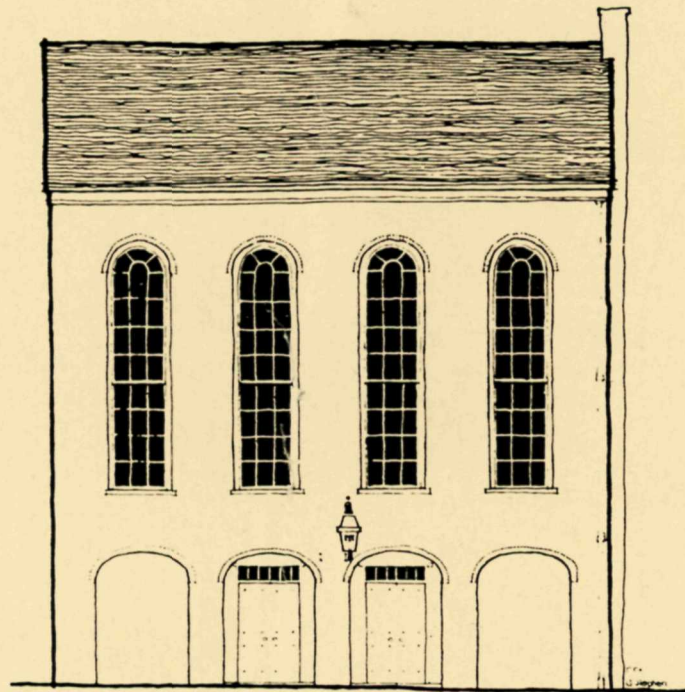


AFRICAN MEETING HOUSE

**Boston African American
National Historic Site**

Boston National Historical Park



Historic Structure Report

THE AFRICAN MEETING HOUSE
HISTORIC STRUCTURE REPORT

Boston African American National Historic Site
Boston National Historical Park
Boston, Massachusetts

By

Barbara A. Yocum

Building Conservation Branch, Cultural Resources Center
North Atlantic Region, National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
Lowell, Massachusetts

1994

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS	iii
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS AND CREDITS	vii
PREFACE	xiii
I. <u>ADMINISTRATIVE DATA</u>	1
II. <u>HISTORICAL BACKGROUND</u>	5
ARCHIVAL SOURCES	7
THE YEARS 1806-1850	9
Site Acquisition	9
Design	10
Construction	10
Exterior Appearance	15
Interior Plan	16
Remaining Building Debt	17
Use of the Schoolroom	19
Use of the “Minister’s Rooms”	24
Financial and Organizational Problems	26

THE YEARS 1852-1897	30
Fund-Raising for Renovations	30
Architectural Alterations	31
Post-1855 Changes	35
THE YEARS 1898-1971	39
The End of Black Ownership	39
The Congregation Anshi Libavitz	40
THE YEARS 1972-1982	59
Exterior Work	60
Interior Work	60
III. <u>ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION</u>	63
INTRODUCTION	65
Analytical References	65
Doorway and Window References	65
ORIGINAL 1806 APPEARANCE	66
Exterior Elements	66
Interior Elements	69
Basement/First Story	69
Second Story	77
Attic	82

ALTERATIONS IN 1855	84
Exterior Work	84
Apse	84
Gutters	87
Doorways	87
Windows	88
Exterior Light Fixture	88
Finishes	88
Interior Work	89
Entry	89
Basement/First Story	96
Foyer	100
Sanctuary and Gallery	104
POST-1855 ALTERATIONS	117
Exterior Work	117
Interior Work	117
POST-1880 ALTERATIONS	118
General Information	118
Interior Work	120
ALTERATIONS 1904-1972	125
Circa 1912	125
After 1934	127
STABILIZATION IN 1975	128
Exterior Work	128
Interior Work	128

IV.	<u>EXISTING CONDITIONS</u>	131
	EXTERIOR ELEMENTS	133
	INTERIOR ELEMENTS: BASEMENT/FIRST STORY	143
	INTERIOR ELEMENTS: SECOND STORY	157
V.	<u>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR RESTORATION</u>	177
	PROPOSED TREATMENT	179
	EXTERIOR RECOMMENDATIONS	180
	INTERIOR RECOMMENDATIONS	183
VI.	<u>APPENDICES</u>	193
	APPENDIX A. Finishes Analysis	195
	APPENDIX B. Wallpaper Analysis	227
	APPENDIX C. Mortar Analysis	231
	APPENDIX D. Nail and Hardware Analysis	239
	APPENDIX E. Information on the African Meeting House Pulpits	245
	APPENDIX F. Fragments of Yiddish Script Found in Sanctuary	253
VII.	<u>BIBLIOGRAPHY</u>	257

