

CAPSULE SUMMARY
McDowell Hall (AA-675)
St. John's College, Annapolis

McDowell Hall at St. John's College was begun in 1742 as the mansion for the Maryland colonial governor, Thomas Bladen. The original design was the work of architect Simon Duff and local builder Patrick Creagh. Factionalism in the General Assembly disrupted funding for the project, and the unfenestrated structure fell into disrepair. By 1784, the house, which had become known as "Bladen's Folly," was granted by the provincial government as the future site of St. John's College. The all-male college, chartered in 1784, completed the construction of the building. Joseph Clarke, who designed the dome of the State House, was responsible for the design and construction of the roof and cupola. In 1789, classes were held in the first two rooms to be finished. McDowell Hall was named in honor of St. John's first principal, John McDowell. The prominent Georgian style brick building was the only structure on the original four-acre campus until 1835, when Humphreys Hall was constructed. The building has been used as a dormitories, classroom/lecture halls, offices, and banquet/ball room by the now co-educational college. During the Civil War, it served as the headquarters of the Union Army Medical Corps. The structure was severely damaged by fire on February 20, 1909, and again in November 1952. Each time it was rebuilt to its original configuration. The centerpiece of St. John's College campus for over 200 years, McDowell Hall is one of the oldest academic buildings in continuous use in the United States. The building is significant for its association with education in colonial Maryland, Governor Thomas Bladen, and the enduring and innovative St. John's College. McDowell Hall is also significant architecturally as a well-developed, large-scale example of the Georgian style.

McDowell Hall is characterized by its cube-like massing and bold central pavilion. The three-story building is set upon a raised brick foundation, has brick walls laid in both English and Flemish bond, and is covered with a hipped roof. Slab brick end chimneys and a prominent central cupola punctuate the skyline. The building is divided horizontally into three principal levels by prominent brick belt courses, and vertically into nine equal bays of symmetrical window openings. The brick wall surfaces, though substantially rebuilt in areas, offer finely detailed brickwork and mortar joints, elegant brown sandstone quoining on the principal facade, brick belt courses, and a stone watertable and at the basement-level.

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Inventory No. AA-675

1. Name of Property (indicate preferred name)

historic McDowell Hall, St. John's College (preferred); Bladen's Folly

other

2. Location

street and number 60 College Avenue not for publication

city, town Annapolis vicinity

county Anne Arundel

3. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name St. John's College

street and number 60 College Avenue, Box 2800 telephone 410/263-2371

city, town Annapolis state MD zip code 21404

4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Anne Arundel County Courthouse tax map and parcel

city, town Annapolis liber folio

5. Primary Location of Additional Data

- Contributing Resource in National Register District
 Contributing Resource in Local Historic District
 Determined Eligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
 Determined Ineligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
 Recorded by HABS/HAER
 Historic Structure Report or Research Report at MHT
 Other: _____

6. Classification

Category	Ownership	Current Function		Resource Count	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce/trade	<input type="checkbox"/> recreation/culture	<u>1</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> defense	<input type="checkbox"/> religion	<u>1</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> site		<input type="checkbox"/> domestic	<input type="checkbox"/> social	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> structures
<input type="checkbox"/> object		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation	<u>4</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> objects
		<input type="checkbox"/> funerary	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<u>6</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> Total
		<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> unknown		
		<input type="checkbox"/> health care	<input type="checkbox"/> vacant/not in use		
		<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: Commemorative		
				Number of Contributing Resources previously listed in the Inventory	
				<u>1</u>	

7. Description

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Condition

<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> altered

Prepare both a one paragraph summary and a comprehensive description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

McDowell Hall was originally begun as the Maryland Colonial Governor's Mansion in 1742. It was subsequently completed in 1789 as St. John's College, and was later largely rebuilt following a disastrous fire in 1909. Today, McDowell Hall, characterized by its cube-like massing and bold central pavilion, stands as the centerpiece of St. John's College campus. The three-story building is set upon a raised brick foundation, has brick walls laid in both English and Flemish bond, and is covered with a hipped roof. Slab brick end chimneys and a prominent central cupola punctuate the skyline. The building is divided horizontally into three principal levels by prominent brick belt courses, and vertically into nine equal bays of symmetrical window openings. The brick wall surfaces, though substantially rebuilt in areas, offer finely detailed brickwork and mortar joints, elegant brown sandstone quoining on the principal facade, brick belt courses, and a stone watertable and at the basement-level.

Although it is clearly a Georgian building, McDowell Hall is a product of several significant building campaigns. These phases of construction are described below:

PHASE 1 (1742-1747): Construction of McDowell Hall began in 1742, as the intended residence of the then-governor of Maryland, Thomas Bladen. It was planned as a large, double-pile residence, consisting of the two-story, nine-bay main block above a raised cellar, and including the projecting three-bay central pavilions on the front and rear walls. Paired interior chimneys were to serve four corner-room fireplaces on each floor. The building, designed by architect Simon Duff and constructed by local builder Patrick Creagh, was executed up to the roof level before the project was abandoned and construction was discontinued.

PHASE 2 (1786-1789): Having acquired the unfinished governor's mansion in 1786, the newly-formed St. John's College hired Joseph Clark, architect of the State House, to complete the exterior of the building and design the interior layout to accommodate classrooms, dormitories for students and faculty, and other facilities. The main aspects of the exterior of the building that date to Phase 2 include the following: the small gables on the building's side walls above the central bay of windows; the pitch and profile of the hipped roof; and the original octagonal drum and bell tower (rebuilt in Phase 6, along different lines, but visible in historic photos). A wood porch (later rebuilt) was constructed on the main southeast facade.

PHASE 3 (1830-1860): The original windows on the south elevation of the building were replaced with new sash having larger panes and finer muntins. This may have been done in an effort to accentuate the primacy of this facade.

PHASE 4 (circa 1882): A sandstone stair porch and entrance were added to the southwest side of the building.

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PHASE 5 (1903; 1904): The Greek Revival-style, red Seneca sandstone porch and stair were added to the northeast side wall, having been salvaged from the west side of the State House Library Annex before its demolition. The wood porch on the southeast facade was rebuilt in 1904, but retained the overall dimensions.

PHASE 6 (1909): In February 1909, McDowell Hall suffered a disastrous fire that caused extensive damage and left the building a mere shell. The uppermost floors on the interior were lost, and the first floor effectively ruined. On the exterior, the first story and most of the second story walls survived the fire, but much of the third story walls were lost. Following the fire, the building was restored, to its original overall configuration and massing. However, certain changes were made in plan and in detail. For instance, on the interior, the third floor was re-arranged into its present six-room plan (the large center room having been abandoned) and the stairway was altered. The cupola was rebuilt along different lines, giving it a more attenuated and less robust appearance.

PHASE 7 (1952): Fire struck McDowell Hall again, damaging the basement and floor of the Great Hall. The original wood beams were damaged and replaced by steel beams. And, in the decade following the fire, the first floor classrooms were divided to create offices and reception space.

PHASE 8 (1989): McDowell Hall was renovated, with its floors and gallery strengthened. The configuration of several classrooms was altered, and modern HVAC installed. A new stair was added to the west side of the building.

Exterior Description:

The southern (or SE) elevation of McDowell Hall facing College Avenue has a strong sense of frontality. The nine-bay facade is divided into three parts with a central projecting pavilion and side wings. A pediment and a three-bay-wide porch further articulate the central pavilion. The corners of the building are decorated with brownstone quoining, a rich detail found in other pre-Revolutionary brick buildings and meant to accentuate the termination of the wall plane. The elevation is divided horizontally by a molded brownstone water table and by brick belt courses between the principal stories. The walls are laid in a combination of all-header and Flemish bond with fine raised mortar joints. The windows have elegant gauged brick flat-arch lintels with thin putty joints on the basement, first and second stories.

The first story of the facade is principally laid in all-header brick above the raised brownstone water table.¹ The brickwork generally survives from Phase 1, though some significant repointing of the brick

¹ The side wings have Flemish bond brickwork for several courses above the watertable, then header bond above.

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is evident in sections, and the brick under the porches appears to have been refaced following the 1909 fire.² The brick varies in color from salmon red to dark brown. The central pavilion features a central entry door and 12/12 flanking windows behind a three-bay wood porch with central pediment. This porch, originally built during Phase 2, was rebuilt in 1904, along the same lines.³ This 1904 re-built porch appears from photographs to have survived the 1909 fire. It is characterized by its attenuated wood columns with entasis, sandstone torus bases, and reeding in the neck below the caps--features similar to those found on the rear porch, in the gallery and in the cupola--all Phase 2 additions to the building. The porch sits upon a Flemish bond brick base and has a vault under it, providing a passage to the ground story door below, and features a wood railing with some original and some replacement hand rails.

Behind the porch is the double entry door and flanking 12/12 windows. The door, from Phase 2, miraculously survived the fire and consists of two leaves, each with four panels treated as flush beaded rectangles on the exterior and sunken panels with heavy ovolos on the interior. The 12/12 windows to either side appear actually to be two pairs of 6-light sash modified to create the present 12-light sash. This was probably done during the rebuilding following the 1909 fire, possibly to make them consistent with those at the other end of the Great Hall, on the north elevation.⁴ Fine, gauged brick lintels cap the window openings.

The windows in the bays to either side of the central pavilion have 6/6 wood sash, with large panes and narrow muntins that suggest an 1830-1860 date of construction and influence of the Greek Revival style. These windows may have been replaced at that time to reinforce the primacy of the facade (the windows on the corresponding north elevation have smaller panes arranged in a 12/12 configuration). The openings are rectangular and have fine, gauged brick flat arches above them. Based upon photographs, it appears that the first-story windows survived the fire.

The belt course separating the first and second stories is a strong, complex one with courses of beveled brick, common brick and convex brick, all laid as headers but without rubbing and with common lined mortar joints. The second story above this belt course is laid in Flemish bond. The walls generally survived the fire, though some patching is visible between the windows. All nine windows have 6/3

² According to Edward Chappell (Director, Architectural Research Department, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation), the brickwork inside the porches on both the north and south elevations was almost entirely refaced in 1909. This was done possibly in order to remove remnants of the white paint and/or plaster that covered the walls under the north and south porches, as seen in historic photographs. See Memorandum from Edward Chappell to architect Chip Bohl, dated June 6, 1988 (MHT Vertical files, McDowell Hall.)

³ See Memorandum from Edward Chappell to Chip Bohl, dated June 6, 1988 (MHT Vertical files, McDowell Hall.)

⁴ See Memorandum from Edward Chappell to Chip Bohl, dated June 6, 1988. (MHT Vertical Files, McDowell Hall).

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sash (either 1830-1860 originals, or post-fire reproductions of the 1830-1860 sash), gauged brick flat arches and wood sills.

The belt course separating the second and third stories consists of four rows of plain header bond, while the walls above are laid in Flemish bond. The belt course and the third-story walls are almost all a product of the post-fire rebuilding. The windows on this level are square with six-fixed lights and gauged flat-arched brick lintels.

Above the third story central pavilion rises the central pediment and cornice, both rebuilt following the fire. The pediment is adorned with an oval neo-classical window and cornice returns.

The basement level of the facade below a molded brownstone watertable and surrounded by an "area," is laid in English bond (of inferior quality to the bonding of upper floors), with significant repointing. The basement level consists of a central basement level entry below the porch and three bays of 6/6 windows in the two side wings, all of which retain fine gauged brick flat arches from the original period of construction.

The western (or SW) elevation is a relatively unadorned brick wall surface defined by a single bay of openings on center and brick belt courses dividing the wall horizontally. The cellar, first and second stories were built as part of the original period of construction, while the third story and pediment were built during the Phase 2 completion stage. It seems that this wall surface may originally have been unpierced, but during the completion of the building in Phase 2, was fenestrated with a single bay of windows on center, with pilasters to either side supporting the central pediment. The sandstone stair porch was added circa 1882, at which time the first-story window was converted into a door. The brickwork, which has English bond walls at the basement and first story levels and Flemish bond on the second and third stories, managed to escape the 1909 fire largely unscathed. However, some post-fire changes were made, including the removal of the brick pilasters that supported the single-bay pediment and passed through the upper belt course (ghosting is clearly visible at third story).

On the first story, the stair porch leads to a central entry, with a double replacement door and eight-light transom above. A 6/6 window in the front bay of the elevation is an addition, possibly from the Phase 2 period of construction, based upon the re-worked brickwork around it which is similar to that on the third story. The sandstone porch sits upon a brick foundation, laid in English bond with a vaulted passage beneath leading to the basement entry.

The second story window, on center of the wall, has 6/6 sash and a gauged flat arch lintel, while the third story window features two segmentally arched windows (one on center, the other in the front bay),

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with 6-light fixed sash and a gauged, segmentally-arched brick lintel. The central pediment is a bold projection with cornice returns and unadorned pediment, rebuilt following the fire. Both chimneys on this western side wall survived the fire; only the upper seven or so courses were replaced during the post-fire reconstruction.⁵

On the basement level of this elevation a central replacement door and three-light transom under the stair porch leads into the building, while two 9/6 windows (one next to the entry and the other in the front bay of the elevation), provide additional light. These windows, both segmental-arched with segmentally arched gauged brick lintels, appear to be original.

The eastern (or NE) side elevation is chiefly distinguished by the grand sandstone porch moved from the State House in 1903, and by the austere wall surfaces broken by the horizontal belt courses and a single, consistent bay of windows toward the front wall. Its walls of brick date from the first two periods of construction (the cellar, first and the majority of second story from Phase 1; the remaining parts of the second story and the third story from Phase 2). Brick pilasters that supported the central pediment were removed, as on the corresponding western side wall, but ghosting, especially on the third story is clearly evident.

The first story of this southeast elevation, above the molded brownstone watertable, has three openings including a central door and single windows in the side bays. The double replacement doors are set deep into the thick brick walls, along with a 12-light square transom above. The brickwork of the gauged, flat-arch lintel above the door, and the opening around the door, strongly suggests that this door was added, most likely around 1904 when the porch was put on. The porch is a robust Greek Revival-style red sandstone piece with Scamozzi Ionic columns with eagles between the volutes and a balustraded porch roof.

The 6/6 window opening in the front bay is square-headed with a gauged flat arch; the 6/6 window next to the central door in the rear bay is segmentally arched, with a gauged, segmentally-arched brick lintel. The second story, above the complex belt course, has a central, square-headed 6/6 window opening onto the porch roof, next to which in the rear bay is a segmental-arched 6/6 window. The front bay has a segmentally arched opening with a gauged brick lintel. The third story has three windows, placed directly above the openings below. These have 6-light fixed sash and segmental openings. Like on the northwest side wall, the central pediment is quite pronounced, with a bold cornice return and an unadorned tympanum. The pediment and cornice are both post-fire replacements. The pair of chimneys appears to have survived the fire relatively intact, having only the upper courses rebuilt.

⁵ The Sachse *Birds' Eye View of the City of Annapolis* shows McDowell Hall with only the rear chimney on this western elevation. It is assumed that this rendering is inaccurate.

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The basement or cellar level of the southeast elevation is laid in English bond below the brownstone watertable. Three segmental-arched windows (two to one side of a central entry, one to the other) pierce the wall surface and interrupt the sandstone banding at this lower level. The windows have 6/6 sash and segmental arched gauged brick lintels. An entry, leading into the basement level and located under the sandstone porch, may have originally been a window.

The north (or NW) rear elevation corresponds to the south front elevation in that it is nine bays wide consisting of a three-bay projecting pavilion on center, flanked by three-bay side wings. A central pediment further accentuates the central bay, while a porch shelters the first story rear entry door. Here, however, and in contrast to the front facade, the elevation lacks the prominent corner quoining, and the larger, square-headed windows. Instead, all of the windows from the cellar to the third story are segmental arched with gauged brick lintels, and all appear to be contemporaneous to the brickwork around them. As on the other elevations, the cellar, the first and (most of) the second stories were built in the Phase 1 period of construction, while the third story and part of the second story were finished in Phase 2. Similarly, the brickwork of the first story, under the central porch, differs from the rest of the wall surface and was probably re-faced following the fire in an effort to eliminate its whitewashed surface.⁶

The first story consists of a central entry and porch, flanked by four bays of windows to either side. The porch, built in Phase 2, is a single-bay wood structure set upon a brick base with a vaulted passage beneath. It has a gable-roofed pediment supported by attenuated wood columns and wall pilasters. The columns match those of the south porch, as well as the interior gallery. The steps of the porch are rolled out to volutes in plan, and the sides of the steps are sizable specially-cut blocks of smooth, curved, matching grey stone. The herringbone brick paving is set inside stone edging that, unlike the steps, is held together with iron cramps. The rounded, beaded porch handrails appear to include both original and replacement sections. The pair of wooden doors are post-fire replacements, but based upon the original south porch doors.

The first story windows are all 12/12 wood sash with segmental-arched openings, gauged brick lintels and wood sills.

The second story consists of nine equal bays of 8/8 segmental-arched windows set within segmental-arched openings with gauged brick arches, while the third story features nine equal bays of 4/4 segmental-arched windows within segmental-arched openings with gauged brick lintels. The pediment

⁶ The brick here is salmon colored as opposed to the darker red of the rest of the elevation.

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above the projecting central pavilion was rebuilt following the fire, and like the south pediment, has a central oval window.

The basement level has a central door under the porch vault and four segmentally arched 8/8 windows to either side (the windows in the two inside bays have been filled in).

The hipped roof and the cupola are post-fire replacements. The general overall cupola scheme was retained, and the columns carefully copied; however, the proportions of the structure were elongated and the number of columns was adjusted from the originals.

Interior Description:

The interior of McDowell Hall was entirely rebuilt following the 1909 fire; however, the configuration of space and the architectural finishes were all based upon the original 18th century building. According to a 1760s account of the building, the original plan for McDowell Hall included "...four large rooms on the lower floor, besides a magnificent hall, a staircase, and a vestibule..." This arrangement is quite similar to the present, whereby the building is divided into three equal interior bays, consisting of classrooms, a staircase, a Great Hall, and a vestibule. The center bay is occupied in its entirety by the large double-height space, called the Great Hall, while four classrooms, each square in plan, are located in the four corners of the building. Two stair halls, one on the east and one on the west side of the building, separate the corner classrooms and provide access to the east and west porches. A vestibule between the east stair hall and the Great Hall provides a formal entry into the latter.

The primary means of interior access is from the east (sandstone) porch. This entry leads directly into the east stair hall that contains a grand, sweeping, open stringer stair with stringer ornament and a turned newel, all rebuilt following the 1909 fire. Behind the stair is a wood paneled wall with six-light hopper windows opening onto the mid-flight stair landing. A small vestibule behind the stair provides access to either the front classrooms, or to the Great Hall, occupying the central bay of the buildings. Originally, the four classrooms were all the same size. While this is generally still the case, some changes have been made, including the partitioning off of the northeast classroom to accommodate a smaller, rectangular classroom, a mechanical room, an elevator, and another vestibule leading to the classroom.

The typical classroom on this first floor features narrow wood floorboards, molded baseboards, fireplaces located on center of the exterior side walls (the northeast classroom lacks the fireplace), chalk boards and dropped ceilings. The windows are all set into the brick walls with interior wood shutters nestled into the reveals. Wood paneled wainscoting fills the space beneath the sash to floor level. Coved (replacement) crown molding forms an edge to the dropped ceiling. The fireplace mantels are all

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similar with pilasters supporting fluted caps and a projecting mantel shelf. A plain frieze board with dentils above spans the pilaster caps.

The Great Hall is the large, double-height space with a second floor gallery that occupies the center of the large building. Originally planned as a single-height space, the room was opened up when it was completed in Phase 2. This was accomplished by the removal of the floor of the second floor, and by the construction of a balcony (gallery) around its four sides. This balcony was originally supported by Corinthian columns which were located under the principal newels of the second floor railing. Following the fire, however, the columns were removed, making the second floor balcony a cantilevered space. The room was originally furnished with pews and served as a Chapel.

The Great Hall is a long rectangular space with single, exterior doors located on center of the north and south walls and flanked by windows. The south exterior door consists of two leaves of four flat panels with ovolo-molded stiles and rails (the panels are flush and beaded on the exterior). This south door, including its jamb, date from Phase 2, having miraculously survived the 1909 fire. The north doors were replaced following the fire and currently are arranged to swing towards the exterior--a condition not original to the building, but required by current life safety codes.

The four 12/12 windows (two to either side of the exterior doors) feature original Phase 2 architraves and shutters, as well as the original soffit and wainscoting. Possibly all of this material survives in its original location, except for the shutters on the north wall. A pre-fire photograph reveals that these shutters had been cut in half, and the present ones remain whole. All of the architraves and wainscoting have been re-secured with cut nails, the nails matching other work done in the post-fire period of construction.

Three single, interior doors (one on center and two to either end) are located on the two side walls of the room. The central door leads to the stair passages, while the end doors open into the corner classrooms. All of the doors are six-paneled with molded architrave surrounds, an over-door, and paneled door reveals. All six doors were finished with replacement trim after the fire.

The Great Hall has 4"-wide oak floorboards with a 6"-high baseboard with a molded cap. The ceiling (under the cantilevered balcony) features contemporary coved crown molding. A molded chair rail also lines the large rectangular space. Door and window casings interrupt the chair rail.

