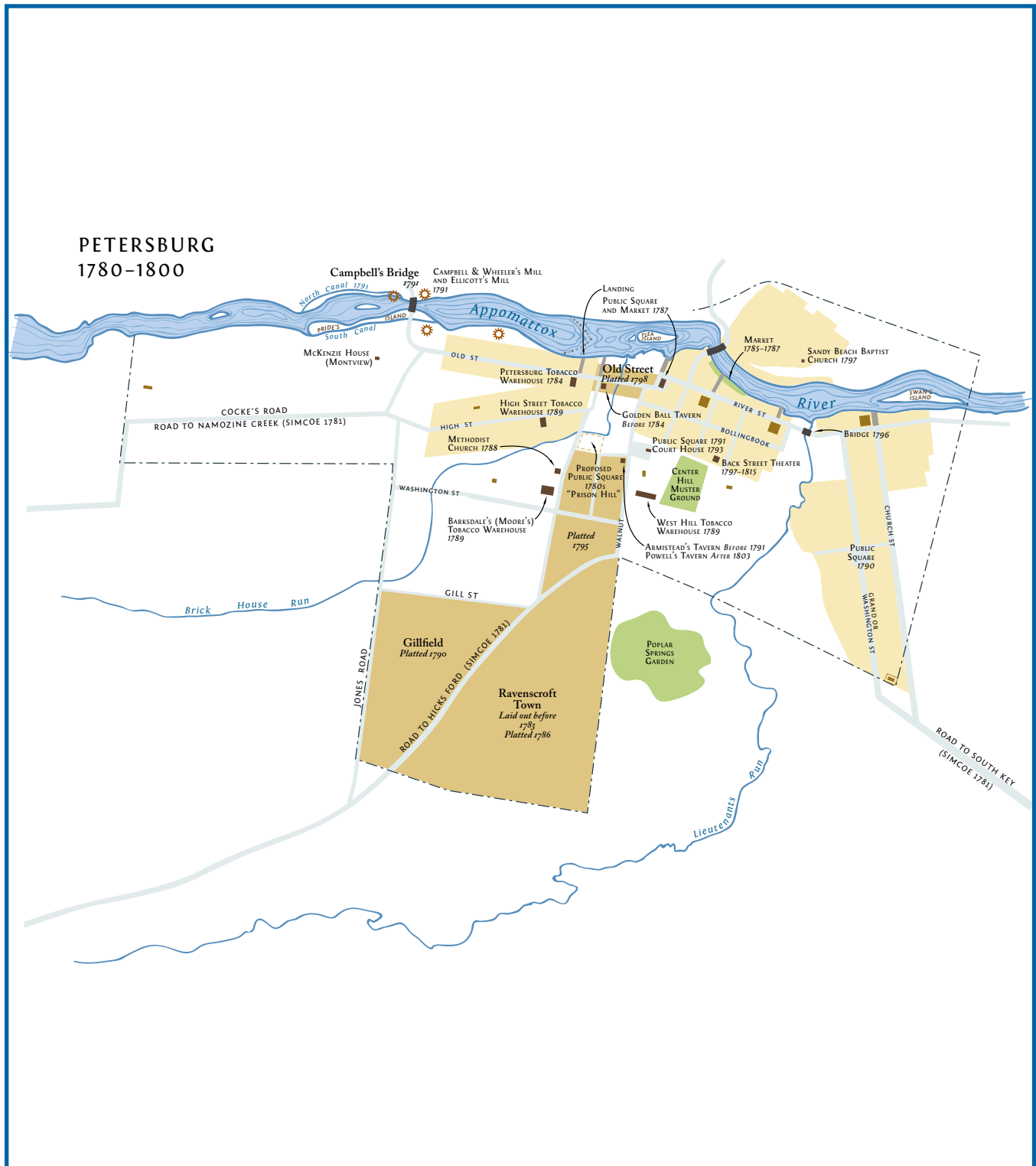


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# 1760-1780