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS AND CREDITS

1. "Plan and Elevation for a Small Townhouse," 1806. Diagram from
The American Builder's Companion by Asher Benjamin, Plate 33 11

2. First Independent Baptist Church, 1843. Engraving from *The Boston Almanac for the Year 1843* by S.N. Dickinson, p. 88. Courtesy of the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities (neg. no. 12300-B) 12

3. Sabbath School Records, 1831-1894. Compiled by Barbara A. Yocum 22

4. Congregation Membership Records, 1812-1897. Compiled by Barbara A. Yocum 27

5. First Independent Baptist Church, circa 1860. Photograph by Josiah Johnson Hawes. Collections of the Boston Athenaeum (OHF, Smith Court; neg. no. 284) 33

6. First Independent Baptist Church, circa 1875. Photograph courtesy of the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities (neg. no. H-2382-A) 37

7. "Abolition Church," Plans of Basement, Main Story, and Balcony, 1934. Measured drawing by Edmund P. Lynch for HABS, Library of Congress (Sheet 1 of 3, Survey No. 2-74, Index No. MASS 13-Bost 42) 44

8. "Abolition Church," East and North Elevations, and Details of Main Cornice, Entrance Doors, and Stone Tablet, 1934. Measured drawing by Edmund P. Lynch for HABS, Library of Congress (Sheet 2 of 3) 45

9. "Abolition Church," Half Transverse and Longitudinal Sections, and Plan of Stair, 1934. Measured drawing by Edmund P. Lynch for HABS, Library of Congress (Sheet 3 of 3) 46

10. Synagogue of Congregation Libavitz, North and East Elevations, 1937. Photograph by Arthur Haskell for HABS, Library of Congress. Courtesy of the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities (neg. no. 12299B) 47

11. Interior of Synagogue, West Gallery Stair, 1937. Photograph by Arthur Haskell for HABS, Library of Congress. Courtesy of the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities (neg. no. 6817B) 48

12. Interior of Synagogue, South Wall of Sanctuary and Gallery, 1937. Photograph by Arthur Haskell for HABS, Library of Congress. Courtesy of the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities (neg. no. 10059-AH)	49
13. Interior of Synagogue, Southeast Corner of Sanctuary and Gallery, 1937. Photograph by Arthur Haskell for HABS, Library of Congress. Courtesy of the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities (neg. no. 6819B)	50
14. Interior of Synagogue, Southeast Corner of Sanctuary and Gallery, 1937. Photograph by Arthur Haskell for HABS, Library of Congress. Courtesy of the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities (neg. no. 10062-AH)	51
15. Interior of Synagogue, Northeast Corner of Sanctuary and Gallery, 1937. Photograph by Arthur Haskell for HABS, Library of Congress. Courtesy of the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities (neg. no. 6820B)	52
16. Interior of Synagogue, Southeast Corner of Sanctuary and Gallery, 1937. Photograph by Arthur Haskell for HABS, Library of Congress. Courtesy of the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities (neg. no. 6818B)	53
17. Interior of Sanctuary, Northeast Corner of Gallery, 1937. Photograph by Arthur Haskell for HABS, Library of Congress. Courtesy of the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities (neg. no. 6815B)	54
18. Conjectural 1806 Basement Plan. NPS drawing by Barbara A. Yocum, 1982	70
19. Conjectural Plan of 1806 East Basement Stair. NPS schematic drawing by Barbara A. Yocum, 1982	71
20. Sand Samples from 1806, 1855, and Post-1880 Plaster. NPS photograph by Barbara A. Yocum, 1982	73
21. Conjectural Cross Section of 1806 Basement Ceiling. NPS schematic drawing by Barbara A. Yocum, 1982	74
22. Representative Samples of 1806 Nails Found at the African Meeting House. NPS photograph by Barbara A. Yocum, 1982	75
23. Conjectural 1806 Second-Story (Sanctuary) Plan. NPS schematic drawing by Barbara A. Yocum, 1982	78