The western third of the building consists of the west stair hall and two corner classrooms. The west hall contains a new stair (1989), whose details are based upon the east stair. This passage (minus a stair)

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may have been part of the original design, or may have been added when the west porch was added in circa 1882.

Second Floor: The second floor offers an identical floor plan to the original first story, with the balcony overlooking the Great Hall. At this level, there are four classrooms occupying the four corners of the building. The four classrooms are similarly appointed with mantels located on center of the exterior side walls, and windows on the front or rear exterior walls. Blackboards are located on the interior partition walls. The mantels in each of the classrooms are similar to those found in the first story classrooms.

Third Floor: The third floor plan differs from the first two in that the Great Hall does not occupy the central portion of the building at this level. Rather, the space provides room for two additional classrooms (four in the corners, and two to either side of a small corridor above the Great Hall). The six classrooms are similar with blackboards on their interior walls and 3/3 windows on the exterior walls, but notably different from those below in the absence of fireplace openings and mantels.

A new (1989) stair leading to the attic level is located in the narrow corridor on center of the building, and against its north partition wall. This contemporary stair is based upon the main, east stair. An older stair leading to the attic and located between the east stair hall and the center bay of the building was removed during the 1989 renovation.

The interior of the cupola was not accessible at the time of this survey.

The basement level of McDowell Hall is divided into six principal spaces including a faculty lounge, a main lounge, a fireplace lounge, a coffee shop and serving area, restroom facilities, a mail room and small lounge and a lobby entrance. Generally, the spaces are contemporary divisions and are appointed with dropped acoustical tile ceilings and furred out drywall walls. However, some notable, historic features do survive, including the large fireplace opening in the "fireplace" lounge and the mailboxes lining two interior walls off of the lobby entrance, under the east porch. The fireplace is located against the west side wall of the building and features a large, segmental-arched opening with sandstone voussoirs and keystone. The chimney breast is laid in English bond with king and queen closures. The mailboxes, aligned in a long banks of several rows of boxes occupying the center portion of the wall, are brass with brass locks, and most likely dating from the post-1909 rebuilding.

8. Significance

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Period	Areas of Significance		Check and justify below	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> health/medicine	<input type="checkbox"/> performing arts
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> invention	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> politics/government
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-1999	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment/ recreation	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 2000-	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> ethnic heritage	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/ settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> social history
	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning		<input type="checkbox"/> maritime history	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

Significance dates 1742-1789; 1909; 1952 **Architect** Simon Duff; Joseph Clarke

Specific dates 1742; 1784; 1789; 1909; 1941; 1952; 1989 **Builder** Patrick Creagh

Evaluation for:

National Register

Maryland Register

not evaluated

Prepare a one-paragraph summary statement of significance addressing applicable criteria, followed by a narrative discussion of the history of the resource and its context. (For compliance reports, complete evaluation on a DOE Form – see manual.)

McDowell Hall at St. John's College was begun in 1742 as the mansion for the Maryland colonial governor, Thomas Bladen. The original design was the work of architect Simon Duff and local builder Patrick Creagh. Factionalism in the General Assembly disrupted funding for the project, and the unfenestrated structure fell into disrepair. By 1784, the house, which had become known as "Bladen's Folly," was granted by the provincial government as the future site of St. John's College. The all-male college, chartered in 1784, completed the construction of the building. Joseph Clarke, who designed the dome of the State House, was responsible for the design and construction of the roof and cupola. In 1789, classes were held in the first two rooms to be finished. McDowell Hall was named in honor of St. John's first principal, John McDowell. The prominent Georgian style brick building was the only structure on the original four-acre campus until 1835, when Humphreys Hall was constructed. The building has been used as a dormitories, classroom/lecture halls, offices, and banquet/ball room by the now co-educational college. During the Civil War, it served as the headquarters of the Union Army Medical Corps. The structure was severely damaged by fire on February 20, 1909, and again in November 1952. Each time it was rebuilt to its original configuration. The centerpiece of St. John's College campus for over 200 years, McDowell Hall is one of the oldest academic buildings in continuous use in the United States. The building is significant for its association with education in colonial Maryland, Governor Thomas Bladen, and the enduring and innovative St. John's College. McDowell Hall is also significant architecturally as a well-developed, large-scale example of the Georgian style.

St. John's College

After several failed attempts, the State of Maryland chartered St. John's College in 1784 (Bill No. 37). The college is a direct descendant of King William's School, founded in 1696 by the *Petitionary Act for Free Schools*. The act appointed nineteen trustees known as the Rector, Visitors, and Governors. The method of selecting the trustees stated that "any group of citizens who subscribed a thousand pounds to the college endowment had the right to nominate one member of the board."⁷ These trustees collected

⁷ Tench Francis Tilghman. *The Early History of St. John's College*. (Annapolis, MD: St. John's College Press, 1984), p. 4.

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funds from donors, rental properties, and specified provincial taxes, to support a schoolmaster. The first building erected by the school was a brick schoolhouse located beside the State House on State Circle, a site now occupied by statue of Baron Johann DeKalb (1721-1780). The free school, which pledged to provide liberal education, taught "arithmetic, navigation, and all useful learning" to the young boys who were enrolled.⁸ Subsequent advertisements for the school listed classes in "arithmetic, geometry, gravity, surveying, navigation and Italian, bookkeeping, Latin, Greek, and French, as well as English Grammar...."⁹

Financially supported by Governor Benedict Leonard Calvert, son of the fourth Lord Baltimore, King William's School was charged with educating youths, who were then expected to attend William and Mary College in Virginia. The lack of a Maryland college, however, prompted many prominent colonial citizens to petition the General Assembly for funding to establish colleges in Chestertown on the Eastern Shore and in Annapolis on the Western Shore. Between 1750 and the American Revolution, seven college bills were introduced in the Assembly. The first six bills failed because the Senate and the House of Delegates could not agree on the means to finance the colleges. The money raised in 1773 to finance the schools was subsequently confiscated in 1780 to replace the tobacco cargo burned aboard the *Peggy Stewart* in 1775. Two years after private subscriptions funded the charter of Kent County School on the Eastern Shore as Washington College in 1782, the King William's School trustees announced that Reverend Ralph Higgenbotham "will open a school for the education of young gentlemen in the Greek and Latin languages, preparatory to their entering college."¹⁰ The charter, prepared by Reverend John Carroll, Reverend Patrick Alison, Reverend William Smith, and three laymen, was sent to the Assembly. The document, which named the new college "St. John's," forbade all religious tests for faculty or students and granted an annual income "for ever" of 1,750 pounds to be garnered from a tax on Western Shore ordinaries.

According to Emily A. Murphy in *A Complete & Generous Education: 300 years of Liberal Arts, St. John's College, Annapolis*, "the St. John's charter outlined the formation of a board. One trustee was to be elected by any group of individuals, or by a corporation, who had subscribed 1,000 pounds; 13 trustees had to be elected by March 1, 1786, to compose a board whose first order of business had to be the choice of a college site. At issue was four acres of ground, the site of the unfinished governor's mansion, which the state promised to the college if the board decided to locate the college in Annapolis."¹¹

⁸ Emily A. Murphy, *A Complete and Generous Education: 300 Years of Liberal Arts, St. John's College, Annapolis*. (Annapolis, MD, St. John's College Press, 1996), p. 5.

⁹ Murphy, p. 6.

¹⁰ Murphy, p. 8.

¹¹ Murphy, p. 9.

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Four of the college's founders were the signers of the Declaration of Independence from Maryland: William Paca, Charles Carroll of Carrollton, Thomas Stone, and Samuel Chase. Chase and Stone were members of the college's first Board of Rector, Visitors, and Governors. Carroll joined the board in 1786, in addition to granting 200 pounds to the college. Stone and Paca each gave 100 pounds, and Chase pledged 50 pounds. As governor, William Paca fixed his signature to the charter creating the college.

Rather than act upon the conveyance of property in Annapolis, the St. John's board met on February 28, 1786 to consider a "Proposition laid before them by the Rector and Visitors of Annapolis School in pursuance of 'An act of Assembly for Consolidation of the funds of King William's School with the funds of St. John's College.'" A committee representing the school requested that the "two trustees they were entitled to elect by virtue of the two thousand pounds they were prepared to pledge immediately, be sworn in as Visitors of St. John's board in time to vote on the location of the college." The committee requested also that "until the college be completed," they might withhold the residue of their funds to maintain King William's, now known as the Annapolis School. Because King William's School was obliged to conduct a school in Annapolis, its board made sure that the college would settle in Annapolis before parting with portions of its funding. Further protection of King William's School interests were included in the "Act of Consolidation," which proposed a split of the school corporation into two parts. One part became St. John's College on March 1, 1786, while the other was to operate as the Annapolis Free School until the college opened. The act allowed King William's School to keep 1,000 of its 2,000 pounds so that it could continue to operate until the college opened, and allowed the school to sue for the money to be returned and reopen if St. John's mismanaged its funds. The St. John's board granted the King William's School their requests. Three years later, on November 11, 1789, sixteen "perspectives" marched behind their schoolmaster, Reverend Ralph Higgenbotham, in a procession of notables who officially opened St. John's College.¹²

In 1791, the board ordered the four acre campus be enclosed by wooden fencing. The boundaries of the plot were approximately located at College Avenue (then known as Tabernacle Street) to the southeast, the lots now occupied by Pinkney and Humphreys Halls to the northeast and southwest, and terminated at the southeastern walls of Randall and Campbell Halls. The board ordered the campus be landscaped with a garden, measuring 350 by 280 feet.

In 1795, the campus was enlarged to its present thirty-three acres when the college purchased adjoining land from David Ross. In February 1796, the State of Maryland patented additional property to the college, running along St. John's Street to College Creek.¹³

¹² Murphy, pp. 3-11.

¹³ Anne Arundel County Land Records, Liber JC #L, Folio 142.

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The new college was divided into three parts. First, the Grammar or English School, served the same purpose King William's School had by teaching boys grammar, arithmetic, Latin, Greek and other subjects to prepare them for college. Then there was the college proper, itself divided into two parts, consisting of the mathematics and science department; and the English, Greek, Latin, rhetoric, logic, and oratory department. John McDowell headed the mathematics and science department. The English department was under Reverend Higgenbotham, former master of King William's School and rector of St. Anne's Church. In addition to the grammar school and the college, St. John's also had a French School, where students would pay an extra fee and study nothing but French.¹⁴

Following its heritage as a free school charged with providing a liberal education, the college adopted the motto: "Facio Liberos Ex Libris Libraque" [I make free men from children with books and a balance]. The college seal carries Masonic symbols, including a man carrying a T-square and climbing the seven-layered mountain to Solomon's Temple of Wisdom. The inner ring of the seal reads: No way is impassable to virtue. The seal commemorates the college's first commencement in 1793, rather than the founding of the school in 1785. These references to the Masonic Order, which reopened their Annapolis lodge in 1793, have been suggested as the source of the college's name. Although there were no Masonic lodges in Annapolis at the time the college was chartered, many of the prominent men of Maryland, such as the ones who made up the board of the new college, were Masons. St. John the Baptist and St. John the Evangelist are two saints honored by the Masons, and the old Annapolis lodge (disbanded in 1760) was known as St. John's Lodge. Greatly affected by Freemasonry, the General Assembly recessed early in the afternoon of December 27, 1784 in honor of the feast day of St. John the Evangelist, a day celebrated by all Masons. Incidentally, three days later, the General Assembly passed the charter of St. John's College.¹⁵ Yet, no official records have been found to verify the source of the college's name.

Late in 1790, the Board of Trustees appointed John McDowell the first principal of St. John's College (the term president was not used until the late 19th century). McDowell served in this position for sixteen years, overseeing the college's first commencement of two graduates in 1793. Born in Pennsylvania, McDowell graduated from and taught at the College of Philadelphia (now the University of Pennsylvania) and then in Cambridge on Maryland's Eastern Shore. Having passed the bar, he practiced law for five years before joining the faculty of St. John's. The board recognized that McDowell "suited the American genius" stating they had chosen him over any "Gentlemen of Great Character from Europe" to head the college.¹⁶

¹⁴ Murphy, p. 14.

¹⁵ Murphy, p. 17.

¹⁶ "A Brief History: St. John's College, Annapolis, Maryland," Pamphlet prepared by St. John's College.

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Prominent students graduating early in the history of St. John's College include Francis Scott Key (class of 1796), who was a distinguished attorney and author of "The Star-Spangled Banner;" and George Washington's step-grandson (George Washington Parke Custis) and two nephews (Fairfax and Lawrence Washington). An important center of learning, the college graduated 105 students by 1806, including four future state governors, six judges, and twenty-one members of the state legislature.

In 1805, the Maryland legislature withdrew the state financial support promised to St. John's College at its founding. This had a tremendous impact on the school, which did not begin to recover until the 1830s. The appointment of Hector Humphreys (1831-1857) as principal of the college was instrumental in that recovery. Humphreys rearranged the curriculum and added modern science to the traditional teaching of classics, mathematics, and moral philosophy. During Humphreys' tenure as principal a number of buildings were constructed on the growing campus, including Humphreys Hall dormitory and housing for faculty at the Paca-Carroll House and Pinkney Hall. The Chase-Stone House, which symmetrically balanced the Paca-Carroll House to the northeast, was constructed to house the college principal and vice-principal. Set within a straight line referred to as "Yale Row," the new buildings flanked McDowell Hall. During this period of expansion, enrollment grew to over one hundred students, utilizing a library with more than four thousand volumes.

An insurance policy, dated 1841, documents the configuration of the campus: "there are a cow, wash, and wood house, built of wood, 33 feet from the new building [Humphreys Hall], Brick Privy 19, and a wood stable or Barn about 160 feet. There are a wood Meathouse 85 feet from the old college building [McDowell Hall], and a wood privy about 30 feet from the meat house." The original four acres, known as the Green, had been embellished with trees planted in 1834 and 1837.¹⁷

By July 1861, Union troops, under the command of General Benjamin Butler, had occupied Annapolis. The majority of the students had left the college, either having joined the war effort, or having been taken out of town by frightened parents. With the exit of the students, Principal Cleland K. Nelson found himself unable to finance operation of the campus.¹⁸ In the beginning of the 1861 school year, the preparatory school enrolled twenty-six scholarship students, whose tuition was paid in part by the General Assembly. Thus, the board felt that if the school closed completely and sent the students home, the General Assembly would take this as a violation of the charter, and St. John's would never again get any money. The faculty at this time, however, consisted of just Professor William Thompson, an 1838 graduate of St. John's College.

¹⁷ Tilghman, p. 81.

¹⁸ Principal Cleland K. Nelson requested and received permission from the board to sell off the furniture in Humphreys Hall in order to pay the debts, and then quickly moved his family out of town. The faculty, whose salaries were paid by tuition money, quite naturally took exception to the fact that Nelson had sold the furniture for his own use and left them no chance of getting paid. In the end, the board absolved Nelson of any wrongdoing.

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Throughout the war, General Bulter succeeded in taking over open lots in and around Annapolis, in addition to turning the Naval Academy grounds into a military hospital. Yet, Bulter did not touch St. John's campus. His successor, however, did not have the same respect for the halls of learning. In October 1861, the Union Army took over the grounds of the college, and most of the buildings. Professor Thompson and his young charges were left with only McDowell Hall, which once again became the sole college building. Renamed the College Green Barracks, the campus grounds were used at first as a parole camp, a place where exchanged Union prisoners were brought to get medical attention, fresh clothing, food, and the combat pay due them. On the back of the campus, closer to College Creek, there were eight wooden barracks holding 150 men each, cookhouses, bathhouses, and warehouses for quartermaster's supplies. The need for a chapel prompted the construction of a one-story wood frame building in 1862 between McDowell Hall and Humphreys Hall.

By May 1863, the number of soldiers moving through College Green Barracks was too great, as Annapolis became the most important depot for paroled prisoners on the East Coast. Consequently, a larger parole camp was erected outside Annapolis in an area still known as Camp Parole. The army retained use of the campus despite the removal of the parole camp. After months of debate over the future use of the property, the college was turned over to the Medical Corps, and the campus became St. John's College Hospital, Division Number 2 of the U.S. General Hospital at Annapolis. At this time, Professor Thompson continued to teach his classes, with an enrollment of forty-one students attending classes and residing at McDowell Hall.

In October 1863, the board lost control of the campus. The surgeon in charge of the hospital, who had decided that it was vital that he have the entire campus, received permission from the Surgeon General of the U.S. Army to commandeer McDowell Hall. Following a three-month hiatus, the college procured classroom space in City Hall. The Union army vacated St. John's in October 1865. The occupation of the school caused great deterioration of the facilities, particularly the library, laboratory equipment, and buildings. After the war, the federal government paid the college \$4,666 for the damages, which totaled more than \$16,000.

Again receiving funding from the General Assembly of Maryland, St. John's College hired Henry Barnard (1811-1900) as principal in 1865. Under the direction of Barnard, the college recovered from the effects of the war, and the constant financial strain. Barnard was devoted to public education and had served on the state board of education in both his native Connecticut and neighboring Rhode Island. His first move at St. John's was to put together a handpicked faculty and radically reorganize the curriculum. Barnard is credited with saving the college after the Civil War by putting together a good faculty and drawing 88 students to the program. In reconstructing the campus, Barnard envisioned "it surrounded with a hedge of Osage orange and planted with every variety of Maryland tree. There

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should be expanses of thick, soft greensward on which the eye loves to repose."¹⁹ His tenure at St. John's was short, leaving in 1867 to serve as the first Commissioner of the Department of Education for the United States.²⁰ Subsequently, James Clarke Welling, a graduate of Princeton University and former editor of the *Daily National Intelligencer* in Washington, D.C., was appointed the new principal of the college.

Welling never adapted Barnard's radical curriculum, rather he retained the traditional Greek- and Latin-based curriculum and the courses in mathematics and English were vastly improved. Enhancement of the English Department was laid upon Hiram Corson, one of the professors hired by Barnard. Corson had been the librarian of the Smithsonian and was a highly regarded private lecturer and teacher who represented the new and growing interest in English literature.²¹

Although the college was able to attract excellent educators, the majority of these teachers and principals did not remain at St. John's College for long. Thus, James Mercer Garnett was appointed as the tenth principal of the college in 1870 after Welling left. Garnett did little to alter the existing curriculum; however, he did allow students to substitute German for Latin and French for Greek. This change, radical at the time, was the first movement towards an elective system, an educational program that was becoming more and more popular at the end the 19th century nationwide.

The greatest change under the ten year direction of Garnett was financial. In 1880, the General Assembly did not renew the college's supplementary funding support of \$12,000 that began in 1861. St. John's was reduced to the base grant of \$3,000. Therefore, the board decided to reorganize the school and declared all positions vacant. Placing blame unfairly on Garnett, the board hired Reverend John McDowell Leavitt as the new principal. It was at this time that the title of principal was changed to president. At Leavitt's suggestion, the previous faculty was reappointed. Yet, the college was understaffed as several of the professors resigned because the board was unable to provide a proper salary or housing. Consequently, the seniors had to teach the preparatory school during the 1881-1882 school year. In 1882, the Assembly was able to provide an additional grant of \$7,500 a year, and by 1883, a faculty of eleven men had been hired.²² When the Assembly again cut off all supplementary funding in 1884, Leavitt felt compelled to resign.

In the spring of 1884, Professor William Hopkins was appointed acting president. A graduate of the class of 1859, Hopkins had become a professor soon after receiving his degree. One of the first actions of the administration was to adopt a program of compulsory military training under the direction of

¹⁹ Tilghman, p. 110.

²⁰ Murphy, p. 33.

²¹ Murphy, p. 35.

²² Murphy, pp. 35-41.

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Lieutenant Charles W. Foster of the Third Artillery. Along with military training, students began to take part in what are known today as "extra-curricular activities." These activities included a campus newspaper, several literary societies, athletics, and socials with the young ladies of Annapolis. The curriculum was divided between classics and a new technical course that stressed practical skills like engineering and mining. These advancements, however, did little to bolster enrollment and financial security for the school. In 1886, there were just sixty-eight students, the campus was severely deteriorated, and the debts were mounting.²³

In 1886, Englishman Dr. Thomas Fell (1886-1923) was appointed president of the college with the heavy responsibility of saving the school from being closed. Humphreys Hall, where the preparatory school was housed, and Pinkney Hall, the college dormitory, had neither central steam heat nor indoor plumbing (the outhouses were located behind McDowell Hall). Enrollment fell to an all-time low of sixty students and the salaries of the professors were the lowest in the county. Additionally, St. John's College now had two mortgages on the campus. Fell's first priority was the clean up the campus, which was still littered with remnants from the thousands of troops who occupied the property during the Civil War. The second priority was to improve the professors' salaries, thereby attracting better, and more, qualified educators. However, in order to accomplish all this, the college needed more income in the form of tuition. By sending professors out to recruit students and by opening the preparatory school to prospective Naval Academy students, Fell managed to double the enrollment in just one year. In the academic year 1887-1888, there were 138 students; by 1889-1890, 154 students were enrolled.²⁴

Yet, with the increase in enrollment, the college's debts increased. By 1888, the school owed \$18,800, there were four mortgages on the campus property, and many of the professors had not been properly compensated. In 1888, the General Assembly granted \$2,256 for two years to pay interest, but it was not until 1894 that some relief was granted to the college in the form of \$6,000 a year extra, to be continued indefinitely. This gave St. John's \$9,000 a year from the legislature, in addition to tuition money.²⁵ Furthermore, in 1898, the Maryland General Assembly granted \$15,000 for the purpose of either constructing new buildings or renovating old ones. It was decided the money would fund the construction of a single new building. The financial burdens were further eased when New York banker James T. Woodward took over the \$20,000 mortgage, increased it to \$30,000, and reduced the interest to three and a half percent. To show their gratitude, the board elected Woodward as a member. In addition, when the new building was dedicated in 1900, it was named after Woodward's father, Henry Williams Woodward. Woodward Hall contained the college library, the physics, chemistry, and biology labs, and the armory.