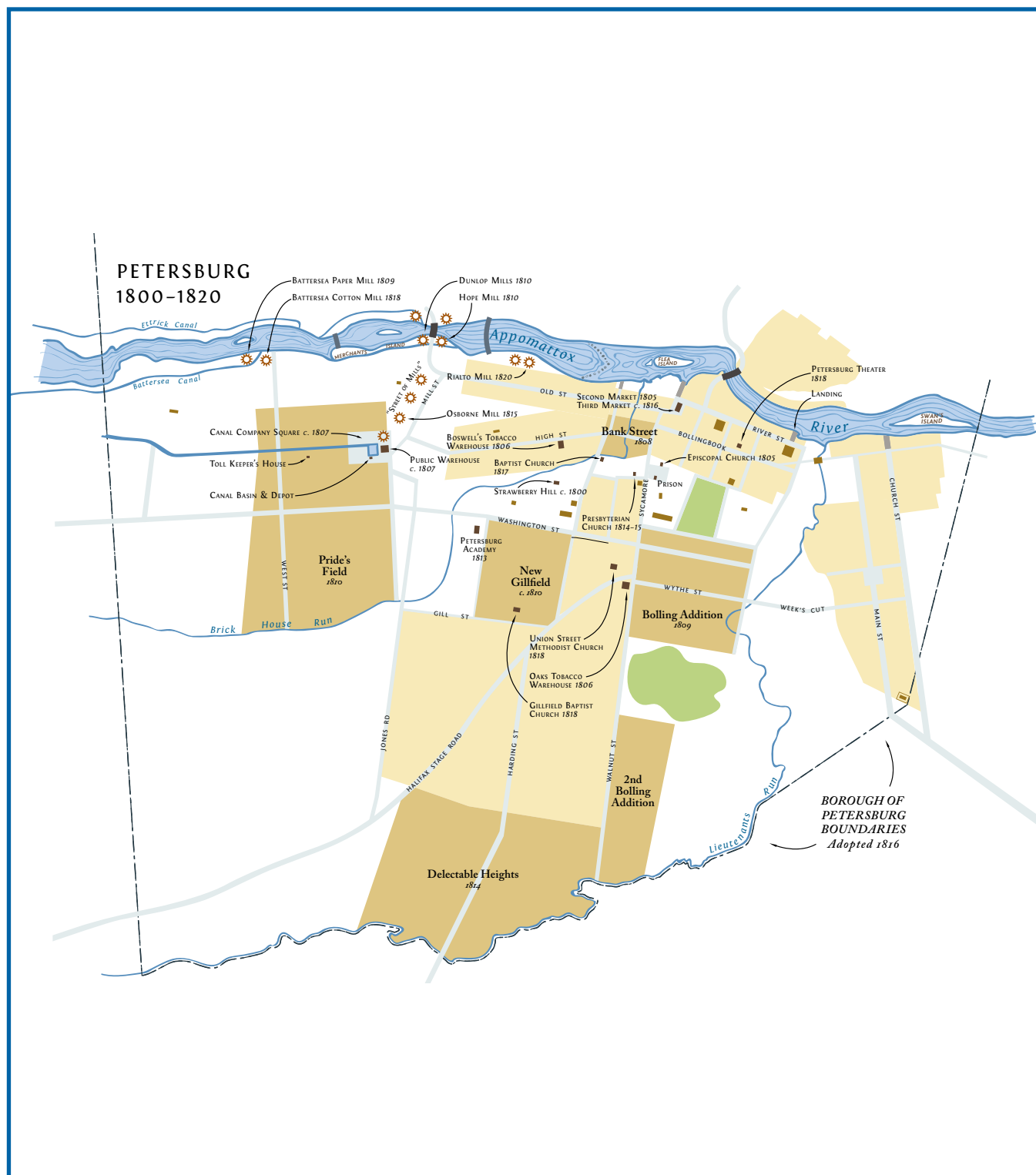


## X. APPENDIX "C" ADDITIONAL MAPS - cont'd