24. Examples of 1806 Molding Profiles Found at the African Meeting House. NPS schematic drawing by Barbara A. Yocum, 1982	79
25. Elevation Drawing of 1806 Roof Truss. Schematic drawing by Frederic C. Detwiller, Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities, for Boston National Historical Park, April 1982	83
26. Exterior View of Apse, 1973. Photograph courtesy of the Museum of Afro American History	85
27. Exterior View of Apse, 1973. Photograph courtesy of the Museum of Afro American History	86
28. Conjectural 1855 Basement Plan. NPS schematic drawing by Barbara A. Yocum, 1982	90
29. Representative Samples of 1855 Nails Found at the African Meeting House. NPS photograph by Barbara A. Yocum, 1982	92
30. Entry Ceiling, Showing Decorative Painting above North-Wall Doorways, 1975. Courtesy of the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities (Conservation Center slide files)	94
31. Entry, East Sanctuary-Stair Doorway, 1975. Photograph courtesy of the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities	95
32. Conjectural 1855 Second-Floor Plan. NPS schematic drawing by Barbara A. Yocum, 1982	101
33. Examples of 1855 Molding Profiles Found at the African Meeting House. NPS schematic drawing by Barbara A. Yocum, 1982	102
34. Conjectural Elevation, South Wall of Sanctuary, circa 1850-1900. Measured drawing by Frederic C. Detwiller, 1975. Courtesy of the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities	106
35. Locations of East Gallery Carrying Beam at North Wall in 1855 and 1975. NPS drawing by Barbara A. Yocum, 1982	109
36. Locations of West Gallery Carrying Beam at North Wall in 1855 and 1975. NPS drawing by Barbara A. Yocum, 1982	110
37. Early Gaslight Fixture Found During 1975 Archeological Work. NPS photograph by Barbara A. Yocum, 1982	112
38. Sanctuary, 1855 Wallpaper. NPS photograph by Barbara A. Yocum, 1982	114

39. Sanctuary, 1855 Wallpaper on North Partition, East of Center Doorway. NPS schematic drawing by Barbara A. Yocum, 1982	115
40. Sanctuary, 1855 Wallpaper on North Partition, West of Center Doorway. NPS schematic drawing by Barbara A. Yocum, 1982	116
41. Representative Samples of Post-1880 Nails and Hardware Found at the African Meeting House. NPS photograph by Barbara A. Yocum, 1982	119
42. Comparison of Conjectural 1806 and Post-1880 Basement Ceilings. NPS schematic drawing by Barbara A. Yocum, 1982	121
43. Examples of Post-1880 Molding Profiles Found at the African Meeting House. NPS schematic drawing by Barbara A. Yocum, 1982	122
44. Examples of Circa-1912 Molding Profiles Found at the African Meeting House. NPS schematic drawing by Barbara A. Yocum, 1982	126
45. Exterior View, Northeast Corner. NPS photograph by Blaise Davi, 1982	135
46. North Elevation. NPS schematic drawing by Barbara A. Yocum, 1982	136
47. North Elevation, Exterior Doorways. NPS photograph by Blaise Davi, 1982	137
48. East Elevation. NPS photograph by Blaise Davi, 1982	138
49. East Elevation. NPS schematic drawing by Barbara A. Yocum, 1982	139
50. South Elevation. NPS photograph by Blaise Davi, 1982	140
51. South Elevation. NPS schematic drawing by Barbara A. Yocum, 1982	141
52. West Elevation. NPS schematic drawing by Barbara A. Yocum, 1982	142
53. First-Story (Reflected Ceiling) Plan. NPS schematic drawing by Barbara A. Yocum, 1982	145
54. Entry, Looking West. NPS photograph by Blaise Davi, 1982	146
55. Entry, North Wall. NPS schematic drawing by Barbara A. Yocum, 1982	147
56. Entry, Evidence of 1855 Sanctuary-Stair Doorway. NPS schematic drawing by Barbara A. Yocum, 1982	148
57. East Sanctuary Stair. NPS photograph by Blaise Davi, 1982	149

58. Basement, West Side of North Wall. NPS schematic drawing by Barbara A. Yocum, 1982	150
59. Basement, East Side of North Wall. NPS schematic drawing by Barbara A. Yocum, 1982	151
60. Basement, North End of East Wall. NPS schematic drawing by Barbara A. Yocum, 1982	152
61. Basement, South End of East Wall. NPS schematic drawing by Barbara A. Yocum, 1982	153
62. Basement, South Wall. NPS schematic drawing by Barbara A. Yocum, 1982	154
63. Basement, South End of West Wall. NPS schematic drawing by Barbara A. Yocum, 1982	155
64. Basement, North End of West Wall. NPS schematic drawing by Barbara A. Yocum, 1982	156
65. Second-Story Floor Plan. NPS schematic drawing by Barbara A. Yocum, 1982	159
66. Second Story, Sanctuary Floorboard Plan. NPS measured drawing by Barbara A. Yocum, 1984	160
67. Second Story, North Wall. NPS schematic drawing by Barbara A. Yocum, 1982	161
68. Second Story, East Wall. NPS schematic drawing by Barbara A. Yocum, 1982	162
69. Second Story, South Wall. NPS schematic drawing by Barbara A. Yocum, 1982	163
70. Second Story, West Wall. NPS schematic drawing by Barbara A. Yocum, 1982	164
71. Foyer, Looking Toward West Gallery Stair. NPS photograph by Blaise Davi, 1982	165
72. Foyer, North Wall and West Gallery Carrying Beam. NPS photograph by Blaise Davi, 1982	166
73. Foyer, North Wall Between Windows 209 and 210. NPS photograph by Blaise Davi, 1982	167