²³ Murphy, p. 43.

²⁴ Murphy, p. 45.

²⁵ Murphy, p. 45.

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With the money Fell raised and an increase in the state's contribution to the school, the college had saved enough money in the endowment fund, which was started in 1892, to pay off the mortgages. St. John's was free of debt for the first time since the Civil War. In addition, the Assembly provided supplementary funding ranging from \$16,000 to \$50,000 a year. In 1902, the Assembly grant allowed for the construction of another building, this time a combination dormitory and dining hall that would relieve the overcrowding at Pinkney Hall. Completed in 1903, the new building was initially known as Senior Hall and Mess Hall. In 1912, it was renamed Randall Hall in honor of J. Wirt Randall, a prominent Annapolitan and a member of the board who had been instrumental in obtaining money from the General Assembly.

As early as 1890, St. John's College had recognized the need for athletic facilities and raised money for a temporary gymnasium. It was not until 1908, however, that money was procured through alumni donations for the construction of a new, permanent gymnasium. "The structure was completed in 1909 and subsequently named for Lieutenant E.G. Iglehart, who has been a great supporter of athletics, both as a student and an alumnus."²⁶ Soon after construction of the permanent gymnasium began, McDowell Hall was severely damaged when faulty wiring started a fire. Although many suggested the structure be razed rather than restored, the alumni prevailed in saving the building, which was reconstructed to its original design.

Despite being immersed in extracurricular activities, the center of student life was the cadet corps. The military program, intended to be a small part of the curriculum, was dominating the school's program. The various Army officers assigned to the college since 1885 had trained two companies in the battalion so well that in 1905 St. John's College was selected by the War Department as one of the ten leading military colleges in the country.²⁷ Following a tragic episode of hazing, the activities and responsibilities of the corps were modified. First, the preparatory school was restructured as a sub-freshman class; second, President Fell resigned his duties at the University of Maryland to focus on the affairs of St. John's; and third, discipline was returned to the faculty. The military department might have been disbanded completely if it had not been for the war in Europe.²⁸ Instead, the military program was revised, creating the first ROTC unit in the U.S. in 1917. Next to West Point, St. John's had the greatest number of officers in service during World War I of any college or university in the country.²⁹

After 36 years at St. John's College, President Fell resigned in 1923. Under the direction of the new president, Major Enoch Barton Garey (a member of the class of 1903), the sub-freshman class and

²⁶ Murphy, p. 56.

²⁷ Murphy, p. 63. The pamphlet "A Brief History: St. John's College, Annapolis, Maryland," prepared by St. John's College, indicated the school was one of the six leading military colleges.

²⁸ Murphy, pp. 62-63.

²⁹ Murphy, p. 63.

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military program were disbanded and a system of free electives replaced the four-part curriculum created by Dr. Fell. The system of free electives ultimately led to a Bachelor of Arts degree. Garey remained just three years, but during his tenure he managed to raise the ranking of the academic standards of the college, which had slipped during Fell's last years in office.

During the Depression, the college experienced severe financial troubles. The board had invested heavily in Annapolis real estate, even mortgaging college buildings to afford additional investments. When the stock market crashed in 1929 and their investment opportunities evaporated, there was not enough money to meet operating expenses. Yet, rather than close the school, the board elected to again revamp the curricular and expand their educational ideal to attract a wider range of students. Thus, in 1937, Stringfellow Barr and Scott Buchanan, two academics with revolutionary educational ideas, were hired as president and dean, respectively. Buchanan, believing that traditional liberal arts could be used as a formal structure for learning, devised a course of study with the "great books" as the basis for class discussions. Another important feature of his plan was the inter-relatedness of the disciplines; he proposed a college with a unified, all-required curriculum and no departments or majors.³⁰

Under the direction of Barr and Buchanan, St. John's "great books" program attracted nationwide attention. While the college had previously been a local school, suddenly students from across the country were applying to study the new program. Although World War II meant low enrollments in the 1940s, by the war's end the popularity of St. John's was established. Scott Buchanan described the criteria for a great book in the 1938 college catalogue:

To begin... a great book is one that has been read by the largest number of persons.... The second criterion is also apparently numerical: a great book has the largest number of interpretations. This does not mean that the book must be confusingly ambiguous; it rather refers to the inexhaustibility of its significance, each interpretation possessing a clarity and force that will allow other interpretations to stand by its side without confusion. Dante's Divine Comedy and Newton's Principia are the telling examples under this standard. The third criterion is more important and is harder to determine: a great book should raise the persistent unanswerable questions about the great themes in European thought. Questions concerning number and measurement, matter and form, ultimate substance, tragedy, and God open up mysteries for the human mind.... The fourth criterion is that a great book must be a work of fine art; it must have an immediate intelligibility and style which will excite and discipline the ordinary mind by its form alone. Fifthly, a great book must be a masterpiece of the liberal arts. Its author must be a master of the arts of thought and imagination whose

³⁰ "A Brief History: St. John's College, Annapolis, Maryland," Pamphlet prepared by St. John's College.

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work has been faithful to the ends of these arts, the understanding and exposition of the truth.

Such a list makes a chronological series with an order that imposes additional powers in each book. Each book was written after and in the light of previous books; each book was written before other books which it has influenced. Each master has stood on the shoulders of another master and has had later masters as his students. One cannot internally understand a given book until he has read its predecessors and also its successors. It turns out that the best commentary on a great book is another great book.³¹

The difficulties involved in starting the new curriculum were compounded by the \$300,000 mortgage on the property. A committee assembled to address the issue of funding. In a highly irregular move, the committee asked for and received the resignations of the entire Board of Visitors and Governors. A new board, which included several members of the old one, was nominated. Other changes included the banning of fraternities, the replacement of intercollegiate sports with intramural sports, and the hiring of the first woman professor, Helen Hill Miller, in 1940. Beginning in 1944, a summer term was added to the school year.

The fundraising board also advised the selling of historic properties in Annapolis that the college owned. As published by the Commission for the Restoration and Enlargement of Colonial St. John's College in *Historic Houses for St. John's*, the school owned, maintained, and restored many of Annapolis' most historic buildings. This included the Hammond-Harwood House at 19 Maryland Avenue (1774), the Brice House at 42 East Street (1767-1773), the Pinkney House (now at 164 Conduit Street, circa 1785), and the Peggy Stewart House at 207 Hanover Street (1761-1764) to name a few. Purchased separately, the off-campus properties served as investments for the college while protecting the landmark buildings. The Hammond-Harwood House served as a teaching museum for the students, while drawing tourists who paid an admission to view the historic building. The historic house served as the centerpiece for the first academic course in American crafts, under the direction of R.T.H. Halsey.³² In addition, these buildings provided additional classrooms, home for the fraternities, and off-campus housing for students and teachers. Such was the case with the Commodore Waddell House at 61 College Avenue (AA-413) and the modest brick building at 256-258 King George Street, which was known as Biology Hall.

Financially, the college thrived with the generous donations of Paul Mellon, who had enrolled as a student in 1940 to study the "great books." In 1945, Mellon placed \$4.5 million in trust with his Old

³¹ Murphy, p. 81.

³² Kaplan, Wendy, "R.T.H. Halsey: An Ideology of Collecting American Decorative Arts." *Winterthur Portfolio*, Volume 17, Number 1, spring 1982, pp. 43-53.

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Dominion Foundation to provide an endowment for the college. However, the endowment was dependent on one stipulation: that the college remain at its Annapolis location. This was based on the rumors that began as early as 1940 suggesting the Naval Academy wanted to annex the St. John's campus. By June 1945, both the House and the Senate committees on Naval Affairs held hearings on the proposed takeover. St. John's, having not received a clear demonstration of national necessity for the taking of their campus, refused to participate in the negotiations. It was not until May 1946 that the House Committee adopted a resolution stating that circumstances did not warrant annexing St. John's campus and an alternative expansion plan for the Naval Academy was made.

The departure of Barr and Buchanan in 1946 prompted the election on April 22, 1947 of John Kieffer as the eighteenth president of St. John's College. During Kieffer's presidency, African-Americans were admitted for the first time when Martin Dyer joined the student body in 1948. In 1949, Richard Weigle (1949-1980) was appointed president of the college. During Weigle's thirty years in this position, enrollment was higher than it had ever been as women were admitted for the first time in 1951. Major construction efforts were undertaken, including the erection of Campbell Hall in 1953, the moving of the Charles Carroll the Barrister House from Main Street to the campus in 1955, and the building of a new science hall and auditorium in 1956-1958. One of the college's major construction efforts during this period was completely unintentional, when in 1952, fire once again damaged McDowell Hall. Fortunately, the insurance allowed of the Great Hall to be replaced and strengthened.

In the early 1960s, rather than expand the campus, President Weigle headed up an effort to build a second campus. John and Faith Meem determined the location of the second campus by their gift of land at the foot of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Funding was secured, a group of tutors agreed to transfer, and the campus opened in 1964. The Santa Fe campus enabled the college enrollment to grow to 800 – 400 on each campus – without sacrificing the small classes and the close community atmosphere necessary for the great books program. In 1980, with the retirement of Weigle, the board decided to appoint one president per campus. The college is now governed by one Board of Visitors and Governors and united by a single curriculum overseen by a Joint Committee on Education.³³

Building History

Originally encompassing four acres, the property on which McDowell Hall stands was chosen by then governor Thomas Bladen as the future location of a governor's mansion. Construction of the house began in 1742, under the direction of Scottish-born architect Simon Duff. Duff, having immigrated to Maryland at the insistence of Cecilius Calvert, designed the Georgian style building to encompass wings on either side which were united to the main block by colonnades of pillars. Patrick Creagh of

³³ "A Brief History: St. John's College, Annapolis, Maryland," Pamphlet prepared by St. John's College.

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Annapolis, architect for the Treasury Building on State Circle, served as builder and supplied all the materials. The plan, expected to cost between 4,000 and 6,000 pounds, was only partially completed in 1745 when Bladen requested an additional 4,000 pounds from the Lower House of the General Assembly to finish the extravagant mansion. Creagh had erected the walls of the structure, laid the joists, and prepared the scaffolding for the roof before the project was discarded. With the legislative failed to provide the funding, the roofless structure was left exposed to the elements. The incomplete and abandoned dwelling soon became known as "Bladen's Folly or Governor's Folly."

Reverend Andrew Burnaby gives a description of the building in 1760 in his *Travels through the Middle Settlements in North-America, In the Years 1759 and 1760*:

The town is not laid out regularly, but is tolerably well built, and has several good brick houses. None of the streets are paved, and the few public buildings here are not worth mentioning. The church is a very poor one, the stadt-house but indifferent, and the governor's palace is not finished. This last mentioned building was begun a few years ago; it is situated very finely upon an eminence, and commands a beautiful view of the town and environs. It has four large rooms on the lower floors, besides a magnificent hall, a staircase, and a vestibule. On each side of the entrance are four windows, and nine upon the first story; the offices are under ground. It was to have had a fine portico the whole range of the building; but unluckily the governor and assembly disagreeing about ways and means, the execution of the design was suspended; and only the shell of the house has been finished, which is now going to ruin.³⁴

Despite its incomplete state, the structure displayed its architectural prominence. In a letter to John Page dated May 25, 1766, Thomas Jefferson wrote of his appreciation for the building's design, noting "they have no publick buildings worth mentioning except a governor's house, the hull of which after being nearly finished, they have suffered to go to ruin."³⁵ A local poet briefly described the building circa 1771 when writing a verse about St. Anne's Church, which was similarly in disrepair:

With grief in yonder field, hard bye,
A sister ruin I espy;
Old Bladen's palace, once so famed,
And now too well "the Folly" named,

³⁴ Reverend Andrew Burnaby. *Travels through the Middle Settlements in North-America, In the Years 1759 and 1760*, (London, England: Cornell University Press, 1798), p. 47.

³⁵ Historic American Building Survey, "McDowell Hall," MD-291, Blue Worksheet, Prepared by Florence T. Dunbar, October 1964 and updated by Eleni Silverman, March 15, 1984.

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Her roof all tottering to decay,
Her walls a-mouldering away.³⁶

The physical condition of the structure was recounted in the *Archives of Maryland, Volume XLIV*:

Your Committee further find, That several Bricks, in the new House erected on said Land for the use of the Governor for the Time being, are moulter's and Decayed; and there is a Crack in the wall of the said House from the Bottom almost to the Top, in the North-East Corner thereof; That there is Round the outside of the said House a Quantity of Portland Stone, Bremen Stone, several casks of Stucco, and some wrought country stone; That within the Cellars of said House there is a large Quantity of Shingles, which appear to lie on the bare ground; and likewise some marble stone and Bremen Stone lying on the damp ground, which last appear much Decayed; That there is a large Quantity of plank and scantling lying in great danger of being spoiled, occasioned by the Rains coming through the Roof of the House; and that part of the sommers of the said House appears to be upon the Decay, Jews-Ears growing now out of the sides thereof.³⁷

At the suggestion of the General Assembly, the newly formed St. John's College was given the unfinished governor's mansion, when the college chose to locate in Annapolis. Extensive work was required to make the building ready for occupation by the students and faculty. This is clearly documented by the board's 1786 action for the completion of two rooms in the building, space need for opening the grammar and mathematical schools. The building committee consisted of Alexander Hanson, Nicholas Carroll, and Richard Ridgley. The work was entrusted to Joseph Clarke, architect for the new State House in 1772. The building was opened in February 1789 for classes. Although the building was considered to be fairly large, it was quickly crowded with classrooms and accommodations for both teachers and students, as well as all other activities of the college. This prompted the Board of Visitors and Governors to agree that the structure should be enlarged by the construction of wings. Unable to agree whether the north or south wing should be erected first, and burdened by financial difficulties, the board never followed through on the enlargement of the building.

Throughout the 1790s, the college was confined to this one unnamed building, known as "the college building." The basement contained the kitchen and dining room. The first floor had classrooms dedicated to the French and English schools. The philosophy and mathematics schools used two of the

³⁶ Historic American Building Survey, "McDowell Hall," MD-291, Blue Worksheet, Prepared by Florence T. Dunbar, October 1964 and updated by Eleni Silverman, March 15, 1984.

³⁷ *Archives of Maryland, Volume XLIV*, pp. 524-525.

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rooms on the southeastern side of the second floor. The two rooms to the northwest were reserved for faculty lodging. The five rooms of the third floor were home to the students. The board calculated that three of the rooms could hold six beds each, one of the rooms had two beds, and the larger central room contained eighteen beds – two boys to a bed. The college library was housed in what was called the “octagon,” the room just under the dome.³⁸

With the completion of Humphreys Hall in 1835, the activities held in the college building were revised. The new building provided housing for fifty students and faculty, as well as a library. The vacated dome room at the original college building was viewed by then-principal Humphreys as “certainly...not classical” and “architecturally offensive,” thus this space appears to have been abandoned for the time being.³⁹ By 1838-1839, the building was being adapted for specific educational programs. In the basement, for example, the southwest corner room was renovated to serve as a laboratory. With the construction of faculty housing in 1855 and 1857, and the erection of a second dormitory in 1857, the old college building was exclusively dedicated to the academic program, housing classrooms, lecture halls, and laboratories. The largest space, found on the first floor, was known as the Chapel. In addition to non-denominational prayer meetings everyday, the Chapel served many uses, including a lecture and recitation hall, a theater, and a dance floor. On December 17, 1824, the Chapel was the site of a grand ball given in honor of the visiting Marquis de Lafayette. The event was described as follows:

The hall had been previously tastefully ornamented by a committee of ladies selected for the purpose, and has been pronounced to be the handsomest room which has ever been appropriated to an occasion of this kind in this country.... It was ornamented with wreaths of flowers, natural and artificial, transparencies of Washington and Lafayette, and many military insignia. In the centre was suspended a large chandelier, of a circular form but decreasing in its circumference from bottom to top, beautifully ornamented and illuminated with nearly one hundred lights....⁴⁰

At the dedication ceremony for the new 1857 dormitory (Pinkney Hall), the deceased principal Hector Humphreys was honored by having the previously unnamed 1837 boardinghouse formally christened “Humphreys Hall.” As an afterthought, the college building was christened McDowell Hall.⁴¹

During the Union troops' occupation of the campus, the board agreed to relinquish use of all buildings, save McDowell Hall. The board lost their plea in 1863 when the Assistant Surgeon George B. Park, in

³⁸ Tilghman, p. 23.

³⁹ Tilghman, p. 71.

⁴⁰ Tilghman, p. 51.

⁴¹ Tilghman, p. 85.

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charge of Division No. 2, wrote to the Surgeon General to ask if he might occupy any part of the "old central building" of the college. The board, Parker wrote, wished to retain McDowell Hall because it contained "Philosophical Apparatus, a Laboratory, Mineralogical and Geological Specimens, Cabinet, Library, and the standard weights and measures," all property of the state of Maryland.⁴² Medical Inspector Joseph K. Barnes was directed to examine McDowell Hall and report on the advisability of its use by the army's medical department. Following this, Josiah Simpson, Medical Director of Baltimore, was ordered to take the building, throwing St. John's College off its campus entirely.

In the decades following the Civil War, the campus underwent a period of reconstruction and renovations. Tench Francis Tilghman reports in the *Early History of St. John's College in Annapolis* that in the 1870s, Principal Garnett wanted "to add a large hall and two classrooms to McDowell."⁴³ Tilghman continues with his own architectural criticism of Garnett's plans: "One shudders to think what the building would have looked like had he been able to carry out this scheme. There is at least this much consolation to be drawn from St. John's continual financial struggle: the college passed through the age of bad taste without having inflicted upon it the architectural monstrosities that make nightmares of so many campuses. And so McDowell Hall was spared the indignity of a couple of excrescences being tacked on it."⁴⁴

Similarly in 1882, President Leavitt intended that a "workshop would be built just back of McDowell Hall, and Humphreys would be used for a library and museum. McDowell itself would be enlarged by ceiling over what is now known as the Great Hall (thus adding two classrooms on the second floor) and by tacking a bay on the western side."⁴⁵ The reduced funding provided by the Assembly forced Leavitt to curtail his lavish plans for the campus and curriculum. He was able to isolate the younger boys of the preparatory school in 1882 by "giving their department two rooms on the west side of McDowell and building a porch and entrance so that access to this school could be had without going through the college property...."⁴⁶

In circa 1899, the interior of the Chapel was described, based on a photograph, as follows: "gas chandelier is suspended above center, and bare electric bulbs hang near the corners of the gallery, above an elevated stage or dais. Steam radiators flank the rear entry, and wooden folding shutters cover the windows."⁴⁷ During the latter part of the 19th century, little work was performed on the structure of

⁴² Tilghman, p. 100.

⁴³ Tilghman, p. 126.

⁴⁴ Tilghman, p. 126.

⁴⁵ Tilghman, p. 132.

⁴⁶ Tilghman, p. 133.

⁴⁷ Circa 1899 photograph held by the Maryland State Archives, Forbes Collection, MdHR G182-149.

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McDowell Hall. The belfry was repaired, however, after being struck by lightning in 1885. In 1903, a red stone porch was erected on the northeast side of the building.

On February 20, 1909, as St. John's prepared to celebrate the 125th anniversary of its charter, McDowell Hall caught fire and in less than an hour its destruction was nearly complete. The fire, presumed to have been started by defective wiring, was fanned by a strong northwest wind that brought the cupola down in ten minutes. Because of the school's military program, 30,000 rounds of ammunition were stored in the basement of the building. This ammunition began to explode at intervals, further destroying the structure of the building.⁴⁸ The walls of the building were too high for the streams of water to reach the roof, so the hoses were carried up into the trees. Unable to save McDowell Hall, brigades of midshipmen and members of the community turned their efforts to saving Humphreys Hall, Pinkney Hall, and the new Mess Hall from catching fire. Once the fire at the historic hall was extinguished, the totality of its destruction was experienced – the two upper floors were burned, the roof and cupola were gone, and the first floor had been severely damaged by water and falling debris. Although the entire interior and roofing system of the building were destroyed, the students, alumni, and community members were able to save furnishings of value, including various equipment, valuable college records, and the collection of class shields that adorned the balconies and walls of the Chapel (Great Hall).⁴⁹ The damage was estimated at about \$40,000, of which \$20,900 was covered by insurance.