# 1780-1800

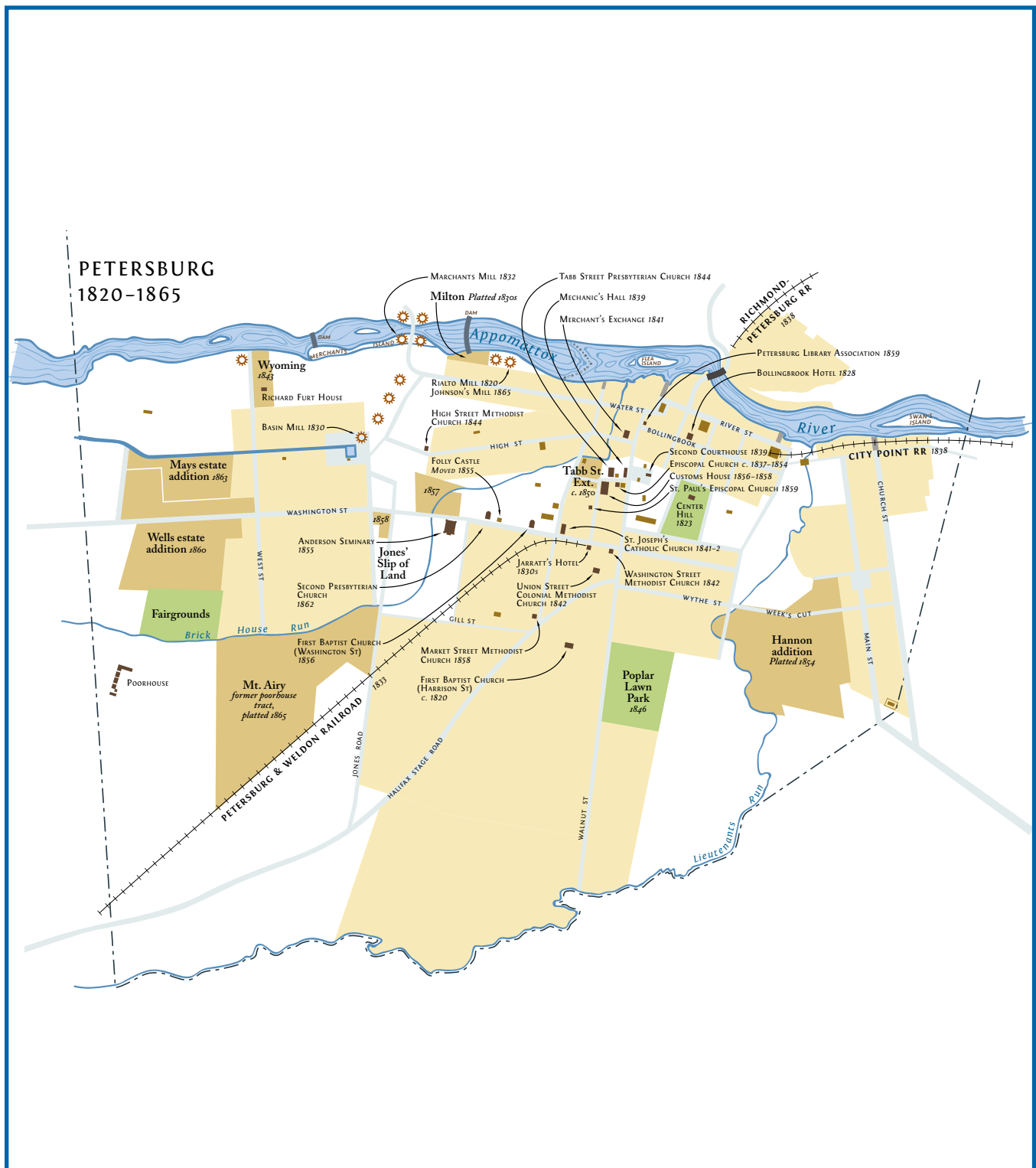
## X. APPENDIX "C" ADDITIONAL MAPS - cont'd