74. Foyer, Looking Toward East Gallery Stair. NPS photograph by Blaise Davi, 1982	168
75. Foyer, South Partition. NPS schematic drawing by Barbara A. Yocum, 1982	169
76. Sanctuary, North Partition. NPS schematic drawing by Barbara A. Yocum, 1982	170
77. Sanctuary, Doorway in North Partition. NPS schematic drawing by Barbara A. Yocum, 1982	171
78. Sanctuary, Looking North. NPS photograph by Blaise Davi, 1982	172
79. Sanctuary, Looking East. NPS photograph by Blaise Davi, 1982	173
80. Sanctuary, 1806 Gallery Joist Pockets in East Wall. NPS photograph by Blaise Davi, 1982	174
81. Sanctuary, Looking South from Gallery Level. NPS photograph by Blaise Davi, 1982	175
82. Sanctuary, Looking West. NPS photograph by Blaise Davi, 1982	176

PREFACE

The initial purpose of this report was to conduct a thorough analysis of building materials at the African Meeting House as it stood in 1982, in order to determine the feasibility of restoring the building—with a minimum of conjecture—to a specified time in the 19th century. This mission was later expanded to include a documentation search, after it was learned that important religious and civic records had been either overlooked by earlier researchers, or recently discovered. This report is therefore an attempt to provide the comprehensive history of the building and the changes it underwent through 1982, based upon historical documentation and the analysis of physical building elements.

After this historic structure report (HSR) was written in draft form in 1982, it was used to guide an extensive program of exterior and interior restoration and rehabilitation at the meetinghouse in 1986-1987. This work was preformed by contract under the supervision of the North Atlantic Historic Preservation Center. It was chronicled in detail in a completion report, and so was not generally included in this report. In the few instances where 1986-1987 discoveries contradicted 1982 hypotheses, however, the 1982 report was revised accordingly.

This study is divided into five parts. Chapter I is an administrative overview. Chapter II describes the historical and architectural background of the African Meeting House as provided by written sources. Also included in this section are historical etchings, photographs, and architectural drawings. Chapter III is the architectural analysis, which includes conjectural drawings based upon information obtained from the study of extant paint, wallpaper, mortar, nails, and other hardware. Chapter IV documents the existing conditions in the meetinghouse, through the use of photographs and detailed site drawings. Chapter V presents recommendations for the restoration of the building. (Chapters VI and VII are the appendices and bibliography, respectively.)

This report was prepared by the North Atlantic Historic Preservation Center (NAHPC) of the National Park Service (NPS). The Preservation Center is part of the Office of Planning and Resource Preservation, North Atlantic Region. It contains laboratories and analytical equipment, and is staffed by historic preservation conservators and exhibit specialists who provide technical support to the parks primarily within the North Atlantic Region. The document presented here was edited and prepared for publication by Preservation Center technical editor Sharon K. Ofenstein.

* * *

[Editor's note: Several changes occurred after the 1982 draft was revised in 1988, but before it was published in 1994. Report author Barbara E. Pearson married and became Barbara A. Yocum. The North Atlantic Historic Preservation Center became the Building Conservation Branch (BCB) of the newly formed Cultural Resources Center (CRC), and it moved to new offices in Lowell, Massachusetts. Finally, the North Atlantic Region's Office of Planning and Resource Preservation became the Office of Resources Management and Research.]

I. ADMINISTRATIVE DATA

The African Meeting House is a three-story brick building located at 8 Smith Court, on Beacon Hill in Boston, Massachusetts. Built in 1806, this structure is significant for its association “with the creation and development of a free African American community within Beacon Hill prior to the Civil War.”¹ Many important meetings were held here in the 19th century, including the founding of The New England Anti-Slavery Society by William Lloyd Garrison on January 6, 1832. From 1806 through 1897, the meetinghouse was used as a black Baptist Church. It then became a Jewish synagogue, in which use it remained until 1972, when the building was purchased by the Museum of Afro American History.

The African Meeting House was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on October 7, 1971. It was officially recognized as a site of national historic significance was bestowed when it was listed as a National Historic Landmark on May 30, 1974. Further recognition of the building came with the passage of Public Law 96-430, signed into effect on October 10, 1980. This act established the Boston African American National Historic Site. It authorized the formulation of a cooperative agreement between the Museum of Afro American History and the National Park Service. Such an agreement—for a period of five years—was signed on August 4, 1981. (This agreement has been reaffirmed several times; the current agreement expires in 1997.) In this way, the African Meeting House became part of the Boston African American National Historic Site. The impetus for this historic structure report is provided in part IIa. of the cooperative agreement, which states that “The SERVICE shall assume primary responsibility for preservation, and restoration of the African Meeting House as mutually agreed upon by the parties, subject to the availability of funds.”

