

positive assertions to this effect by Hamlin and B. H. Latrobe, II. Since then the Maryland Historical Society has acquired the Latrobe Letter Books. A search of this fine collection coupled with the records of the Levy Court of Prince George's County has clarified the mystery.

In May 1813, the Levy Court of Prince George's County ordered that an advertisement be inserted in the *National Intelligencer* and the *Federal Republican* for proposals for repairing the front Wall to the Court House and the Arches in the public offices." (*Levy Court 1795-1818, Ms. Hall of Records* p. 461). On June 7 of the same year the Court ordered that a "skillful workman" be employed to examine the work required and to repair whatever appeared to be in need of it. The County's funds for this purpose were ordered to be entrusted to William B. Beane (*Ibid.*, 465).

Apparently, Latrobe, who was then living in Washington saw the advertisement in one or the other of the two newspapers in which it appeared. He was given the contract. His Letter Books throw some light on the sequence of events: On July 1, 1813 he orders Swedish bars from Patton & Butcher of Alexandria for the Levy Court. On July 7 he advises Beane that it will be impossible—"to put up the Bars at the Courthouse on the 13th. My part is done, but the castings will delay the business." Apparently, other things went wrong for the work is still not done on September 11 when he writes to Beane: "The Business of your Courthouse—I have to Request you to permit it to be finished by Mr. William Smith, the Bearer."

It seems clear therefore that Latrobe's work on the courthouse in Upper Marlboro had to do only with the repair of the wall and the arches as described above and that Smith finished the job for him. It cannot be proved, but it would be heartening to think that the repairs of the courthouse were undertaken in order better to accommodate the records of the State which had been removed to Upper Marlboro in order to avoid the flaming pyre which everyone thought the British would make of Annapolis. There is only this minute of the Levy Court to substantiate this hypothesis:

"It being stated to this court that many of the public Records and papers of the State have been by direction of the Governor and Council removed to the town of Upper Marlboro and deposited in a wooden building which is not deemed sufficiently safe and the Court being applied to to grant permission for the removal of said Records and papers to the Court House it is by the Court determined that the said Records and papers may be removed to the Court House and deposited in the Court Room or any other Room in the House in such manner as William B. Beane and John Reed Magruder shall direct." (*Op. cit.*, 468).

What a lesson for archivists! The state removed its records from threatened Annapolis to safe Upper Marlboro. The British bypassed Annapolis to burn Washington. Their route took them through Upper Marlboro which they ignored!

## Circuit Court

LAND RECORDS, 1696--. Also includes Court Records, 1696-99, 1705-10. Most volumes indexed. C.H. 1696--. L.O. 1949--, microfilm. H.R. 1696-1789; 1696-1949, microfilm.

INDEX TO LAND RECORDS, 1696--. Campbell, 1696-1884. Cottco Universal, 1884--. C.H. 1696--. L.O. 1840-84, microfilm. H.R. 1696-1949, microfilm.

INDEX TO LAND RECORDS, 1696-1868. Liber index. H.R.

LAND COMMISSIONS, 1716-21. See also Land Records. Indexed. H.R.

PLAT BOOKS (PLAT RECORDS), 1883--. C.H.

PLAT BOOK STATE ROADS COMMISSION, 1931--. C.H.