Almost immediately, contributions began to flood the college to aid in the reconstruction of the landmark building. Remembering that the building had been "cramped and old-fashioned," younger alumni requested a new building, roughly following the lines of the original but with an auditorium added on the rear.⁵⁰ The board consulted two very prominent architectural firms in Baltimore and received mixed advice. Both firms indicated the old walls could be used in the rebuilding and that, with judicious patching, future generations would be unable to tell the new from the old. The original bricks could be matched and the old woodwork copied. But both firms promoted the option of taking this opportunity to erect a new building with modern materials and amenities. The older alumni refused to contribute to the rebuilding unless the old McDowell Hall was fully restored in every detail. Consequently, the board was faced with three propositions: 1) copy the façade of the old building and design a new back, 2) tear the whole thing down and design something entirely new, and 3) restore the old building as accurately as possible, using all the original material that could be safely utilized. Alumni pressures proved too great, and the third option was adopted. Tilghman presents a detailed account of the restoration: "The damaged parts of the old walls were cut out; the old timbers were removed; and the foundations were strengthened. Then the walls were filled out with new bricks and the

⁴⁸ A pamphlet "McDowell Hall" prepared by St. John's College states the "students managed to remove it [the ammunition] before fire caused an explosion."

⁴⁹ Murphy, p. 60; Tilghman, p. 167.

⁵⁰ Tilghman, p. 167.

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woodwork of both exterior and interior copied as carefully as possible. The only changes in plan were that the third floor was re-arranged into the present [1940] six rooms, the original large center room being given up. The design of the stairway was also altered somewhat.⁵¹

As quoted by Emily A. Murphy, in *300 Years of Liberal Arts at St. John's College, Annapolis*, the interior configuration following the restoration work was described in the *Rat-Tat*: "Within, the chapel remains the same, the President's office and Faculty rooms are as in the old building. In addition to these on the ground floor is a reception hall, a thing that St. John's has long needed.... The staircase has been changed. Instead of the narrow stairs in the obsolete corners, now it is built in the large, square Puritan style. As in the old building, the second floor embraces the recitation rooms. The third floor is given over to society and fraternity quarters. The basement has been thoroughly finished and is now available for recitation rooms, whenever occasion may require."⁵² The restoration of McDowell Hall, taking slightly over a year, is described in greater detail in Section 7 of this form.

Fire struck McDowell Hall again in November 1952, damaging the basement and floor of the Chapel, or Great Hall as it had come to be called. The original wood beams of 1744, having survived the devastating 1909 fire, were severely damaged, and had to be replaced by steel beams. In the decade following this fire, the first floor classrooms were divided to create offices and reception space. The southeast corner office was reserved for the college president and the dean occupied the southwest corner. The assistant dean used the northwest corner office, while the registrar used the northeast corner office. In 1963, the ivy that had encapsulated the building was removed.

In 1989, the building's interior was again being renovated, with its floors and gallery strengthened, the configuration of several classrooms and offices changed, and the modern HVAC installed. Administrative offices that had been located on the first floor were moved to a new wing in Mellon Hall, and the space restore to its original configuration as classrooms.

Liberty Tree (site)

The last of this country's Liberty Trees stood on the northern side of the St. John's campus, shading Pinkney Hall to the south. Elihu S. Riley, in *The Ancient City*, relates that this historic tulip poplar tree (*Liriodendron tulipifera*) was the site of a treaty of peace between the colonists and Susquehannock Indians in 1652.⁵³ Historians have since discounted this legend, suggesting that the treaty was signed at

⁵¹ Tilghman, p. 168.

⁵² Murphy, p. 61.

⁵³ Elihu S. Riley. *The Ancient City: A History of Annapolis, Maryland 1649-1887*, (Baltimore, MD: Clearfield Company, Inc., reprint 1995), pp. 308-309.

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Providence on the western side of the Severn River. Nevertheless, the tree held historic significance for its association with the colony of Maryland, the town of Annapolis, and St. John's College.

Liberty Trees were one of the first symbols of colonial resistance to British oppression. Americans had designated Liberty Trees in various cities and towns by the middle part of the 18th century as the meeting places to protest British actions. Under the branches of the Annapolis tree, the Sons of Liberty met to hear Samuel Chase and other patriot orators. Annapolis residents also gathered there to determine whether or not people who had not joined the association of patriots should be driven out of the colony. The Liberty Tree is almost certainly the "very large tree on a fine piece of ground" under which Joseph Pilmoor preached the first Methodist sermon in Maryland on July 11, 1772.⁵⁴

During the 19th century, the Liberty Tree continued as an important landmark, for years being the site of Fourth of July celebrations. In 1848, the tree was set on fire by two pounds of explosives set within its hollowing trunk. "The citizens of Annapolis repaired in force for its rescue, the firemen bringing out the city engine and deluging the tree with water. The boys' escapade was, no doubt, greatly denounced; but the juveniles had done better than their denunciators thought or the juveniles intended. The tree had fallen into a state of decay that threatened its life. The next year it was put forth its branches with its youth renewed. The explosion had destroyed the worms that were gnawing away its vitals."⁵⁵ Another account states the tree was ablaze in the second time in the 1840s, being saved when Principal Humphreys extinguished the fire with chemicals from the school laboratory.

In 1907, John T. Withers, landscape architect and forester, performed what was then believed to be the "largest single accomplishment of tree surgery in the world. Decay, begun many years previously, had continued to the point that the trunk was a shell thirteen inches thick. The cavity extended fifty-six feet up the tree. This was thoroughly cleaned out to a depth of several feet down to the ground, the cavity was given an antiseptic wash, and the tree was filled with concrete reinforced with steel and iron. The job required fifty-five tons of concrete. Wither considered the tree to be the largest east of California."⁵⁶

The tree had become such an object of fame that the Peggy Stewart Tea Party Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution decided to erect an iron fence to protect the poplar from souvenir hunters, who were chipping away at its bark. The fence was dedicated on December 18, 1924, the 100th anniversary of Lafayette's last visit to Annapolis. When the danger from souvenir hunters subsided, the fence was eventually removed.

⁵⁴ A pamphlet, "The Liberty Tree," produced by St. John's College.

⁵⁵ Riley, p. 309.

⁵⁶ A pamphlet, "The Liberty Tree," produced by St. John's College.

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Riley described the tree in July 1886 as being "twenty-nine feet, four inches in circumference" two feet from the ground, and standing "about 150 feet high. One third of the trunk is gone, and is now boarded up. The body of the tree is a mere shell – a marvel [sic] how its life can be maintained and thousands of tulips bloom on its branches in their season."⁵⁷ Late 20th century accounts indicate the tree had grown with a "diameter to be 102 inches, measured four and a half feet from the ground. The tree is about 96 feet tall and has a total spread of 60 feet."⁵⁸

The famed tree survived bolts of lightning, severe storms, and even fires for over four centuries. In April 1975, winds opened a six-foot-long crack in the upper trunk and widened it as much as four inches. To prevent damage by another storm, tree surgeons removed a number of branches to lighten the top and filled the crack with pliable mastic, secured on either side by six bolts.⁵⁹ Unfortunately, this last known Liberty Tree to be in existence was severely damaged by a hurricane in September 1999. Despite attempts to save this historic landmark, the tree was taken down in December 1999.

Liberty Bell

The replica of the Liberty Bell standing on the front campus of St. John's College, along College Avenue, is one of forty-eight bells cast in 1950 by the U.S. Department of Treasury as part of a nationwide drive to promote the sale of defense bonds. The State of Maryland temporarily deposited the bell with the Annapolis Chamber of Commerce, which in turn had it placed on the campus in 1952. In a speech at the dedication on May 13, 1953, John M. Whitmore said, "St. John's College, just as the bell, is symbolic of liberty and of man's constant battle to become and to remain free."⁶⁰

Alumni Memorial Tablet

The Alumni Memorial Tablet, standing across the walkway from the Liberty Bell on College Avenue, was erected in 1920 to honor the 452 St. John's students who served during World War I. The figure on the bronze tablet, facing southwest, depicts the alma mater with a drawn sword bowed in mourning over those twenty-four alumni whose names are inscribed on the shield. The Art Deco style tablet is set upon a granite plinth. The limestone stele, rectangular in form, is ornamented at the base with ogee molding and base blocks. The flat top of the object is detailed with a fret relief. On the northeast side of the stele is a bronze plaque with an interpretation of the symbolism on the bronze relief. Baltimore sculptor Hans Schuler (1874-1951) designed the allegorical figure, with J. Arthur Limerick Company of Baltimore casting it in bronze.

⁵⁷ Riley, p. 309.

⁵⁸ A pamphlet, "The Liberty Tree," produced by St. John's College.

⁵⁹ A pamphlet, "The Liberty Tree," produced by St. John's College.

⁶⁰ A pamphlet produced by St. John's College indicating "Other Places to See."

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College Cannon

The cannon set to the southeast of McDowell Hall was used in the War of 1812. This historic cannon is one of thirteen dredged out of Baltimore Harbor. The Peggy Stewart Tea Party Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution and the National Star Spangled Banner Centennial Commission presented it to the college on September 14, 1914.

New Program Seal

Adopted in 1937 with the advent of the New Program, the bronze-cast Great Books seal, located at the foot of the quadrangle to the north of McDowell Hall, was made by John Cook, a former St. John's laboratory technician. The motto on the seal is "Facio liberos ex liberis libris libraque," which means, "I make free adults from children by means of books and a balance." The circular seal is marked at the center by open books surrounding chemical measuring scale.

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HISTORIC CONTEXT:

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE PRESERVATION PLAN DATA

Geographic Organization: Western Shore

Chronological/Developmental Period(s): Rural Agrarian Intensification (1680-1815)
Agricultural-Industrial Transition (1815-1870)
Industrial/Urban Dominance (1870-1930)
Modern Period (1930-present)

Historic Period Theme(s): Architecture, Landscape Architecture, and Community
Planning
Social/Education/Cultural

Resource Type:

Category: Building

Historic Environment: Town

Historic Function(s) and Use(s): DOMESTIC/Single Dwelling
EDUCATION/College

Known Design Source: Simon Duff (Architect)
Patrick Creagh (Builder)
Joseph Clarke (Architect of Original Dome and Roof)
Chip Bohl (Interior Restoration Architect)

9. Major Bibliographical References

AA-675

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Memorandum: Edward Chappell to Chip Bohl, June 6, 1988. "McDowell Hall Exterior, St. John's College, Annapolis, Maryland."

Memorandum: Willie Graham to Chip Bohl, July 22, 1988. "Observations on the Interior Finish of McDowell Hall made on May 31, 1988."

Murphy, Emily A. *A Complete and Generous Education: 300 Years of Liberal Arts, St. John's College, Annapolis.* Annapolis, MD, St. John's College Press, 1996.

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of project area	<u>1 acre</u>	
Acreage surveyed	<u>33 acres</u>	
Quadrangle name	<u>Annapolis, MD</u>	Quadrangle scale <u>1:24,000</u>

Verbal boundary description and justification

McDowell Hall is located on the campus of St. John's College, established at this site in 1784. The college is recorded on Tax Map 4-6, Parcel 458. It is bounded by College Avenue to the southeast, King George Street to the northeast, St. John Street to the southwest, and College Creek to the northwest. The building has been associated with this site since its construction in 1742.

11. Form Prepared by

AA-675

name/title	Laura Trieschmann and Kim Williams, Architectural Historians April 1, 2000
organization	E.H.T. Traceries, Inc.
street & number	5420 Western Avenue
city or town	Chevy Chase, Maryland 20815

The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust
DHCD/DHCP
100 Community Place
Crownsville, MD 21032
410-514-7600

McDOWELL HALL



WELLE
FISHBAUGH
BOHL,
Architect

Annapolis, Md.

Renovation

McDOWELL
HALL

St. Johns C
Annapolis, Md.

ARCHITECT
CUPOLA/
PLAN

- Schematic Draw
- Design Develop
- Construction I
- Bidding Draw
- Contract Draw
- Progress Draw
- For Construction

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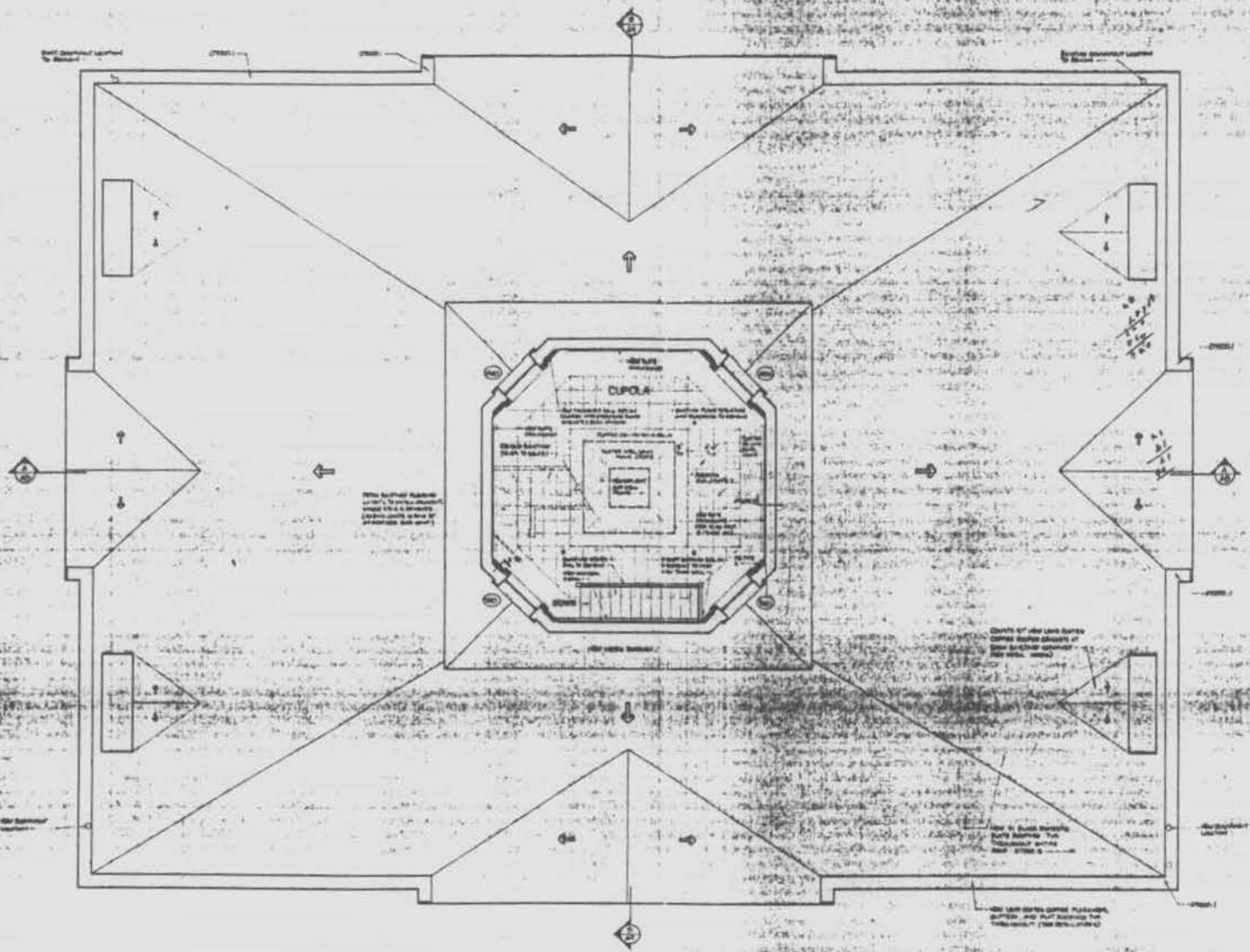
Revisions

Design By:
Drawn By:
Checked By:
Job No: 9073-4
Scale: 1/8" = 1'-0"
Date: 11/28/88

Sheet 7



AA-675



NORTH



WELLEI
FISHBACK
BOHLER
Architects

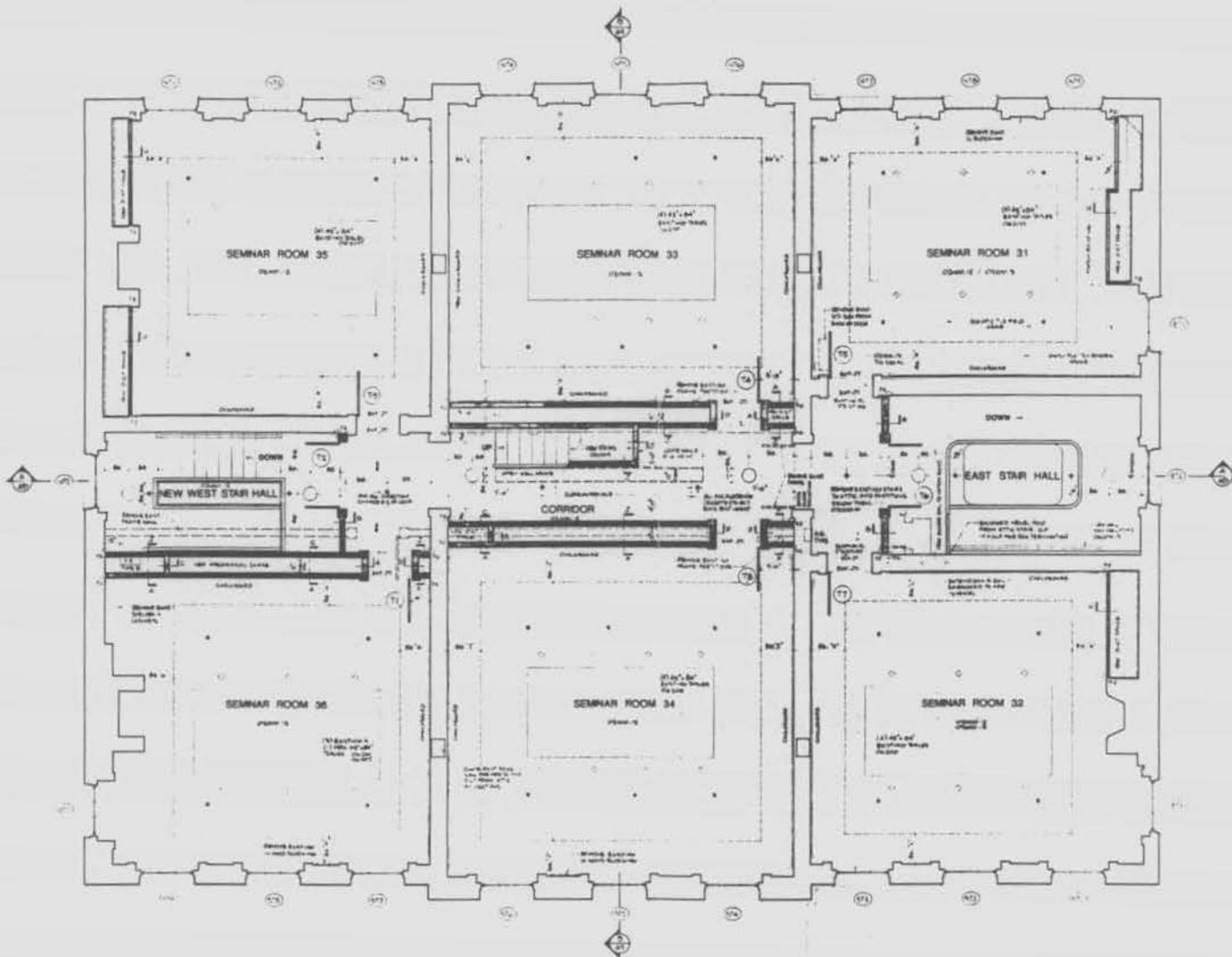
Annapolis, Maryland

Renovation

McDOWNE
HALL

St. John's College
Annapolis, Maryland

ARCHITECT
THIRD FLOOR
PLAN



- Schematic Design
- Design Development
- Construction Documents
- Bidding Documents
- Contract Documents
- Progress Drawings For Construction

REVISIONS

Design By: _____
 Drawn By: _____
 Checked By: _____
 Job No: _____
 Scale: _____
 Date: _____

Sheet

NORTH

AA-675



WELLEF
FISHBACK
BOHLER
Architects.

Annapolis, Maryland

Renovation

McDOWE
HALL

St. Johns, Cal
Annapolis, Mar.