The number assigned to the African Meeting House by the National Park Service’s List of Classified Structures is 22603. Its management category is “A - Must Be Preserved.” No specific treatment or use is proposed in the List of Classified Structures for the meetinghouse. However, the National Park Service’s *Draft General Management Plan and Environmental Assessment* for the Boston African American National Historic Site specifies the following treatment:

The African Meeting House—under a cooperative agreement with the Museum of Afro American History—will be restored to its appearance in 1855, when it was an important religious, social and political center for Boston’s Afro-American community. . . . The restoration will involve the preservation of as much historic building material as possible.²

The date of 1855 was chosen because it corresponded to a major remodeling of the structure by its black Baptist congregation. This period in the building’s history is represented by the largest amount of documentary and physical evidence extant today.³

¹ Public Law 96-430, 96th Congress.

² National Park Service, *Boston African American National Historic Site: Draft General Management Plan and Environmental Assessment* (Boston, MA: North Atlantic Region, 1984 [approved 1986]), p. 25.

³ *Draft General Management Plan*, p. 29.

In terms of use, the draft general management report goes on to say:

The restored African Meeting House will be open for visitors and guided tours and will be staffed and operated by the Museum of Afro-American History with the assistance of the National Park Service. The meetinghouse will once again be used for community meetings, ceremonies, exhibits and special programs.⁴

Audiovisual programs will be developed to be shown in the sanctuary, and small interpretive exhibits will be prepared for display on the adaptively reused first story. In addition to these regular visitor programs, the meetinghouse also will be open for lectures, performances, and special events of community interest.⁵

Such treatment will minimize the amount of conjecture involved in the restoration. It will allow the historic significance of the meetinghouse to be interpreted to the general public. At the same time, the building will continue in its historic use as a place of learning and public assembly.

The primary recommendation concerning the documentary sources used for this report involve the records of the Congregation Libavitz, the Jewish congregation that owned the meetinghouse from 1904 to 1972. The minute books, cash books, and ledgers that have survived from that group are in the possession of the American Jewish Historical Society in Waltham, Massachusetts. These books unfortunately do not cover all the years from 1904 to 1972, and only those entries written after 1947 are in English; the earlier books are handwritten in Yiddish.

The earliest extant book of the congregation is a minute book dated November 1907 to November 1914. Entries in this book that refer specifically to the building were translated from Yiddish to English for this report. The next records of the Congregation Libavitz are the minute books spanning the years 1923-1936, and the cash books covering 1930-1946. These books were not translated into English for this study, due to the time constraints of our translator. Such translation should be undertaken in the future; it is likely to describe alterations that, while not of the historic period, are still part of the evolutionary history of the structure.

⁴ *Draft General Management Plan*, p. 25.

⁵ *Draft General Management Plan*, pp. 25-26.

II. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

ARCHIVAL SOURCES

The collections of the following institutions were consulted for information concerning the historical background and development of the African Meeting House:

American Jewish Historical Society, Waltham, MA

- Congregation Libavitz Collection

American Baptist Churches of Massachusetts, Boston, MA

- historical records task force

American Baptist Historical Society, Rochester, NY

- general collection

Andover Newton Theological School, Newton, MA

(Franklin Trask Library, Special Collections)

- People's Baptist Church file
- Boston Baptist Association minutes
- Massachusetts Baptist Convention minutes

Boston Athenaeum, Boston, MA

- photographic collection
- general reference

Boston Building Department, Boston, MA (City Hall Building)

- building permits division

Boston Edison Company, Boston, MA (Public Information Dept., Centennial Project)

- utility records (no information)

Boston Public Library, Boston, MA

- general reference
- City of Boston early records collection; see Assistant Director (no information)
- microfilm division
- Rare Books and Manuscripts Division

Bostonian Society, Boston, MA

- general collection

Building Conservation Branch, Cultural Resources Center, NPS, Lowell, MA

(formerly the North Atlantic Historic Preservation Center, Boston, MA)

- general collection

Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., Prints and Photographs Division
- Historic American Buildings Survey collection

Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston, MA
- general collection

Massachusetts State Archives, Boston, MA
- Unpassed Documents & Papers Section

Massachusetts State Dept. of Public Safety, Boston, MA (Division of Inspection)
- archives collection (no information)

Museum of Afro American History, Boston, MA
- general collection

Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities, Boston, MA
- Smith Court photographic collection
- general collection

Suffolk County Courthouse, Boston, MA
- deeds and land records collection

Watertown Public Library, Watertown, MA
- general collection

Despite the extensive document search that was done prior to and during the preparation of this report, the record books of the black Baptist congregation that built the African Meeting House in 1806 and occupied it until 1897 have not been located. Such records covering the years 1805-1885 are known to have existed in fair condition in 1889.¹ At that time, they were reported “to be in the possession of some duly authorized church official from whom the information in regard to their condition was obtained.”² It is very possible that the records were subsequently lost to fire: a few references have been found to a fire that destroyed the records, the earliest being a news article published circa 1905.³ However, it is hoped that these important documents will eventually reappear to fill the gaps in the African Meeting House history.

