

and "to fall, mall and saw the tymber for the said court house."¹⁹ Judd also received sums each year for "House room," "Clerk's office and house," for "rent of office" and other items indicating the temporary state of the seat of justice and also the fact that county government was in fact seated on Judd's place. The next mention of the courthouse is found in March Court 1694 when Judd contracts with Edward Jones to finish the building: to find timber and boards, to make a partition and doors, to put up the window frames and weatherboard the house. At the same time, Judd agrees to bring the timber from the landing and to get up the rafters.²⁰

But Judd was still not out of the woods. On November 12, 1694, he is summoned before the impatient justices and required to post bond to finish the courthouse by the last day of the following August. The amount of the bond was 24,000 pounds of tobacco, the price of the building, 12,000 and of the land, 800 pounds. Unfortunately, he did not finish on time, whereupon the grand jury at November Court reproached him severely for his tardiness. Judd excused himself, and he was granted an extension until March 31, 1696, but at the same time the amount of his bond was doubled. Since the levy for that year carried the funds for both the building and grounds and nothing further is heard of Judd's problems, we can assume that this time the job was done, or so near done that the county justices did not think it worthwhile to penalize him further. In any case, we can be certain that the building was finished and occupied before February 4, 1697/98, for shortly before that date the justices certified to the Governor that such was the case.²¹ It is likely that a note in the court records of September 1694 fixes more exactly the date when the courthouse was first used however unfinished: "The Court is adjourned unto the Court House up the Hill."²² And thereafter the intolerable necessity of paying rent was relieved. Until then "the poor county [groaned] under the burden it lies under."²³

In the meanwhile, at March Court 1693, one of the justices was ordered to have built a clerk's office ten foot square for "the securing of the records" and also a cage of the same dimensions near "the appointed place for the court house." Judd received the contract at 2,500 pounds of tobacco for the office, and Thomas Litten built the cage for 800 pounds.²⁴ That the repository for the records was actually built is proved by a report of a legislative committee of March 10, 1697/8, as follows:

The Com^{rs} of Baltimore County have built a small Room att a little distance from the Court house where the Records are to be kept in the Court house is a wooden Chimney but no ordinary within four hundred yards of it.²⁵

That the prison or cage, fifteen feet square, was also built on the same plot of ground is attested by the certification of the justices already cited.

The exact location of this courthouse has long been a matter of speculation and controversy. It has only recently been pinpointed: "It stood on the eastern third of 'Simm's Choice,' was close to and northward from the 'Wee Bit' and was 'up the Hill.'" The "Wee Bit" lay at the point of Gunpowder Fork and about midway between Great and Little Falls.²⁶

Courthouse at Joppa

The removal of the county seat to Joppa in 1712 was fraught with incredible difficulties. Apparently there was agitation as early as 1706 for a change, and at that time a town was set

¹⁹ *Court Record, F. No. 1, f. 341*; Ritchie, pp. 107-08.

²⁰ *Ibid. G. No. 1, f. 30*; Ritchie, p. 108.

²¹ This certification is found in *Baltimore County Court Records, Liber I. S. No. I. K., f. 214*; this item was transcribed from *Liber H. H. No. G*, now lost. The certification is not dated but is found among thirty pages of transcription preceding an item dated as above.

²² Scriven, *op. cit.*

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ Ritchie, p. 108.

²⁵ *Arch. of Md., XXII, 102.*

²⁶ Scriven, *op. cit.*