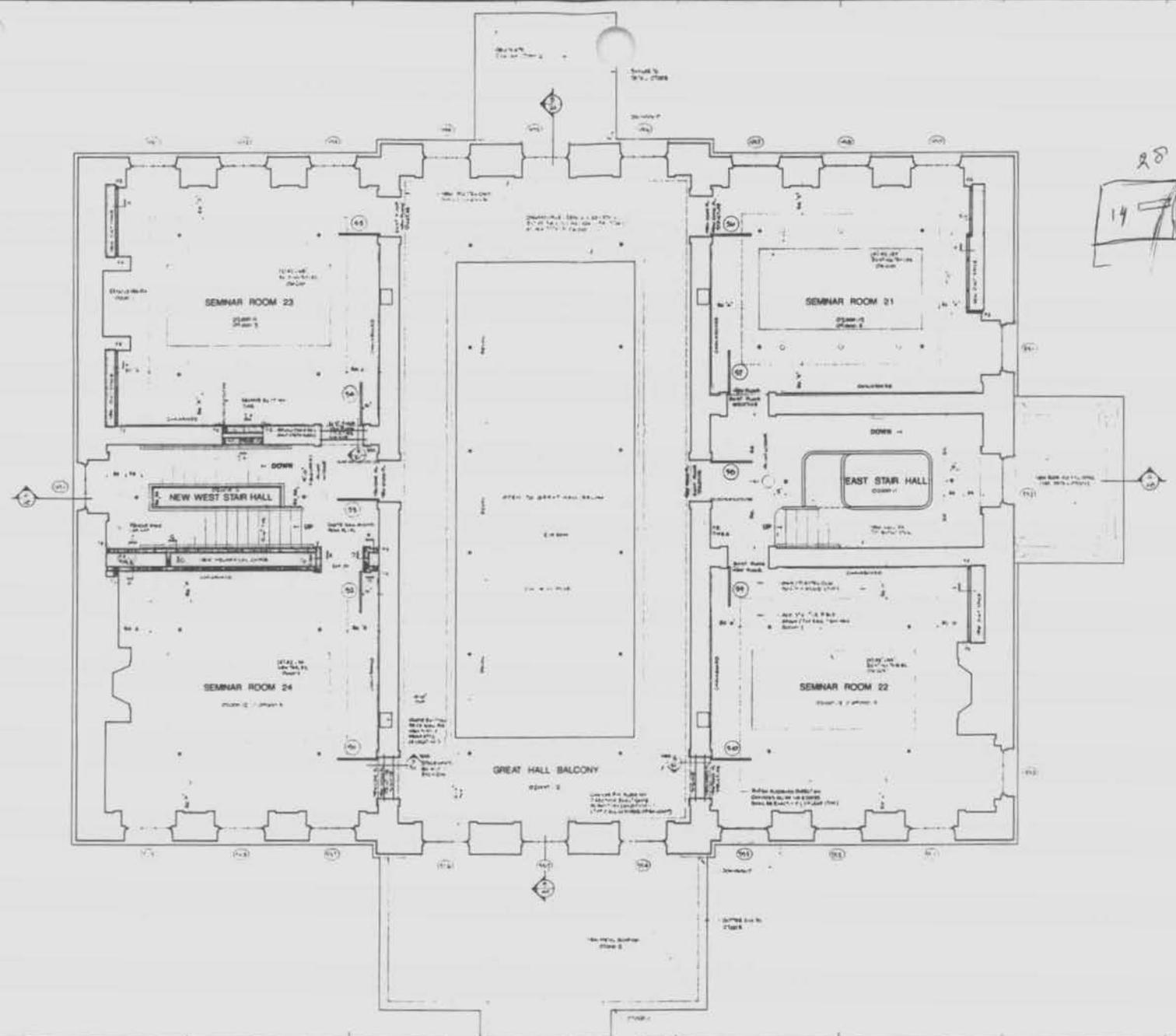
ARCHITECT
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- Schematic Design
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- Construction Doc.
- Bidding Documents
- Contract Documents
- Progress Drawings For Construction

Revisions

Design By: *cm*
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Date: *10/20/88*

Sheet *2* of *10*
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AA-675



**WELLER
FISHBACK &
BOHL,
Architects, P.A.**

Annapolis, Maryland 21404

Renovation of

**MCDOWELL
HALL**

St. John's College
Annapolis, Maryland

**ARCHITECTURAL
FIRST FLOOR
PLAN**

- Schematic Design
- Design Development
- Construction Documents
- Bidding Documents
- Contract Documents
- Progress Drawing - Not For Construction

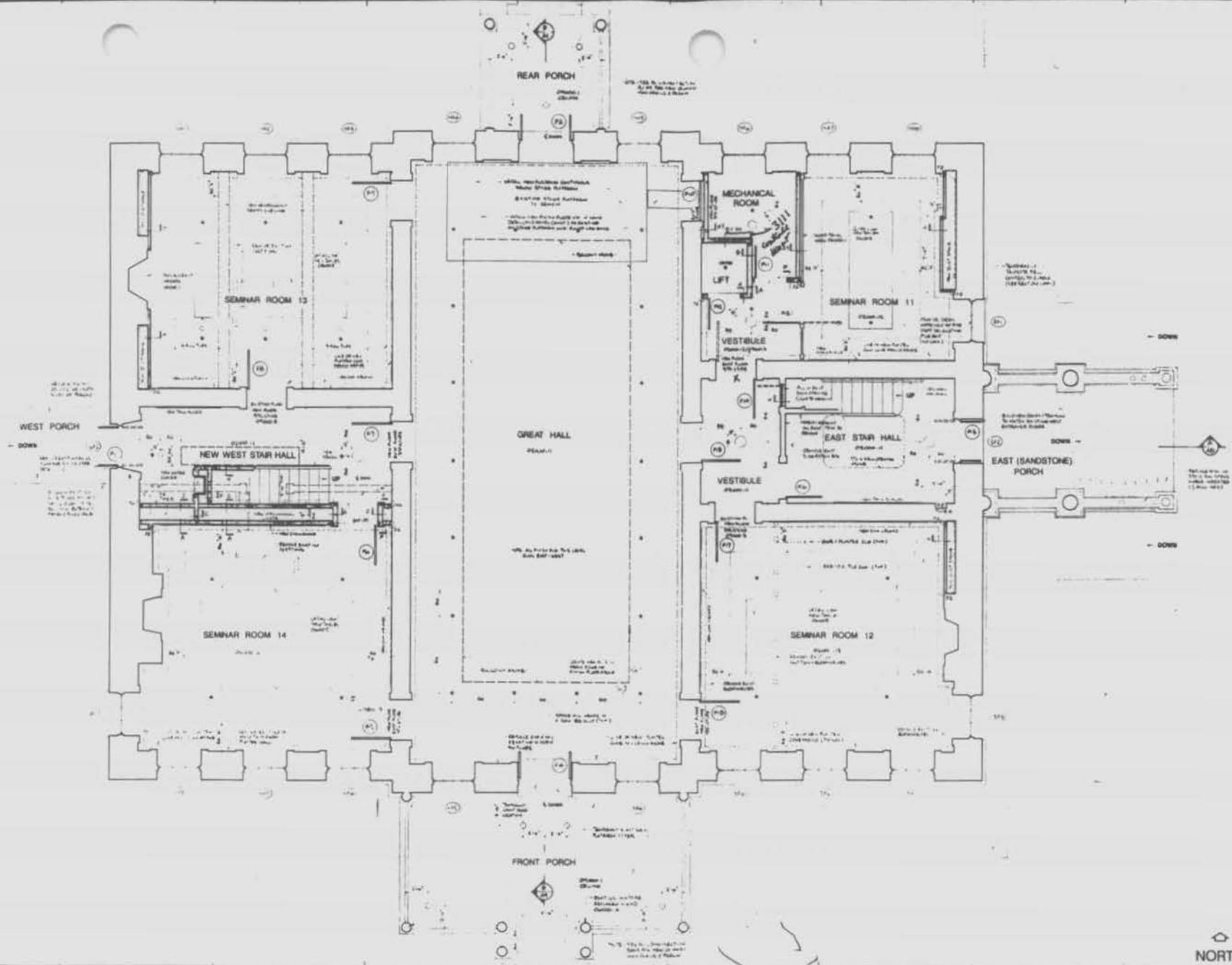
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Revisions

No.	Description

Design By: **W.F.B.**
 Drawn By: **W.F.B.**
 Checked By: **W.F.B.**
 Job No: **875**
 Scale: **1/8" = 1'-0"**
 Date: **11/28/87**

Sheet **5** of **55**



AA-675



WELLEL
FISHBACK
BOHLL
Architects

Washington, Maryland

Renovation

McDOWE
HALL

St. Johns. Co.
Annapolis, Md.

ARCHITECTS
BASEMENT
PLAN

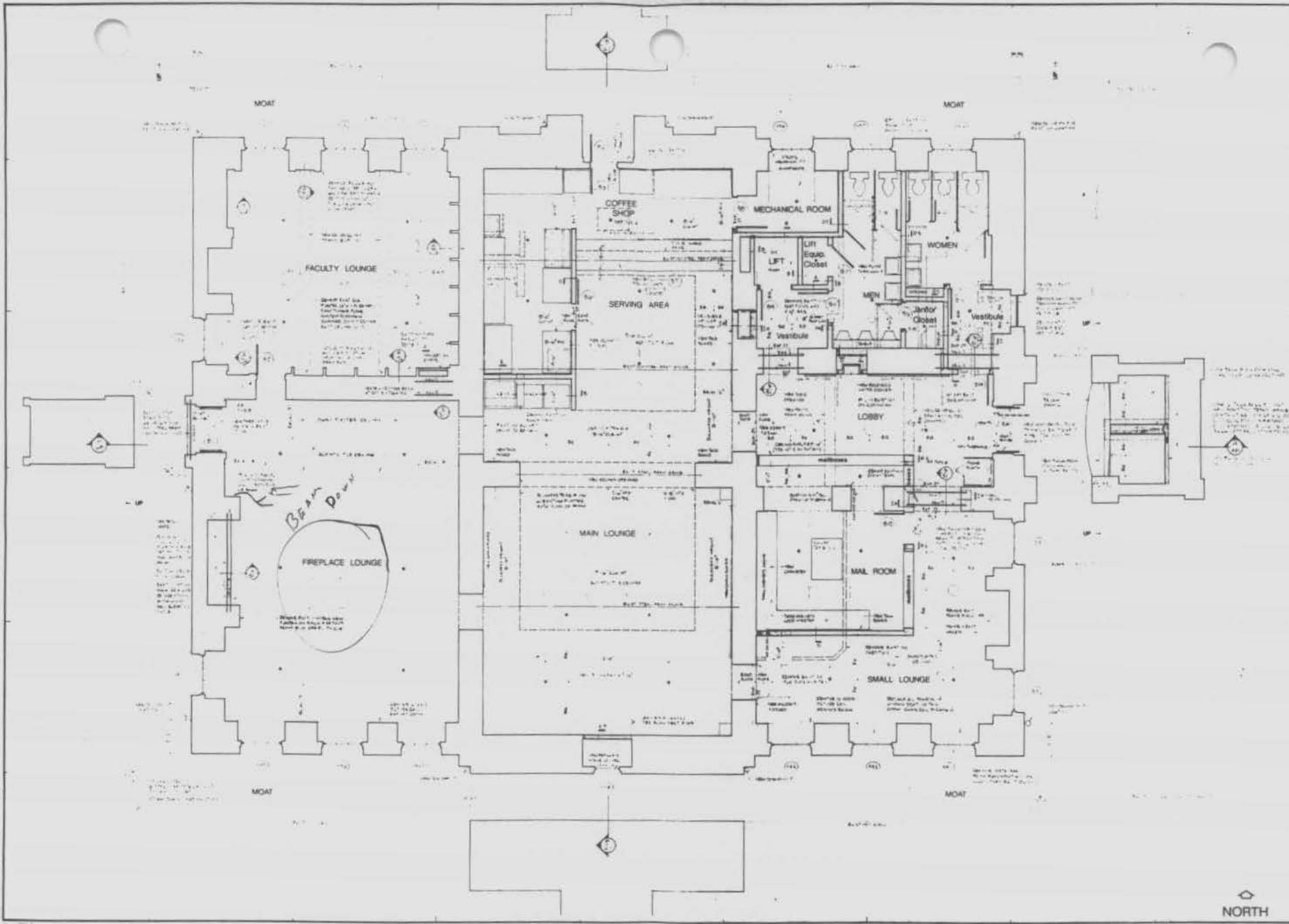
- Schematic Design
- Design Development
- Construction Documents
- Working Documents
- Contract Documents
- Progress Drawings
- For Construction

Revisions

No.	Description	Date

Design By: _____
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 Scale: _____
 Date: _____

Sheet
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NORTH

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HABS-EDDC

NO. 291

Form 3B
VII.15.1959

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
Historian's Work Sheet for "Photo-data Books" (Part I)

Name of Structure McDowell Hall

Address Maryland, Anne Arundel, Annapolis, St. John's College Campus
State, county, township, locality, street address or location

Present Owner (give address) St. John's College

Present Occupant St. John's College administrative staff

Present Use Administrative offices, classrooms, and assembly rooms

Brief Statement of Significance (historical): **This handsomely proportioned building, begun in 1742 as the Governor's Mansion, and finally completed in 1789, has since that date been the focal point of St. John's campus life.**
(All statements shall be documented)

Original and subsequent owners

- Province of Maryland
- State of Maryland
- St. John's College

Date of Erection **Begun in 1742, finished 1789 (See attached notes, Section I).**

Architect **Simon Duff (See attached notes, Section II).**

Builder, suppliers, etc.

Patrick Creagh (See attached notes, Section III).

Original plans, construction, etc.

No existent plans, however a contemporary description gives some indication of the building when it was partially constructed (See attached notes, Section IV)
Notes on alterations and additions

The exterior of McDowell Hall has not been altered since its completion in 1789, excepting the replacement of the steps at the North entrance with a sandstone step and porch which was preserved from the West front of the State House Library Annex of 1886. The original steps and steep were probably similar to that still seen at the south entrance.

For interior alterations, see attached notes, Section V.

HISTORICAL EVENTS CONNECTED WITH STRUCTURE

McDowell Hall was visited by General Washington when he was in Annapolis, and in 1824 two dinners and a ball were given in the Great Hall in honor of General Lafayette, while he was visiting the city.

From 1863 to the end of the Civil War the Hall served as the Headquarters of the Union Army Medical Corps, which was using the college and its buildings as a hospital for exchanged prisoners.

Francis Scott Key attended classes and lectures in the building while a student at St. John's, class of 1796. His Secretary is now in the Great Hall.

Important old views (with location) Buildings File, Alumni Office, St John's College, Annapolis

Front view of McDowell Hall, Magruder Collection, Hall of Records Watercolor of St. Anne's Church with McDowell Hall in background,

Sources of information collection of Dr. and Mrs. Ford K. Brown. (with location) Buildings File, Alumni and Registrar's Offices, St John's College, Annapolis

Redoff, M.L., Buildings of the State of Maryland at Annapolis, Hall of Records Commission, Annapolis, 1954

Maryland Gazette, Annapolis, 4 October, 1960 (See attached notes, Section VI for full text)
Likely sources not yet investigated

Prepared by Florence T. Dunbar

Research Staff, Historic Annapolis, Inc.

Date October 1964

INSTRUCTIONS FOR DOCUMENTATION

- Published references: Give author's full name, exact title from title page (underlined), publisher, place of publication, date, page references.
- Manuscript references: Give location of manuscript and note if long-hand or typed. Cite "from," "to," date, etc.
- Interviews: If information came from a personal interview, give complete name and address of informant.

CONTINUATIONS: Any of the above entries may be continued on additional sheets. Exact transcripts in quotes from pertinent documents are especially welcomed as appendices or otherwise.

MCDOWELL HALL: Additional Notes

Section I:

McDowell Hall was abandoned in an unfinished state due to lack of funds, disagreement in the Legislature, and the impracticality of Governor Bladen's grandiose conception of the building. The four acres surrounding the mansion, which was noted as "the appertenance", and the building itself were granted to the College by the State Legislature.

"The appertenance belonging to this four acres of land consisted of the ruins of a handsome mansion, projected by Governor Bladen about 1742, for the official residence of the Colonial Governors, which though commenced under the supervision of a Scotch architect, who came to the country especially to construct it, was never completed for the purposes originally intended... Hence this building went almost to ruin, and remained uncompleted for years, receiving the popular name of "Bladen's Folly" or "The Governor's Folly". This popular appellation was recorded in verse by a local poet (lines are written as if spoken by old St. Anne's Church, also in bad repair in 1771):

With grief in yonder field, hard bye,
A sister ruin I espy:-
Old Bladen's palace, once so famed,
And now too well "the Folly" named,
Her roof all tottering to decay,
Her walls a-mouldering away.

(p.81, Commemoration of the One Hundredth Anniversary of St. John's College).

Further indication of the condition into which the building was allowed to fall is found in the Archives of Maryland: "Your Committee further find, That several Bricks, in the new House erected on said Land for the use of the Governor for the Time being, are moult'er'd and Decayed; and there is a Crack in the wall of the said House from the Bottom almost to the Top, in the North-East Corner thereof: That there is Round the outside of the said House a Quantity of Portland Stone, Bremen Stone, several casks of Stucco, and some wrought country stone; That within the Cellars of said House there is a large Quantity of Shingles, which

appear to lie on the bare ground; and likewise some marble stone and Bremen Stone lying on the damp ground, which last appear much Decayed: That there is a large Quantity of plank and scantling lying in great danger of being spoiled, occasioned by the Rains coming through the Roof of the H House; and that part of the sommers of the said House appears to be upon the Decay, Jews-Ears growing now out of the sides thereof. (XLIV, pp. 524-525).

Thomas Jefferson, in a letter dated 25 May, 1766 to John Page, said, "They have no publick buildings worth mentioning except a governor's house, the hull of which after being nearly finished, they have suffered to go to ruin,"

In 1786, new life was given to McDowell Hall. On march tenth the Boarg of Visitors and Governors resolved to repair and finish the building. The building committee were appointed: Alexander Hanson
Nicholas Carroll
Richard Ridgeley.

A contract was awarded to Joseph Clark, who was at the time supervising completion of the State House, and two wings were to be added to the Hall. There was much difficulty in raising funds and the work itself was slow, but by 1789 enough work had been done for classes to be held in the Hall, although all work was not completed until the mid 1790's. (Minutes of the Board of Visitors and Governors; 1785 - 1793).

Section II:

"Mr. Duff, architect, came from Scotland at the instance of Cecilius Calvert..." (Mrs. Key)

Section III:

Patrick Cgearh was an Annapolis master-builder who successfully completed the Old Treasury in 1737. He supplied much of the material necessary for the mansion, including bricks, lime, and possibly timber (Radoff, p.77). He was at this time building the new powder house which was to replace the one standing where the Governor's House was to be erected.

Section IV:

"... (Mr Simon Duff) brought with him a plan of building of the Provincial Government House, an Act of Assembly having granted the land whereon St. John's College now stands. Under his direction the walls of the present main building were erected, joists laid and scaffolding prepared for roofing it in. The original design was to have had wings - united by a colonnade of pillars on each side - but in consequence of a difference between the two parties it was never executed... and a large quantity of white marble was imported to finish off this building in handsome style. Small slabs for paving the Hall beautifully white and pure and black also - large fine slabs for the steps, etc. They were taken to the building - some were in the cellar and others piled on the outside." (Mrs. Key)

Section V:

For many years McDowell Hall was the only building of St. John's College, and as such served for class rooms, sleeping quarters for students, and an apartment for a faculty family. In the mid-eighteenth century, when other buildings which could be used for housing had been built, the Hall was converted to its present form; a group of small rooms used for administrative purposes and classrooms on either side of a large assembly room, the Great Hall.

In February, 1909, the building was gutted by fire, only the walls and the porticos remaining. The walls proved to be sound, and it was possible to restore the interior exactly as it had been prior to the disaster.

Fire again struck the building in November, 1952, This time, however, the damage was confined to the basement and the floor of the Great Hall. The original wood beams of 1744 were severely damaged and had to be replaced by ones of steel.

Section VI:

Gary, Joy, "Patrick Creagh of Annapolis," Maryland Historical Magazine, XLVIII, #4, pp. 310-326

Voorhees, Philip R., Historical Sketch, Commemoration of the One Hundredth Anniversary of St. John's College, Alumni Association, Baltimore, 1890 (copy in St. John's College Library).

Key, Mrs., "A Notice Of Some Of The First Buildings With Notes Of Some Of The Early Residents," Maryland Historical Magazine, XIV, p. 262

Archives of Maryland, XLIV, pp. 524-525

Owings, D. McC., His Lordship's Patronage, Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore, 1953

Mereness, D.N., Maryland as a Proprietary Province, New York, 1901

Burnaby, A., Travels through the Middle Settlements of North America, in 1759 and 1760, London, 1798

Section VII:

"Governor Thomas Bladen, who had failed to get on with the Assembly anyway, undertook to erect too large a house. In 1744, after laying out the whole sum of £4000 currency, he had to apply for half as much again, merely to complete the fabric. This the Lower House refused. While the Governor and delegates quarreled, the unfinished palace, by now called "Bladen's Folly," sank into a long decay." (Owings, p.23)

A history of the argument between the Governor and the legislature is found in Mereness, p.349-53. A description of the mansion in its unfinished state is in Burnaby.

An indication of Bladen's extravagance is gained on consideration that when the capitol moved to Annapolis the Assembly began to vote an annual allowance to the governors for rent

as follows: In 1698 Gov. Nicholson got £96.10.0 (which he complained was too meagre). In 1704 Gov. John Seymour was getting £30.0.0. By Gov. Sharpe's time the allowance was £80.0.0, but never more. Sharpe was actually paying £100.0.0 for his lodging. His successor, Robert Eden, purchased for £2,000.0.0 the handsome mansion house overlooking the Annapolis harbour; a bargain compared to the four or six thousand Bladen's Folly was costing. (Owings, p.24).

Section VIII:

Additional views of the Hall:

Hayman Collection, Hall of Records:

- 110: Great Hall before restoration
- 111: Great Hall after restoration
- 127: seen from the State House dome

Forbes Collection, Hall of Records:

- 1499: the Hall on fire
- 1498: the Hall on fire
- 121: front elevation
- 1503: after the fire
- 1507: " " "
- 1598: " " "
- 1608: " " "

Section IX:

The first and fourth definitions of "folly" as given by Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary are:

1. lack of good sense or normal prudence and foresight.
2. an excessively costly or unprofitable undertaking; esp: a ruinously costly often unfinished building.