¹ Carroll D. Wright, *Report on the Custody and Condition of the Public Records of Parishes, Towns, and Counties* (Boston: Wright and Potter Printing Co., 1889), p. 64.

² Wright, p. 9.

³ “Began With Twenty Members: The First African Baptist Church Society Will Celebrate the 100th Anniversary of Its Founding for a Week, Beginning Thursday Evening” (no newspaper name or date); Charles L. Coleman, “A History of the Negro Baptist in Boston: 1800-1875” (unpublished master’s thesis, Andover Newton Theological School, 1956), p. 58.

THE YEARS 1806-1850

Plans for building a place of worship for the First African Baptist Church in Boston commenced shortly after the church was constituted on August 8, 1805.⁴ A committee was appointed to solicit funds, among whom was Cato Gardner, who is reputed to have raised \$1,500.⁵ Encouraged in their effort after having raised \$2,500, a second committee was appointed to superintend the building of the church.⁶ Consisting of six white men, the building committee included Daniel Wild, auctioneer; John Wait, chocolate maker; William Bentley, baker; Mitchell Lincoln, merchant; Ward Jackson, housewright; and Edward Stevens, baker.⁷

Site Acquisition

Land for the meetinghouse, "with building thereon," was purchased from Augustine Raillion by three members of the building committee on March 23, 1805. Costing \$1,550, the land measured 49 by 59 feet.⁸ The site was located on a short passageway off Belknap Street, on the northern slope of the Trimountain later known as Beacon Hill.⁹ This area had been populated after the Revolutionary War by "a number of families of freed negroes."¹⁰

⁴ James O. Horton and Lois E. Horton, *Black Bostonians: Family Life and Community Struggle in the Antebellum North*, p. 40.

⁵ William Lloyd Garrison, ed., "Decade Meeting in Joy Street Church," *The Liberator*, November 19, 1858.

⁶ Lee M. Friedman, "A Beacon Hill Synagogue," *Old-Time New England*, Vol. 33, No. 1 (July 1942), p. 2.

⁷ Charles Shaw, *Topographical and Historical Description of Boston* (Boston: Oliver Spear, 1817), pp. 269-270; Frederic C. Detwiller, "African Meeting House: An Architectural/Historical Analysis" (typescript dated July 1975; in SPNEA library, Boston), appendix.

⁸ Detwiller, "African Meeting House," appendix.

⁹ Allen Chamberlain, *Beacon Hill: Its Ancient Pastures and Early Mansions* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1925), p. 249.

¹⁰ Chamberlain, p. 43.

Design

Original architectural drawings for the African Meeting House have not been found. However, there is a remarkable similarity between a "Plan & Elevation for a Townhouse" in Asher Benjamin's 1806 book, *The American Builder's Companion* (fig. 1), and the earliest known view of the meetinghouse (fig. 2). Commonalities include their three-story heights, their vertical massing, their brick construction, their use of doorways and windows set into blind arches at first-story level, and the fact that their first- and second-story windows are of the same size. The meetinghouse differs by being one bay wider, thereby making it symmetrical; by having square-cut lintels, where none are detailed in the Benjamin design; and by having large windows on the top story.

The similarity has prompted speculation that the design for the meetinghouse was either done or influenced by Boston architect Benjamin.¹¹ It also has been proposed that Ward Jackson, the only housewright on the meetinghouse building committee, may have been responsible for the design.¹² Jackson and Asher Benjamin were no doubt personally acquainted, both being members of the Society of Associated Housewrights. Jackson probably was also familiar with *The American Builder's Companion* before its publication, since it had been submitted by Benjamin to a committee of the society for review.¹³

Construction

Actual work on the building may have begun as early as 1805, or possibly as late as the following spring. The best information about the venture comes from a 1808 petition to the Massachusetts State Legislature, under the title, "Cost of the African Meeting House."¹⁴ As will be explained shortly, the cost of erecting the meetinghouse exceeded the receipts collected for the purpose. The building committee therefore filed the petition in hopes of reducing the deficit.

¹¹ Mitchell, Burditt & Associates, Inc., "The Historic African Meeting House" (typescript dated June 11, 1973; in SPNEA library, Boston), p. 1; Detwiller, "African Meeting House," pp. 6-7.