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# 1800-1820

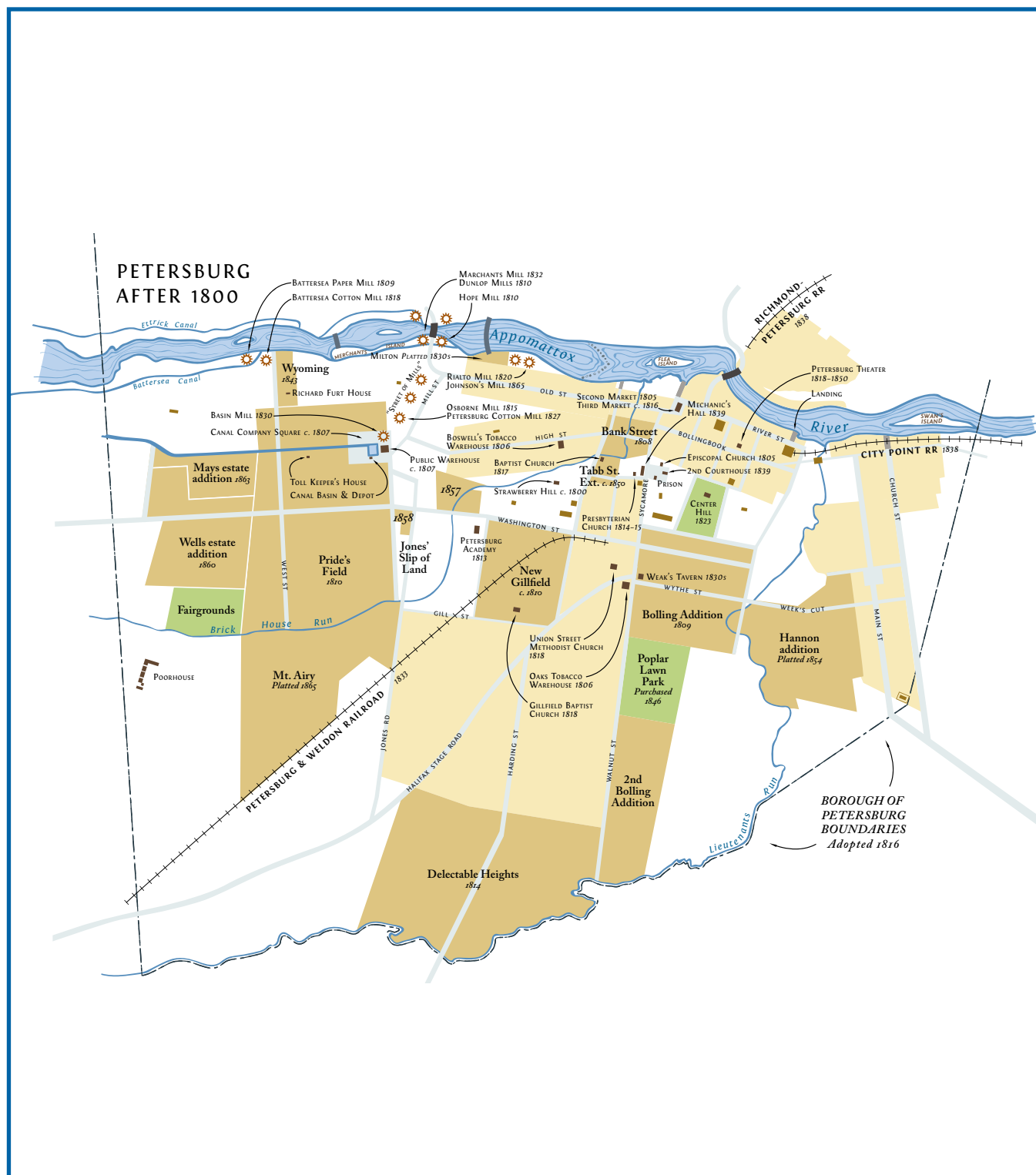
## X. APPENDIX "C" ADDITIONAL MAPS - cont'd