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Winnipeg, Minn. - Winn St. College - Corwell Hall

CORWELL HALL - WINN ST. COLLEGE - WINNEPEGON, MINN.

HABS
MD.

2-ANNA

40A-

McDowell Hall or "Great Hall"
St. John's College
Annapolis
Anne Arundel County
Maryland

PHOTOGRAPHS

ADDENDUM
FOLLOWS...

McDowell Hall
St. John's College
Annapolis, Md.

AA-675
HABS. NO. Md.

HABS
M.D.

2-ANNA

40A-1



Historic American Buildings Survey
E. H. Pickering, Photographer

November 1936

McDOWELL
The ~~Dorset~~ Hall, St. John's College
~~Stephens College,~~
Annapolis, Maryland.



Historic American Buildings Survey
Charles E. Peterson, Photographer

May, 1942.

VIEW FROM NORTHEAST

AA-675

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MD.

1 ANNA

40A-2

McDowell Hall
St. John's College
Annapolis, Maryland

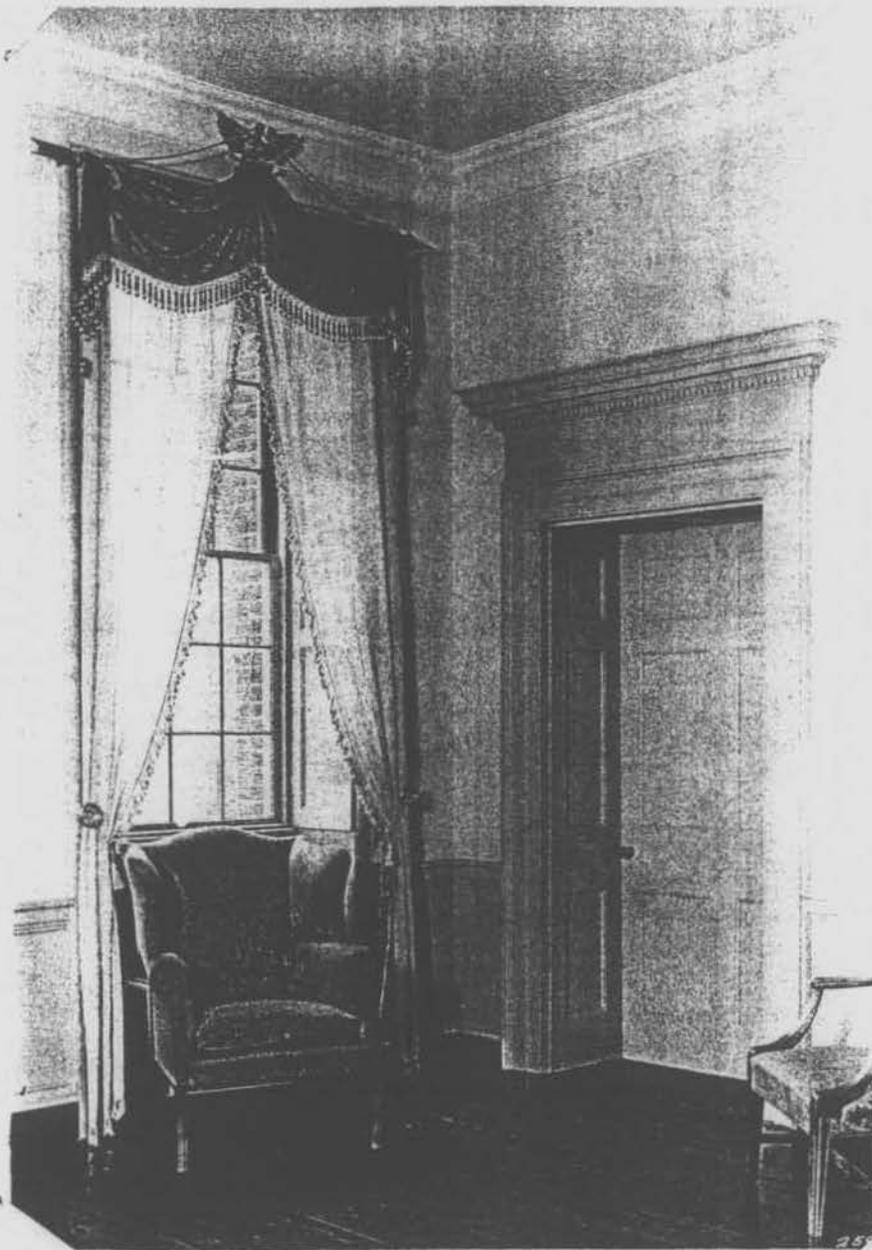
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MD.

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Historic American Buildings Survey
E. H. Pickering, Photographer

September 1936

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Addendum to

St. John's College, McDowell Hall
(Great Hall) (Bladen's Folly)
College Avenue
Annapolis
Anne Arundel County
Maryland

HABS. No. MD-291

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2-ANNA,
40A -

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE INFORMATION

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

HABS AA-675
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40A-

ARCHITECTURAL DATA FORM

STATE Maryland	COUNTY Anne Arundel	TOWN OR VICINITY Annapolis
HISTORIC NAME OF STRUCTURE (INCLUDE SOURCE FOR NAME) St. John's College, McDowell Hall		HABS NO. MD-291
SECONDARY OR COMMON NAMES OF STRUCTURE Great Hall; Bladen's Folly		
COMPLETE ADDRESS (DESCRIBE LOCATION FOR RURAL SITES) College Avenue		
DATE OF CONSTRUCTION (INCLUDE SOURCE) 1742-1789	ARCHITECT(S) (INCLUDE SOURCE) Simon Duff	
SIGNIFICANCE (ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORICAL, INCLUDE ORIGINAL USE OF STRUCTURE) Originally constructed in 1742, by Governor Thomas Bladen, as the Governors Mansion, the building project overstepped its budget and was finally acquired in 1784 by the newly chartered St. John's College. St. John's completed the building and renamed it in honor of the college's first president.		
STYLE (IF APPROPRIATE) Georgian		
MATERIAL OF CONSTRUCTION (INCLUDE STRUCTURAL SYSTEMS) Brick, laid in all-header and Flemish courses on the main facade, Flemish bond on the rear facade and English bond on the ends.		
SHAPE AND DIMENSIONS OF STRUCTURE (SKETCHED FLOOR PLANS ON SEPARATE PAGES ARE ACCEPTABLE) Three stories above an elevated basement; rectangular; about 51'x72'; large central hall, 3 bays wide and 2 stories high, extending from front to rear, and small central (see data p.2)		
EXTERIOR FEATURES OF NOTE The central 3 bays of front and rear facades project as pedimented pavilions; molded brick belt course at second floor level; plain belt course at third floor level; hipped roof with pediments at center of each side; central wooden cupola (modern), whose base is octagonal, with a circular open belfry with 8 columns, dome and finial; pedimented wooden porch at main entrance; 1-bay sandstone porch with modified Greek Ionic columns and entablature (NE end); 1 bay porch (NW facade); brick stoop with sandstone steps (SW end).		
MAJOR ALTERATIONS AND ADDITIONS WITH DATES		
PRESENT CONDITION AND USE Administrative offices, classrooms		
OTHER INFORMATION AS APPROPRIATE The Maryland Legislature authorized Bladen to buy four acres of land and build 'a dwelling house', the cost not to exceed £4000. Bladen had already overrun the budget by £2000 by the time the Legislature abandoned the project in 1744. The abandoned project was thereafter called "Bladen's Folly". (see data p.2)		
SOURCES OF INFORMATION (INCLUDING LISTING ON NATIONAL REGISTER, STATE REGISTERS, ETC.) Archives of Maryland XLIV, pp. 524-525. Brock, Alonzo. "Journal of William Black," <u>Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography</u> , 1877, p.128. (see data page 2)		
COMPILER, AFFILIATION by Florence Dunbar (Oct.1964) and Harley McKee (Aug.1964).	DATE 3/15/84	

SHAPE AND DIMENSIONS (CONT'D):

lateral halls which give access to major areas at each corner.

OTHER INFORMATION (CONT'D):

For many years McDowell Hall was the only building of St. John's College, serving as classrooms, dormitory and faculty apartments. In the mid-nineteenth century, McDowell Hall was converted to its present form and used as administrative offices and classrooms on either side of the large assembly room, the Great Hall.

The building was gutted by fire in 1909, but was restored. In 1952, the building again caught fire, but the damage was confined to the basement and the floor of the Great Hall. The original wooden beams of 1744 were severely damaged and had to be replaced by steel beams.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION (CONT'D):

Burnaby, A. Travels Through the Middle Settlements of North America, in 1759 and 1760, London, 1798.

Davis, Deering. Annapolis Houses, 1700-1775. Bonanza Books, 1947, p106-107.

Gary, Joy. "Patrick Creagh of Annapolis," Maryland Historical Magazine, XLVII, #4, pp310-326.

Key, Mrs. "A Notice of Some of the First Buildings With Notes of Some of the Early Residents," Maryland Historical Magazine, XIV, p.262.

Maryland Gazette, Annapolis, Oct. 4, 1960.

Mereness, D.N. Maryland as a Proprietary Province. New York, 1901.

Owings, D. McC. His Lordship's Patronage. Maryland Historical Society. Baltimore. 1953.

Radoff, M.L. Buildings of the State of Maryland at Annapolis, Ann: Hall of Records, 1

Voorhees, Philip. Commemoration of the One Hundredth Anniversary of St. John's College. Balt: 1890.

Wheaton, Rodd L. "Housing the Governor in Annapolis, Maryland, 1695-1776." Master's Thesis, University of Virginia, 1970.

30



McDOWELL HALL

Begun in 1744 by Thomas Bladen, Fifth Colonial Governor of Maryland, for a "Governor's Palace." It is the student centre of the college; it contains the offices of administration, recitation halls, the Student Union, and the Great Hall.

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Maryland
D. C.



PINKNEY HALL

One of the student resident halls. Erected in 1855; it was used as a military hospital by the United States Army, 1861-1865.

AA-675

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

OF AMERICAN institutions of higher learning St. John's has, next to Harvard College and William and Mary, the longest continuous history. Its story begins in 1696, with the establishment at Annapolis of King William's School. The charter of the school proclaims that it was founded "for the education of youth in good letters and manners." This school flourished until the Revolution, and numbered in its student body the best of the youth of Maryland and the adjacent colonies.

King William's School became St. John's College through the same general forces which created a free America. In the College records stand an impressive number of those names which are honored for their connection with the founding of the Republic.

In 1784 the Legislature granted a college charter. By legislative action the funds, property, masters, and students of King William's School passed to the new institution. By legislative action, also, it received a grant of land near the State House, on which stood a mansion begun in 1744 by Thomas Bladen, Royal Governor from 1742 to 1747. Royal names were out of favor, and it was

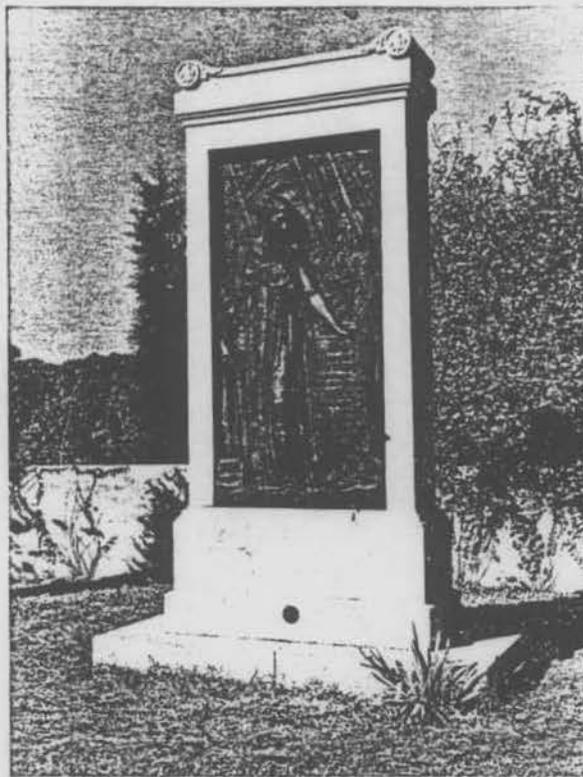


Walton House, 10 Francis Street, built by William Workman. This was the original home of King William's School, founded at Annapolis in 1696. After the Revolution King William's became St. John's College, which is, therefore, America's third oldest educational institution. This is the oldest college building still standing in the United States.

natural that King William's should lose its ancient appellation, but it is not known exactly how the College received its present name. It is probable that among the distinguished men who guided the transition from school to college were some who had been students at St. John's, Oxford. By giving the name of this college to the new institution they testified to an affection which had survived the bitterness and hardships of the Revolution.

They wrote into the charter those principles of religious freedom which earned for early Maryland the name of "The Land of Sanctuary." To quote from the charter: ". . . the said college shall be founded and maintained forever upon a most liberal plan, for the benefit of youth of every religious denomination . . . nor shall any preference be given in the choice of a principal, or other professor, master, or tutor in said college, on account of his particular religious profession."

Dr. Thomas John Clagett, first Protestant Episcopal Bishop to be ordained in the United States, and Dr. John Carroll, first American Roman Catholic



Memorial on the campus marking the graves of French soldiers and sailors who died at Annapolis during the Revolution. Erected in 1911 by the Sons of the Revolution.

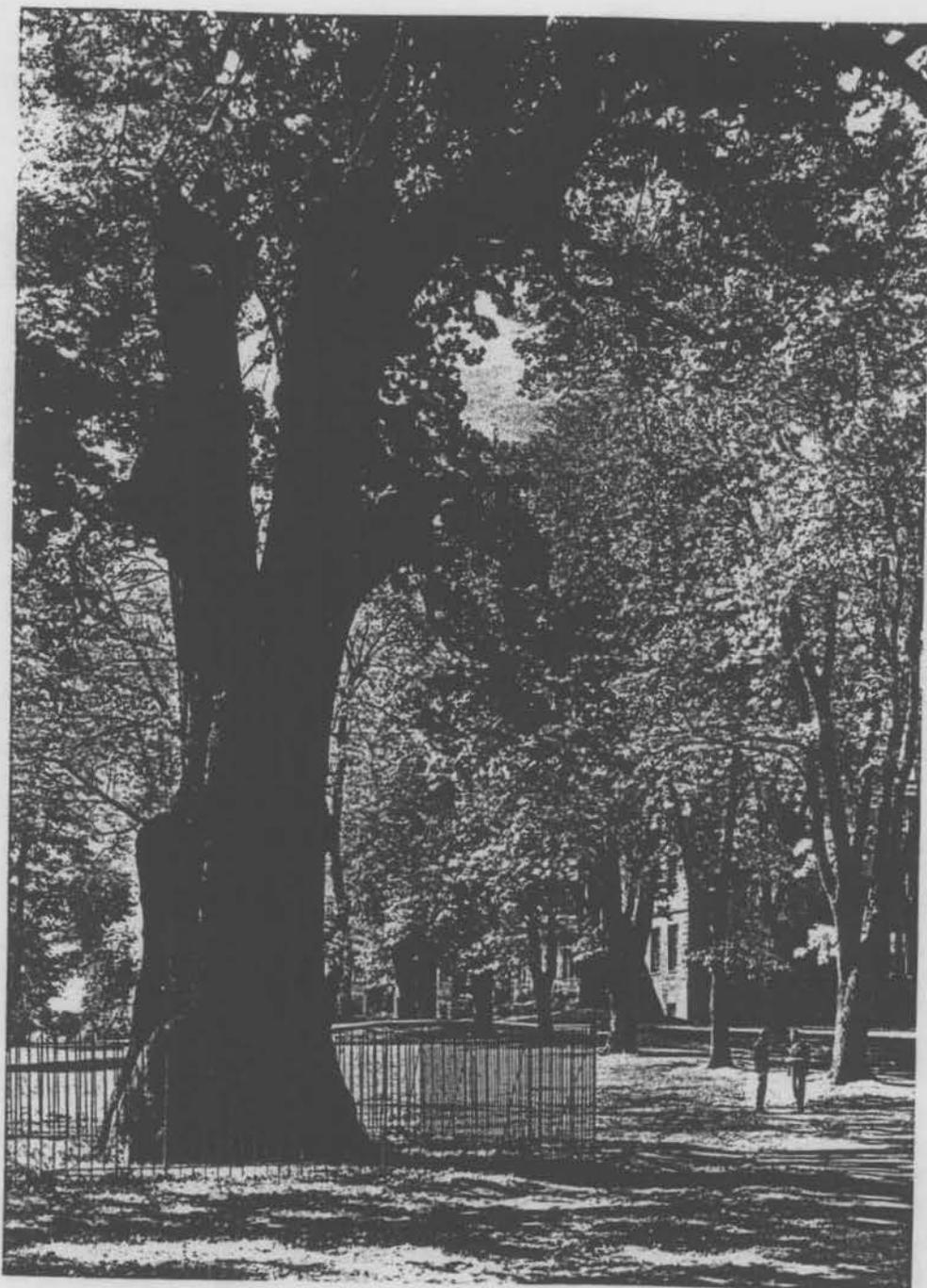
Archbishop, were both members of the first Board of Visitors and Governors of St. John's College.

Three signers of the Declaration of Independence, Charles Carroll of Carrollton, Samuel Chase, and Thomas Stone, served as trustees in the early days of St. John's, as did also John Eager Howard. A fourth signer, William Paca, was among the petitioners for the college charter. Francis Scott Key was graduated from St. John's in 1796 and Reverdy Johnson, Ambassador to Great Britain, in 1812. Founded at a time when politics were uppermost in men's minds, the college was, until the Civil War, a training school for many who were prominent in state and national affairs.

On a solid foundation of past achievement stands the St. John's of today. In fundamentals it has not changed—its purposes and practices are essentially what they were when Washington selected the College as the medium for educating his wards, including his stepson, Peter Custis, and other members of his family. It is striving to create able citizenship for the twentieth century just as it strove to create able citizenship for the eighteenth, and it is accomplishing its purpose by nearly the same means.

FRANCIS SCOTT KEY
A Graduate of St. John's College
in the Class of
1796.





THE "LIBERTY POPLAR"

Scene of a treaty between the Colonists and the Susquehannock Indians in 1652, of many patriotic meetings during the Revolution, and of a welcome to Lafayette in 1824.



RANDALL HALL

Dining Hall and Playing Fields. St. John's adds to its historic charm the advantages of a modern small college, with an intimate student life and athletics for all. College Creek, an arm of the Severn, forms one boundary of the playing fields and King George Street, part of the automobile highway from Baltimore, another.

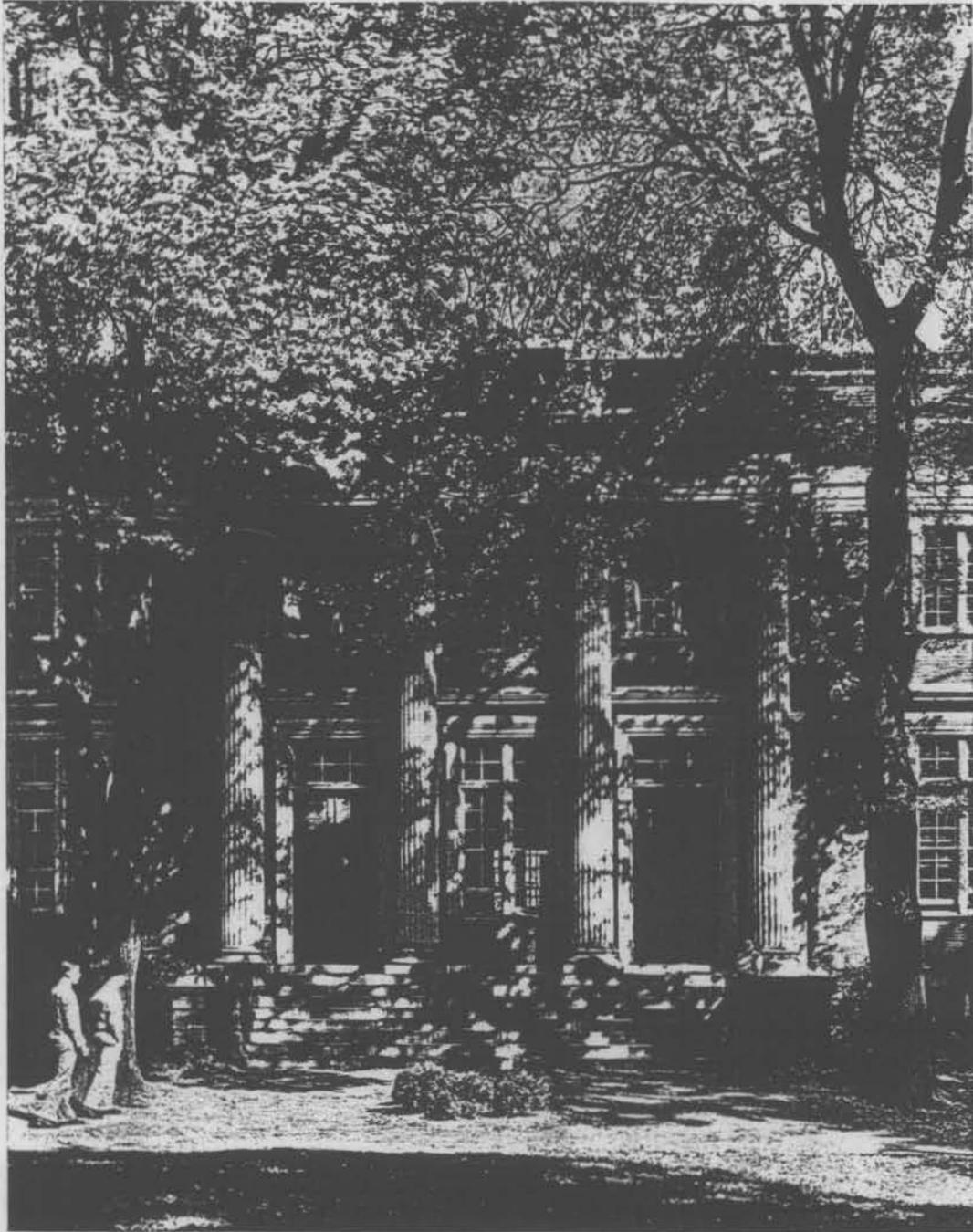
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THE DINING HALL

The evening of the football banquet. Banquets are served in honor of the three major teams, at the conclusion of each season. All students, those who live in fraternity houses and those who live in the dormitories, dine together.