¹² Detwiller, "African Meeting House," pp. 6-7.

¹³ Gerald W. R. Ward, "The Society of Associated Housewrights of the Town of Boston 1804-1837" (typescript date 1973; in SPNEA library, Boston), pp. 8, 52.

¹⁴ "Cost of the African Meeting House and a Resolve" (House Documents and Papers/Unpassed, Nos. 6402 and 6404, 1808; in the State Archives, Boston).

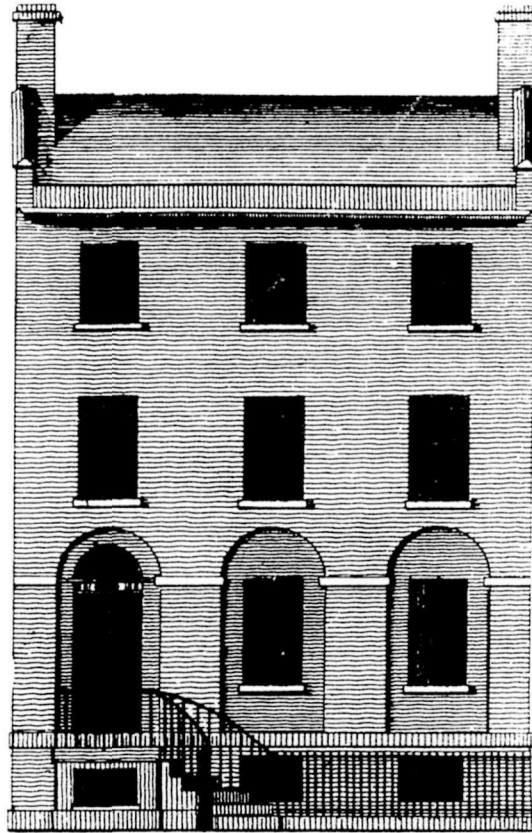


Figure 1. "Plan and Elevation for
A Small Townhouse" (1806).