# 1820-1865



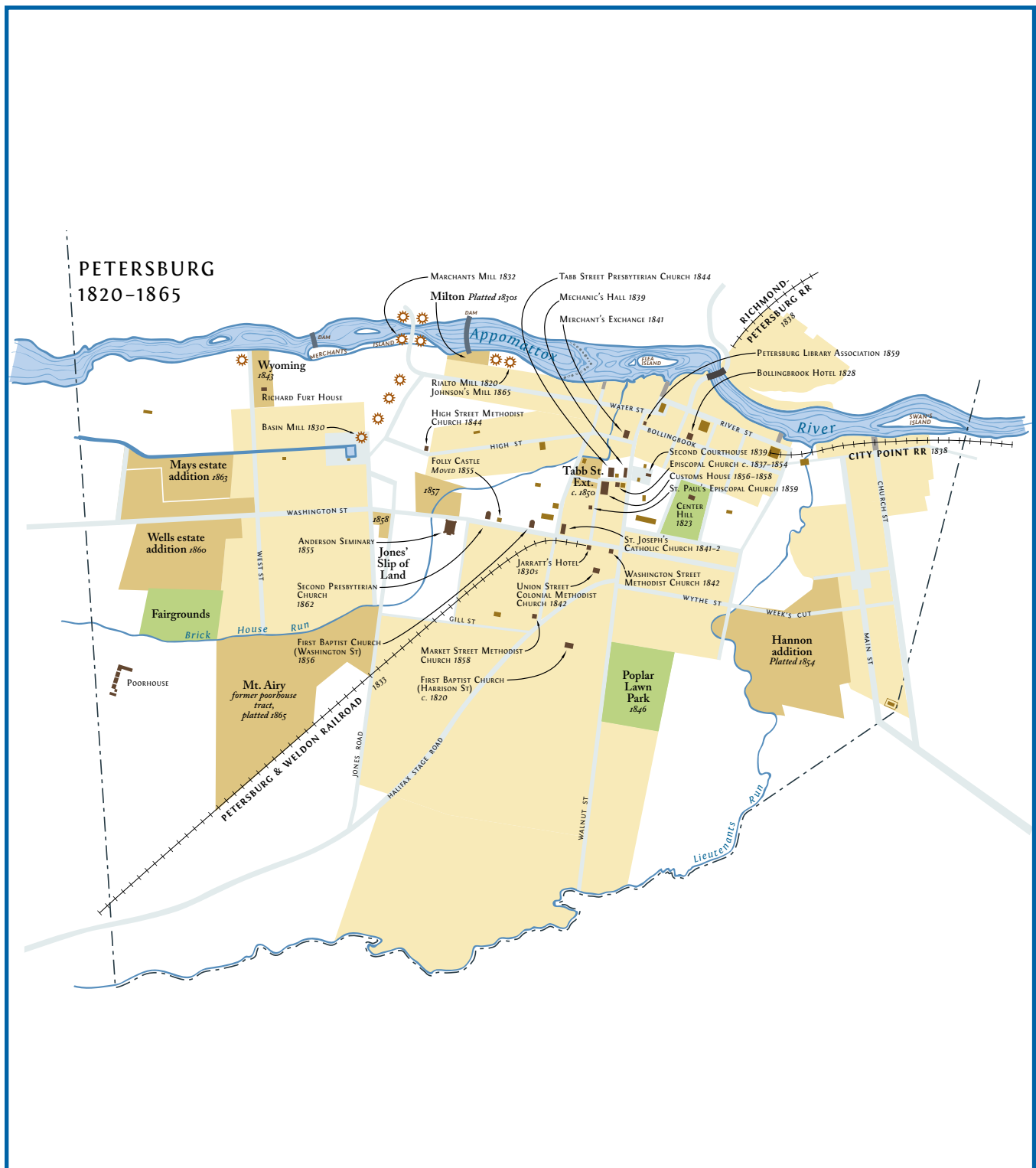
## X. APPENDIX "C" ADDITIONAL MAPS - cont'd



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# After 1865

## X. APPENDIX "C" ADDITIONAL MAPS - cont'd



# 1820-1865

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# XI. APPENDIX "D" - STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS

## *Engineering Design Associates Report*

In 2013 the city of Petersburg contracted with Engineering Design Associates to complete a structural survey and analysis for the Exchange Building. We have referenced their findings in this report and have noted, in the conditions assessment, where we feel additional information or a more complete understanding of the historic fabric would be beneficial as the recommendations in the structural engineer's report are considered in the context of any proposed stabilization or renovation work. The full report is attached here in this document for reference.