AA-675



WOODWARD HALL. THE LIBRARY

Here also are the offices of the members of the faculty where students confer freely with their instructors.

ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE has acquired several of the old colonial homes of Annapolis, all of which are used for college purposes. The Hammond-Harwood House has been completely restored and furnished with the finest examples of colonial furniture. Here the students acquaint themselves with the history of their ancestors. The Museum of Colonial Art is open to the public.



Pinkney House. Built in 1750. Home of Delta Psi Omega.

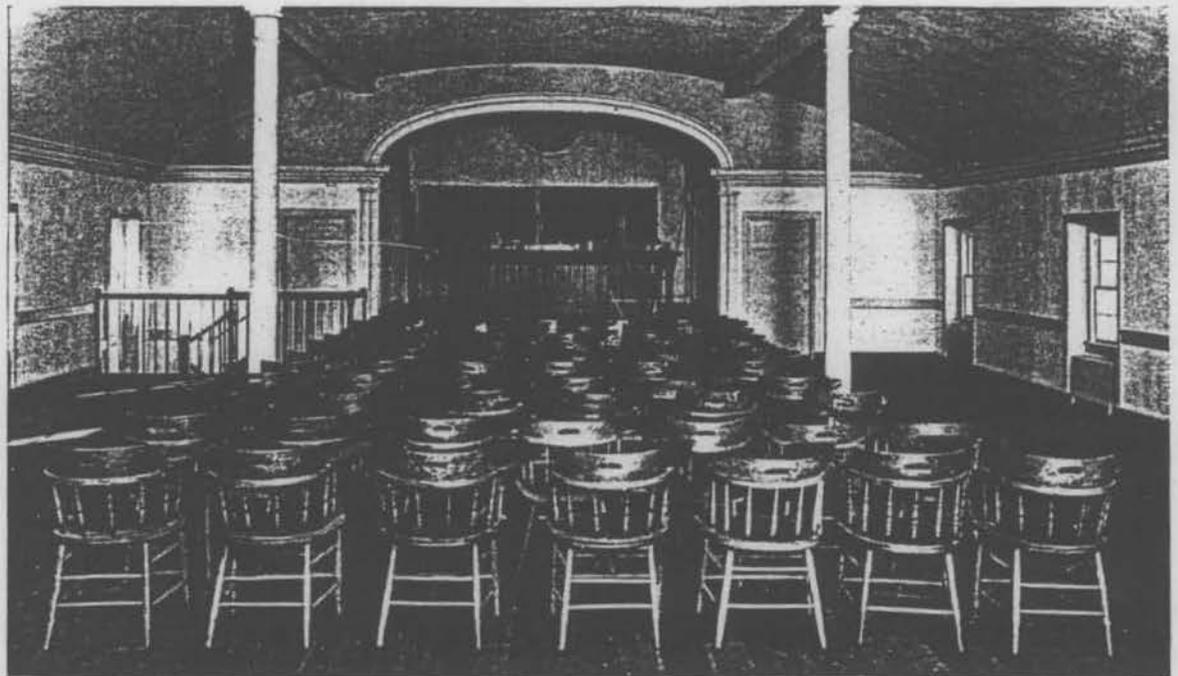


Rear view, Hammond-Harwood House, showing century-old boxwood circle in foreground.



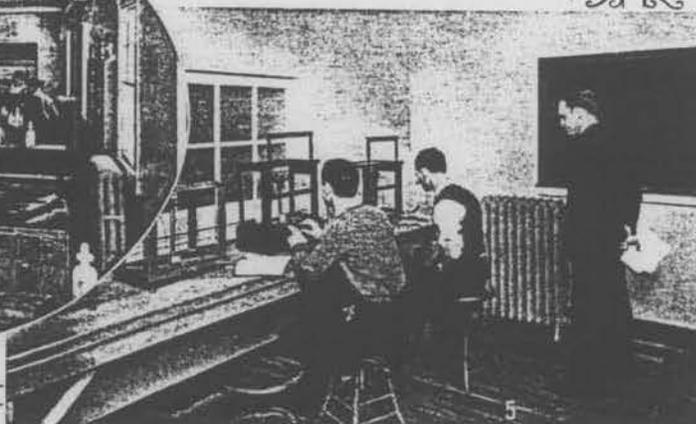
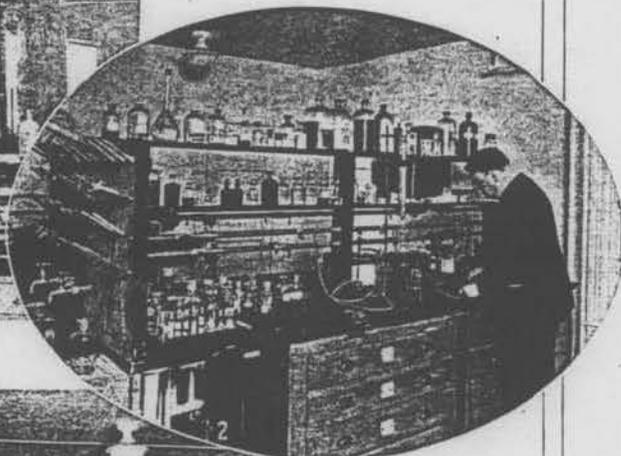
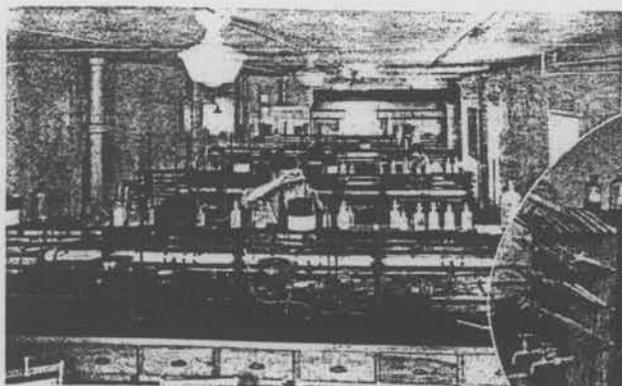
HUMPHREYS HALL

Laboratories and lecture rooms of the Departments of Chemistry and Physics.



CHEMISTRY LECTURE ROOM AND AUDITORIUM

The entire fourth floor of Humphreys Hall provides a room capable of seating over three hundred persons. The Dramatic Club utilizes this stage for its productions. The Chemistry lecture table is removed with ease so that the full stage is available.

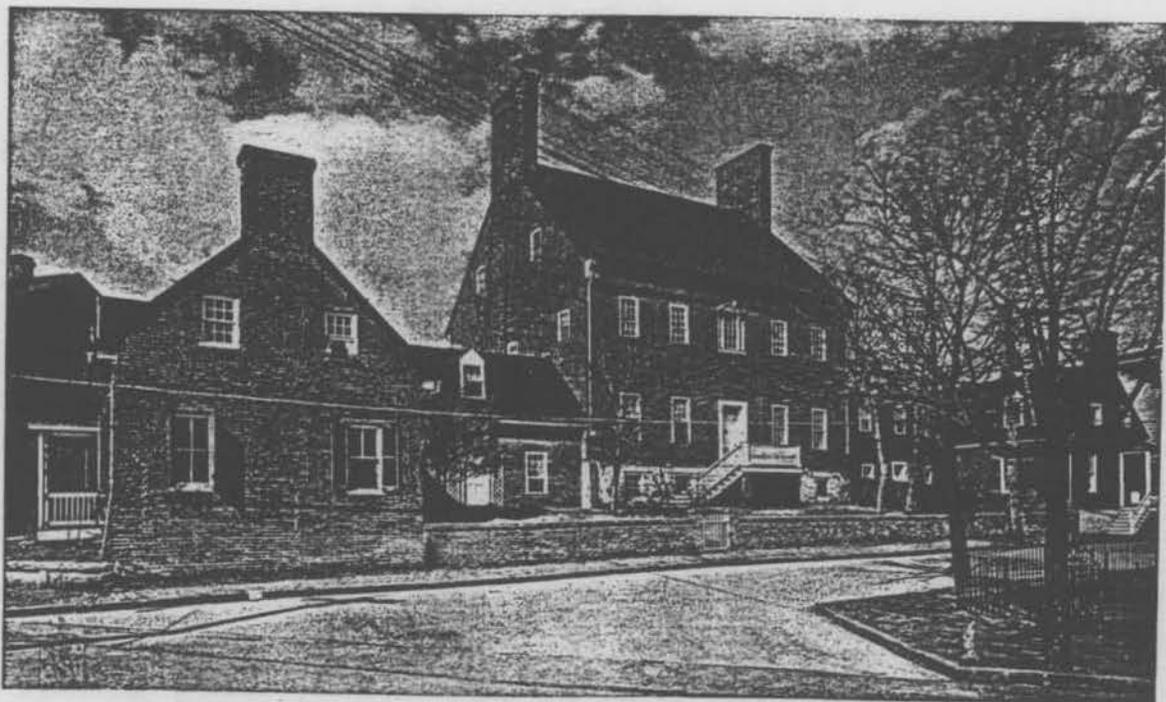


CHEMISTRY LABORATORIES. HUMPHREYS HALL

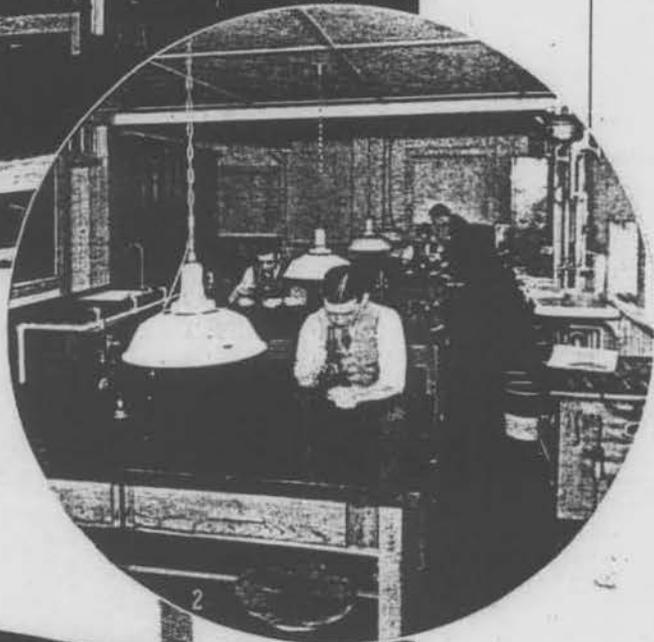
1—3—4 Laboratories for both elementary and advanced classes in Chemistry. 2—The private laboratory and office of the head of the department. 5—The balance room, apart from the laboratories.



Front view, Hammond-Harwood House, showing semi-octagonal wings. This building, begun in 1770, is one of the very finest examples of colonial architecture in America, and influenced Thomas Jefferson in the plan of his home, Monticello. St. John's is developing this mansion into a complete museum of colonial art. This greatly enriches the educational and cultural value of the College.



The Brice House, built about 1740, and now owned by St. John's College. Washington often made this dwelling his home when staying in Annapolis. Its dining room, parlor, and library are classed among the most beautiful rooms in America.



BIOLOGY HALL

256-258 KING GEORGE ST

1. The laboratory for advanced students in biology. 2. Laboratory equipped with lecture demonstration table. 3. Exterior of the building housing the entire department of biology, in which special work is given for pre-medical students.

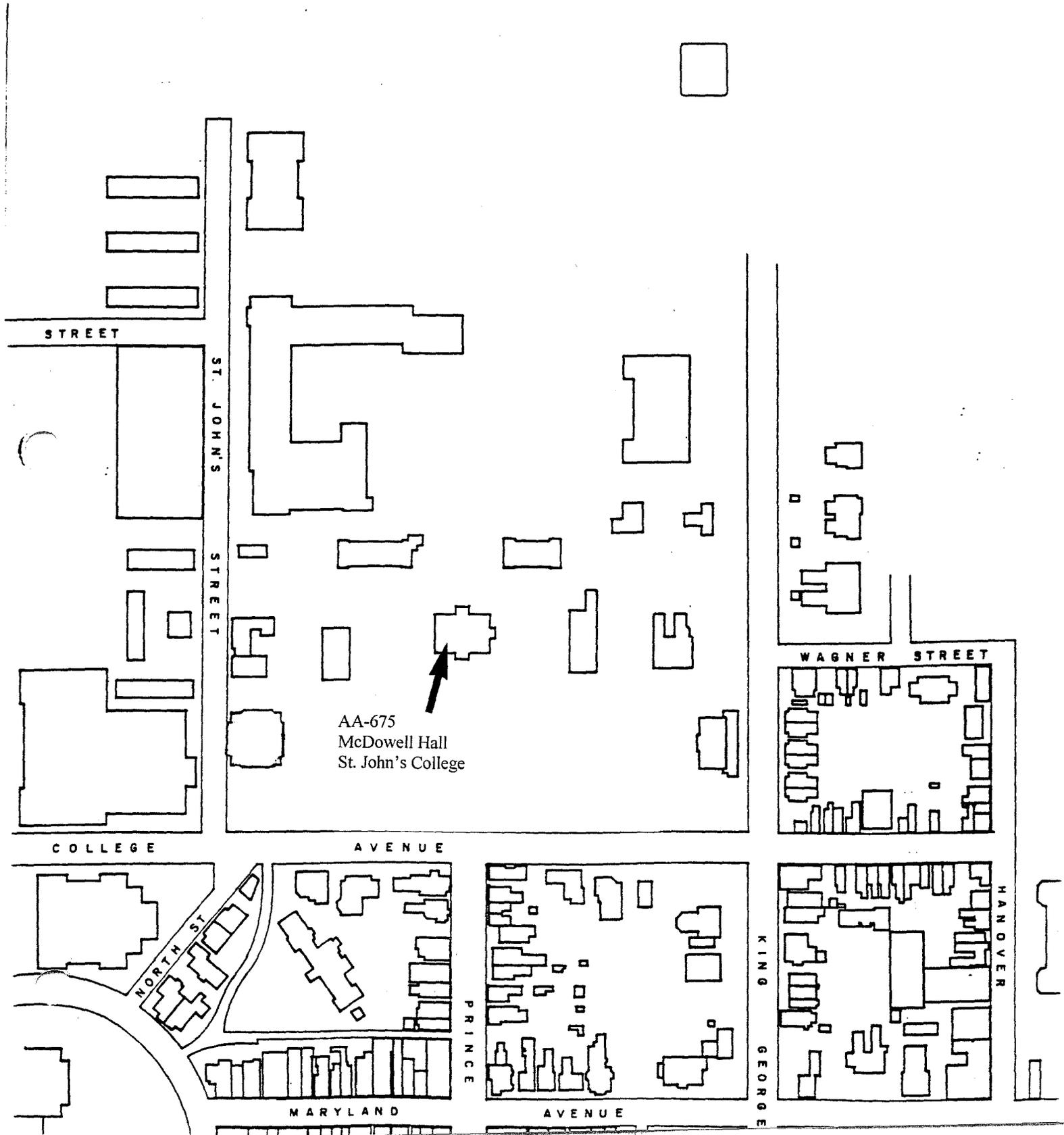
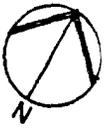
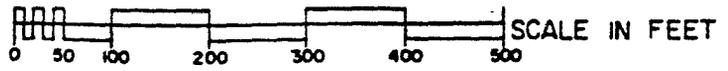
AA-675

Views of St. John's College
MD LID4811 502 v54 1420
Sides



OLD MCDOWELL HALL

TITLE: Views of St. John's College, Annapolis, Maryland.
PLACE: [Annapolis, Md. ? :
PUBLISHER: s.n.,
YEAR: ? 1920 1929
PUB TYPE: Book
FORMAT: [24] p. : chiefly ill. ; 18 x 27 cm.
SUBJECT: St. John's College (Annapolis, Md.) -- Pictorial works. Universities and colleges
-- Maryland -- Annapolis -- Pictorial works.





AA-675

MCDOWELL HALL

ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE

ANNAPOLIS, MD

TRACERIES

1/00

MD SHPO

SE ELEVATION LOOKING NW

1 OF 21



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MCDOWELL HALL

ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE

ANNAPOLIS, MD

TRACERIES

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MD SHPO

SE ELEVATION, LOOKING NW

2 OF 21



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ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE
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MD SHPO

EAST CORNER, LOOKING WEST

3 OF 21



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ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE
ANNAPOLIS, MD
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DETAIL, NE ELEVATION,
LOOKING WEST

4 OF 21



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MCDOWELL HALL

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NW ELEVATION, LOOKING SE

5 OF 21



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MCDOWELL HALL

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WEST CORNER LOOKING EAST

6 OF 21



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MCDOWELL HALL

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MD SHPO

SW ELEVATION LOOKING NE

7 OF 21



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ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE
ANNAPOLIS, MD
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MD SHPO
DOME, SE ELEVATION, LOOKING WEST
8 OF 21



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MCDOWELL HALL

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FIRST FLOOR, GREAT HALL, LOOKING SOUTH

9 OF 21



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MCDOWELL HALL
ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE
ANNAPOLIS, MD

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FIRST FLOOR, GREAT HALL, LOOKING NORTH

10 OF 21



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MCDOWELL HALL

ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE

ANNAPOLIS, MD

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MD SHPO

FIRST FLOOR, SE CORNER, LOOKING EAST

11 OF 21



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MCDOWELL HALL
ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE
ANNAPOLIS, MD
TRACERIES

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MD SHPO
FIRST FLOOR, SW CORNER, LOOKING NORTH

12 OF 21



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MCDOWELL HALL

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ANNAPOLIS, MD

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FIRST FLOOR, NW ROOM, LOOKING WEST

13 OF 21



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ANNAPOLIS, MD
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MD SHPO

FIRST FLOOR STAIR, LOOKING
SW

14 OF 21



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MCDOWELL HALL

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ANNAPOLIS, MD

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FIRST FLOOR STAIR,

LOOKING SW

15 OF 21



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MCDOWELL HALL
ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE
ANNAPOLIS, MD

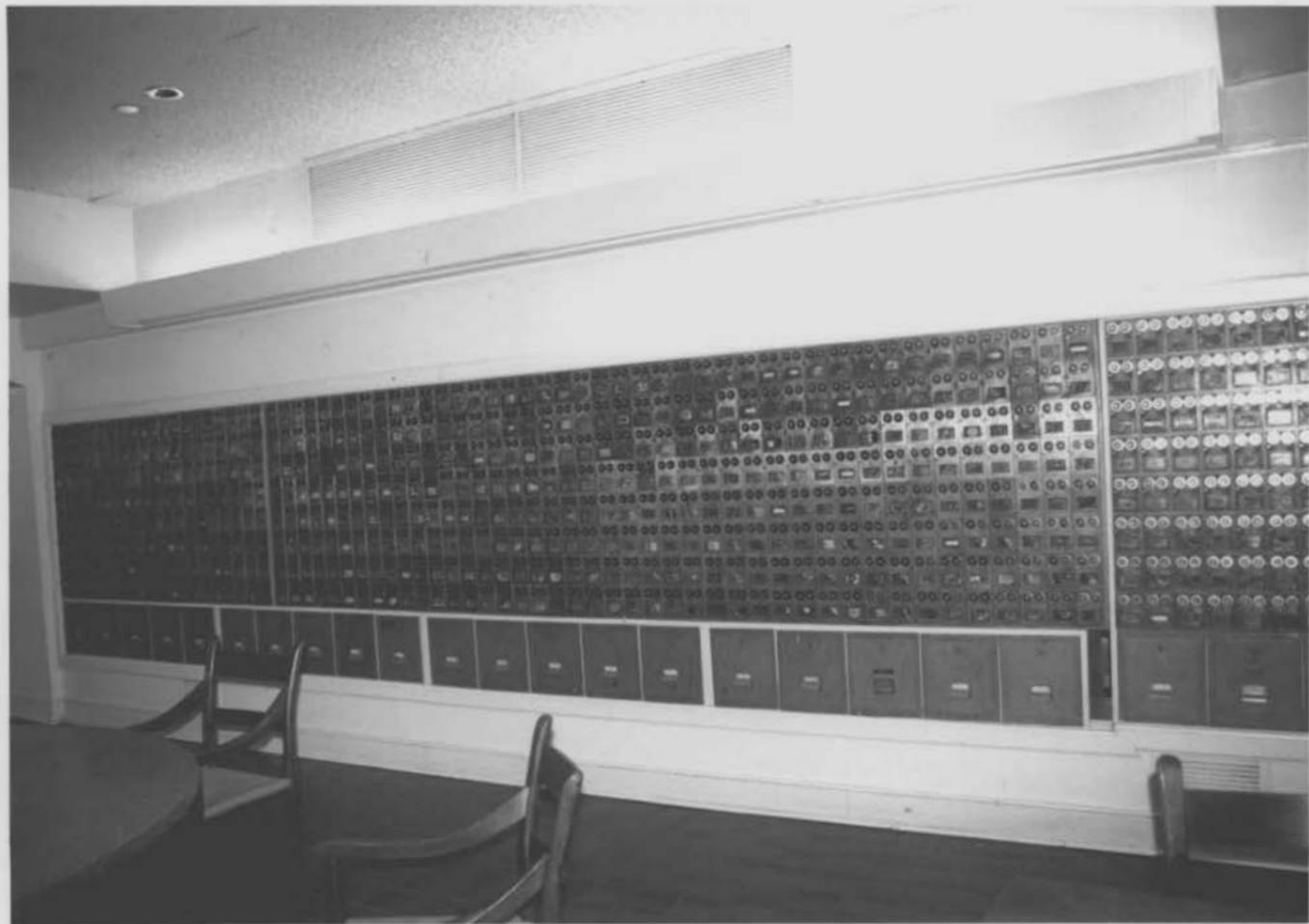
TRACERIES

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MD SHPO

BASEMENT, SW ROOM, LOOKING SOUTH

16 OF 21



AA-675

MCDOWELL HALL

ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE

ANNAPOLIS, MD

TRACERIES

1/06

MD SHPO

BASEMENT, MAIL BOXES, LOOKING SE

17 OF 21



AA-675

ALUMNI MEMORIAL
TABLET

ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE
ANNAPOLIS, MD

TRACERIES

1/00

MD SHPO

LOOKING NORTHEAST

18 OF 21



AA-675

MCDOWELL HALL
ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE
ANNAPOLIS, MD
TRACERIES

1/00

MD SHPO

LIBERTY BELL REPLICA, LOOKING WEST

19 OF 21



AA-675

MCDOWELL HALL

ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE

ANNAPOLIS

TRACERIES

2/00

MD SHPO

1812 CANNON, EAST SIDE OF MCDOWELL
HALL, LOOKING SOUTHEAST

20 OF 21



AA-675

MCDOWELL HALL

ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE

ANNAPOLIS

TRACERIES

2/00

MD SHPO

NEW PROGRAM SEAL, NORTH OF MCDOWELL HALL,
LOOKING SOUTH

21 OF 21

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
 21 STATE CIRCLE
 SHAW HOUSE
 ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

HISTORIC SITES SURVEY FIELD SHEET
 Individual Structure Survey Form

SURVEY NUMBER: AA 675	
NEGATIVE FILE NUMBER:	
UTM REFERENCES: Zone/Easting/Northing	
U.S.G.S. QUAD. MAP:	
PRESENT FORMAL NAME:	
ORIGINAL FORMAL NAME: Thomas Bladen House-Bladen's Folly	
PRESENT USE: College	
ORIGINAL USE: SF Res	
ARCHITECT/ENGINEER:	
BUILDER/CONTRACTOR:	
PHYSICAL CONDITION OF STRUCTURE: Excellent (X) Good () Fair () Poor: ()	
THEME:	
STYLE: Georgian	
DATE BUILT: 1742-1744	

COUNTY: Anne Arundel
TOWN: Annapolis
LOCATION: St. John's
COMMON NAME: McDowell Hall
FUNCTIONAL TYPE: SCH Map 31 Par 20
OWNER: St. John's College ADDRESS: College Ave. Annapolis, MD 21401
ACCESSIBILITY TO PUBLIC: Yes (X) No () Restricted ()
LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE: HABS Local () State () National (✓) ○

GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

Structural System

- Foundation: Stone () Brick (X) Concrete () Concrete Block ()
- Wall Structure
 - Wood Frame: Post and Beam () Balloon ()
 - Wood Bearing Masonry: Brick (X) Stone () Concrete () Concrete Block ()
 - Iron () D. Steel () E. Other:
- Wall Covering: Clapboard () Board and Batten () Wood Shingle () Shiplap () Novelty () Stucco () Sheet Metal () Aluminum () Asphalt Shingle () Brick Veneer (X) Stone Veneer () Asbestos Shingle () Bonding Pattern: Flemish Other:
- Roof Structure
 - Truss: Wood (X) Iron () Steel () Concrete ()
 - Other:
- Roof Covering: Slate (X) Wood Shingle () Asphalt Shingle () Sheet Metal () Built Up () Rolled () Tile () Other:
- Engineering Structure:
- Other:

Appendages: Porches (X) Towers (X) Cupolas (X) Dormers (X) Chimneys (X) Sheds () Ells () Wings () Other:

Roof Style: Gable () Hip (X) Shed () Flat () Mansard () Gambrel () Jerkinhead () Saw Tooth () With Monitor () With Bellcast () With Parapet () With False Front () Other:

Number of Stories: 3 + base

Number of Bays: 9 x 3

Approximate Dimensions: 80 x 60

Entrance Location: Cent in F+R Els

THREAT TO STRUCTURE: No Threat (X) Zoning () Roads () Development () Deterioration () Alteration () Other:
--

LOCAL ATTITUDES: Positive () Negative () Mixed () Other:

ADDITIONAL ARCHITECTURAL OR STRUCTURAL DESCRIPTION:

AA-675

Flat hipped roof with later cupola and bell tower, projecting entrance pavillion, deep molded cornice with returns at the pavillion, Flemish bond, string courses at upper floors, brownstone quoins at corners, excellent pedimented porch at front, excellent brownstone porch at right side entrance.

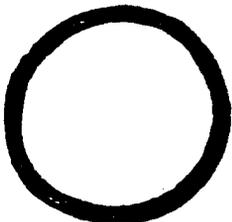
RELATED STRUCTURES: (Describe)

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:

Construction started in 1742 as mansion for Thomas Bladen, colonial governor of Maryland, abandoned as too grandiose, became known as "Bladen's Folly;" historic associations with Lafāyette, Francis Scott Key, Union Army Medical Corps; named for first president of college, John McDowell; of exceptional architectural importance of Georgian style with later additions of design significance.

REFERENCES:

MAP: (Indicate North In Circle)



SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT:

Open Lane() Woodland() Scattered Buildings()
 Moderately Built Up() Densely-Built Up()
 Residential() Commercial()
 Agricultural() Industrial()
 Roadside Strip Development()
 Other:

RECORDED BY:

Russell Wright

ORGANIZATION:

Historic Annapolis, Inc

DATE RECORDED:

Aug. 1983

AP-675 ✓

0206751204

Form 10-445
(5/62)

1. STATE Annapolis, Maryland COUNTY TOWN St. John's VIGNITY Campus STREET NO. ORIGINAL OWNER Gov. J. Wm. Bladen ORIGINAL USE Governor's Residence PRESENT OWNER St. John's College PRESENT USE Administration WALL CONSTRUCTION Brick NO. OF STORIES 3	HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY INVENTORY
	2. NAME McDowell Hall DATE OR PERIOD 1774/earlier STYLE Georgian ARCHITECT BUILDER Simon Duff (?)
3. FOR LIBRARY OF CONGRESS USE	

4. NOTABLE FEATURES, HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE AND DESCRIPTION OPEN TO PUBLIC

Begun in the mid 18th century (1740's) McDowell Hall as a personal residence for then Governor William Bladen, the building remained uncompleted for a long time and earned the title "Bladen's Folley." St. John's College moved into the building in 1785. Basically, a large Georgian block with projecting, pedimented pavillion, McDowell has proportioned windows, Flemish bond, belt courses, etc. but very little decoration except for brownstone quoins, a later cupola, and a magnificent, classical side entrance porch of brownstone. Historically and visually, McDowell Hall is the focal point of the College and its cupola is a prominent point on the Annapolis skyline -- as one enters the city, up Prince George Street, etc.



Exterior

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION AND PHOTOGRAPHS MAY BE ADDED ON SHEET OF SAME SIZE

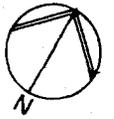
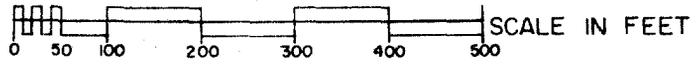


6. LOCATION MAP (Plan Optional)

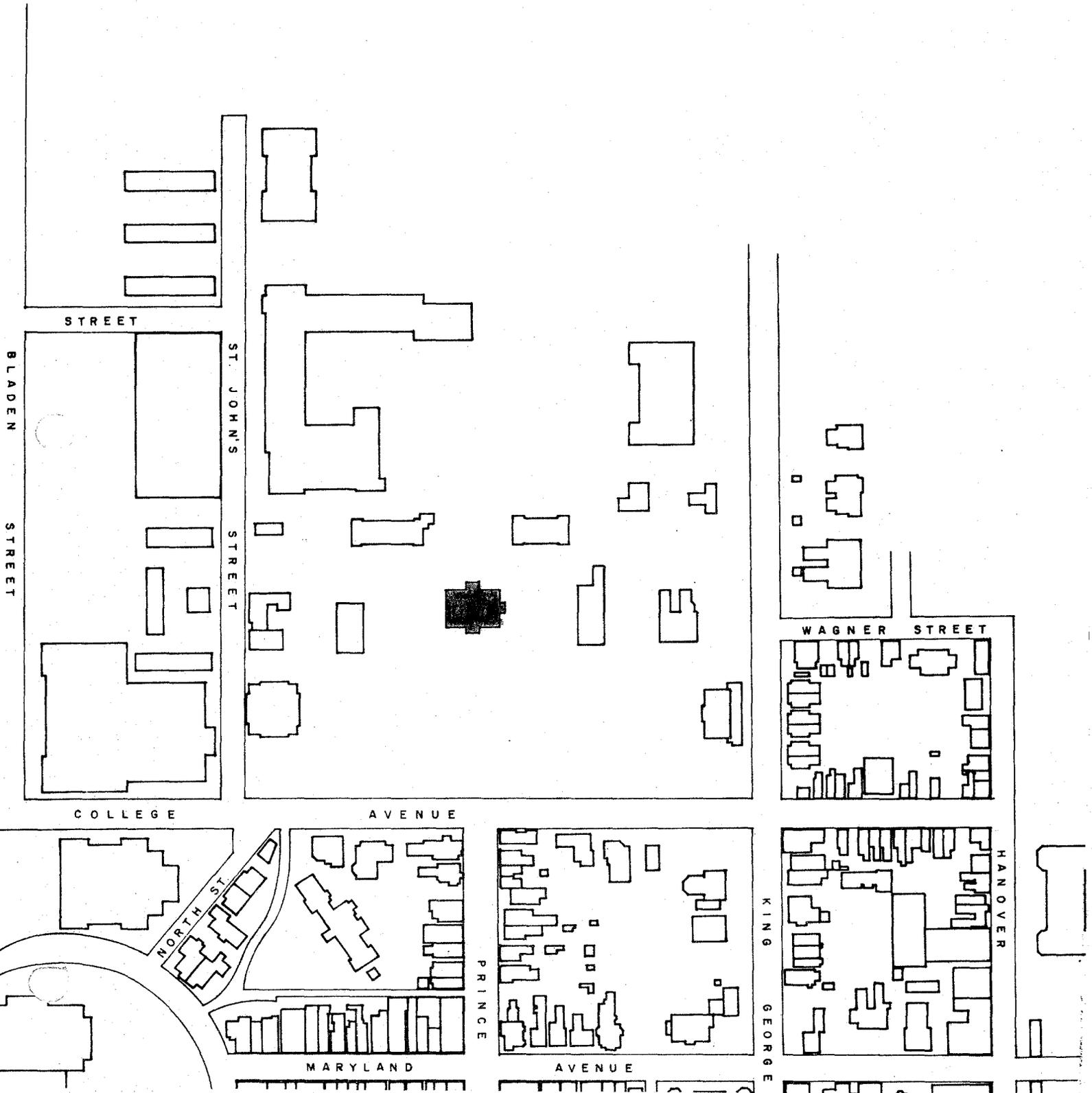
SOURCES:
 Elihu Riley, H. A., Inc.
 7. PHOTOGRAPH

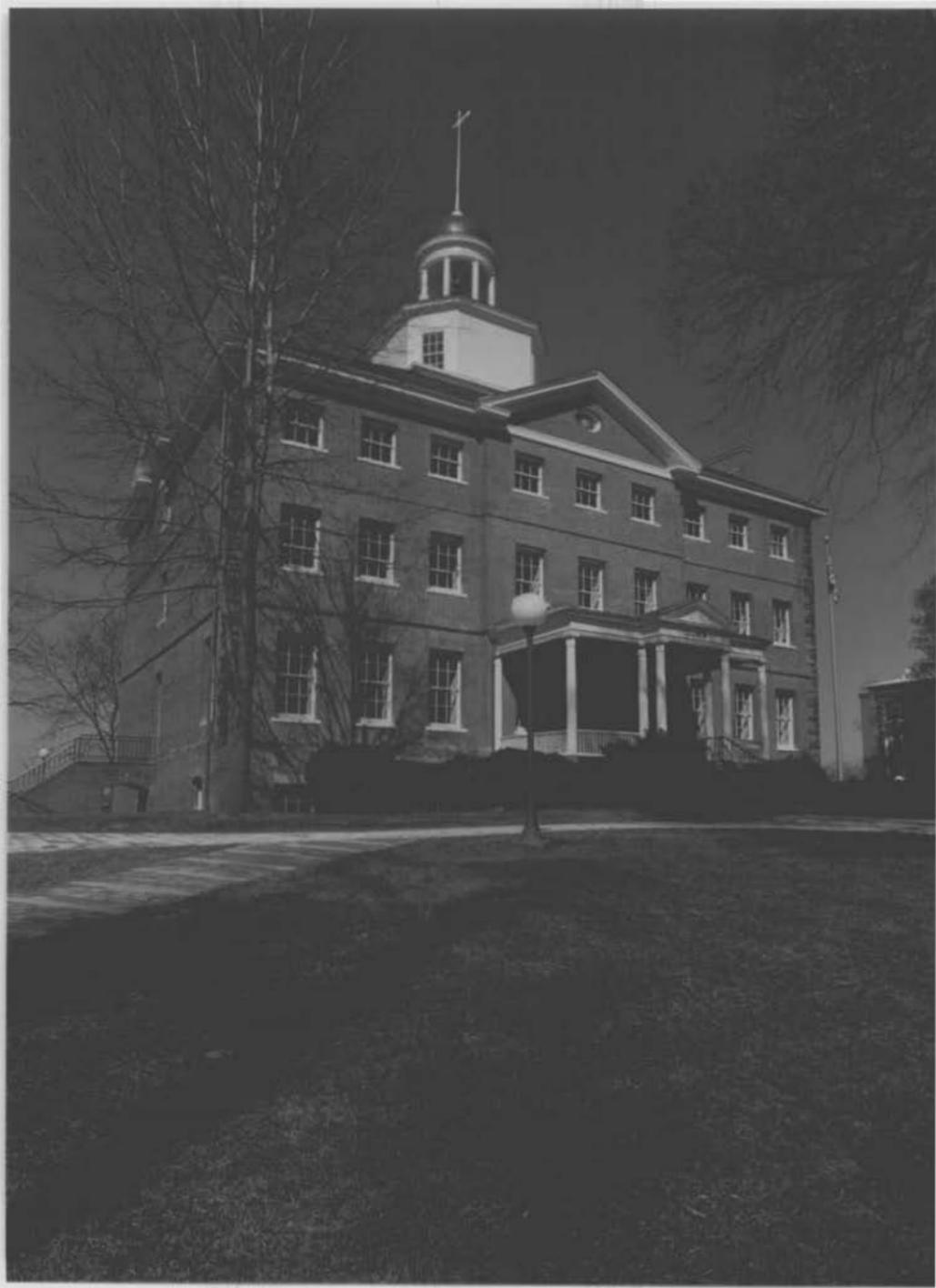
8. PUBLISHED SOURCES (Author, Title, Pages)
 INTERVIEWS, RECORDS, PHOTOS, ETC.

9. NAME, ADDRESS AND TITLE OF RECORDER
 William D. Morgan
 Columbia University
 New York City
 DATE OF RECORD August 22, 1967



AA 675
ANNAPOLIS HIST. DIST.





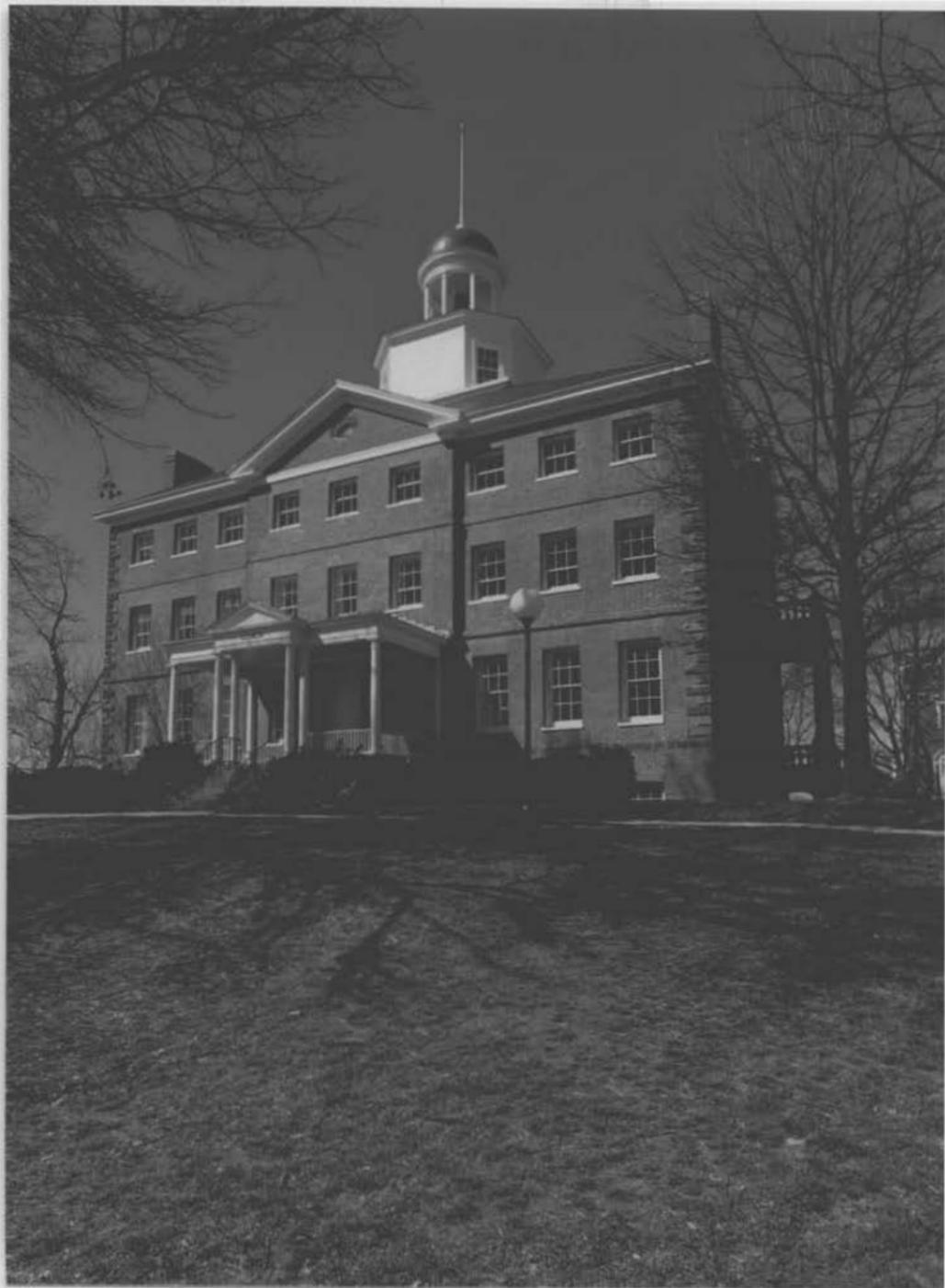
AA-675



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AA-675



McDowell Hall
St. John's

AA 675

Annapolis, Anne Arundel County

Russell Wright July, 1982

Maryland Historical Trust,

Annapolis, Maryland

SE Elevation/camera facing NW



McDowell Hall
St. John's

AA 675

Annapolis, Anne Arundel County
Russell Wright July, 1982
Maryland Historical Trust,
Annapolis, Maryland

SE Elevation/camera facing NW



Weller, Fishback & Bohl Architects, P.A.
Post Office Building, Church Circle
P.O. Box 1784, Annapolis, MD 21404
(301) 268-6414

McDowell Hall
St. John's College Campus
Annapolis, MD

AA-675