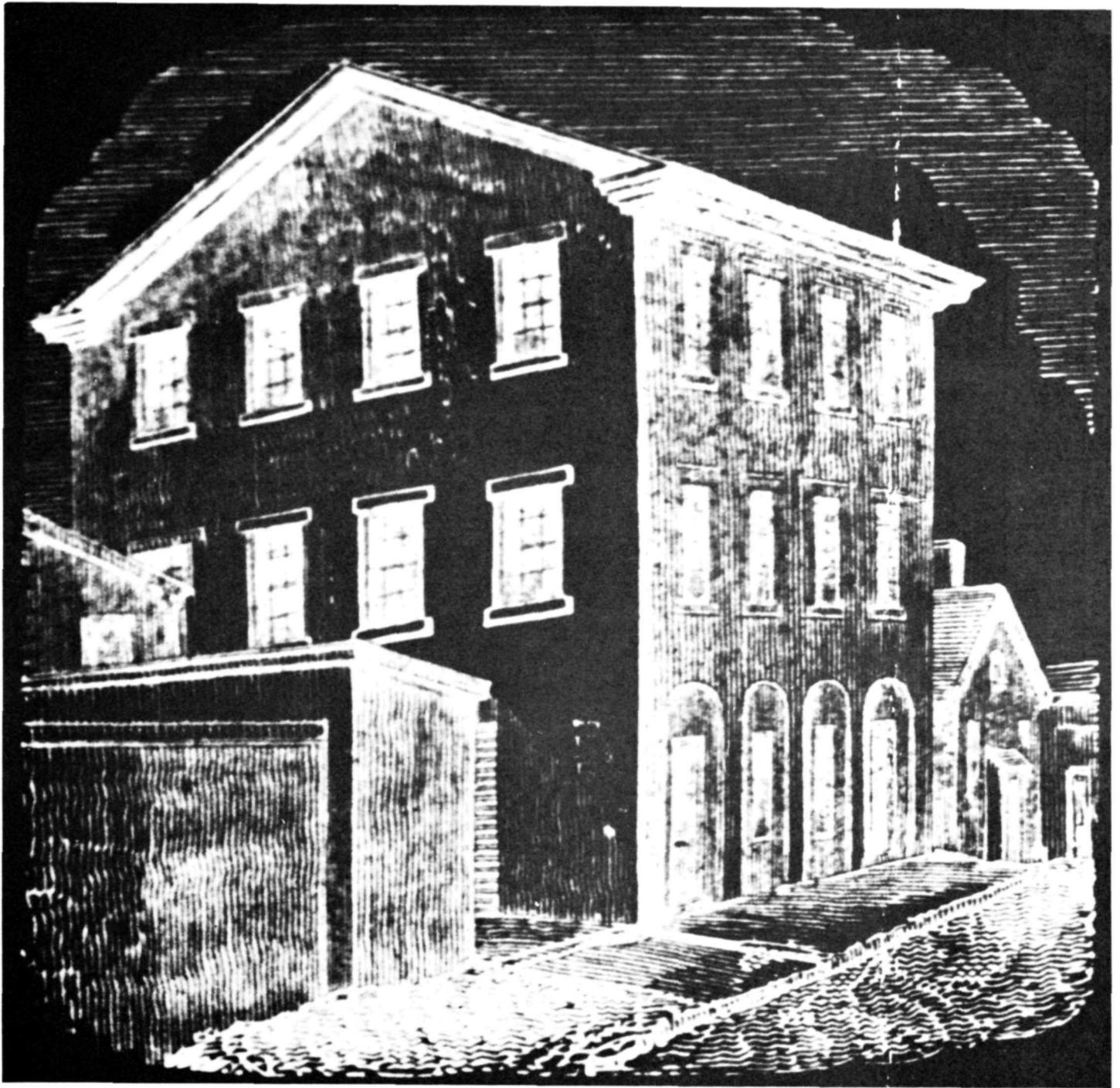


Figure 2. First Independent Baptist Church (1843).

The petition was apparently submitted in two forms. The first submittal in 1808 was primarily a narrative statement of the problem, with a few general financial figures given. The second submittal is dated February 3, 1808. It appears to be a response to a request to provide more detailed financial information, since it consists primarily of a itemized list of expenses and receipts. In two cases, its figures differ from those contained in the earlier submittal by \$25 and \$35. Since the February submittal appears to be more exact, its figures are cited here.

The February 3rd accounting stated that the "Total amount of cost of the meeting house" was \$7,691.48. This figure represented \$7,791.48 worth of materials and labor, minus \$100 obtained by reselling—as will be explained shortly—some salvaged materials purchased but not used. Income for the building of the meetinghouse came from several sources, for a total of \$4,772.54. Of this, \$2,734 was obtained by subscription from individuals, from towns in Massachusetts and Rhode Island, and from New Hampshire and the Province of Maine. Another \$75 came from the sale of the existing building on the lot. In addition, work and materials were donated totaling \$540; and pews were sold in advance, to "none but Africans and people of color."¹⁵

Some building materials were obtained by purchasing salvaged items for \$365 from the old West Church, built in 1736 and in the process of being rebuilt in 1806.¹⁶ One early source indicates that "the windows and a greater portion of the timber" at the African Meeting House came from this purchase.¹⁷ No studies have been done of the Old West Church that would illuminate the nature of the windows or other materials purchased by the African Church. Apparently the purchase included additional material that was not needed: as stated previously, the African Church resold some of the "Old Meeting House stuff" for \$100 after their building was finished. (The material from the old West Church thus may have been purchased by lot.)

The pulpit apparently also came from the old West Church, although it is listed separately in the 1808 accounting as having been purchased from M. Ricknill for \$107.50. This is based on a reminiscence by the Rev. Charles Lowell, pastor of the West Church in 1806 that mentions the pulpit. This reminiscence was published in the Boston *Christian Register* in 1853, and again in *The Liberator* in 1858:

When the first church edifice that belonged to the West Parish was taken down in 1806, the pulpit—was transferred to the African Society who were then engaged in erecting a church in Belknap street—.¹⁸

Perhaps the pulpit was sold at public auction to M. Ricknill, who in turn sold it to the African Church.

¹⁵ Friedman, p. 2.

¹⁶ Detwiller, "African Meeting House," footnote 1.

¹⁷ First Independent Baptist Church and Society in Boston, "To the Public, and all who Encourage Religious Elevation" (subscription dated 1853; on file at the Museum of Afro American History, Boston).

¹⁸ Garrison, "Decade Meeting."

The 1808 accounting contains numerous entries of other materials. Briefly summarized, specific building materials listed included sandstone (\$308.30), slating (estimated \$320.00), lumber (195.13), and paint and oil (\$14.31). "Sundrys" constituted by far the largest expense, totaling \$5,012.30. Of this total, \$4,548 had been advanced by J. Wait, M. Lincoln, and W. Jackson, members of the building committee. Materials were carted to the site for \$20.96, and a horse either bought or borrowed for \$30.

It is commonly thought that only black labor was used to build the church.¹⁹ However, research on the names appearing on the list shows that "although much was done by blacks, white craftsmen and suppliers worked on the structure, as well."²⁰ The only labor costs itemized in the 1808 accounting were for carpentry and masonry work. A total of \$1,512.77 was expended for carpenter work, the majority of which was paid to A.T. Penniman. L. Merian and J. Shattuck received lesser amounts for carpenter work. The expense for mason work was \$656.47. A. Barbados received the largest amount for this work, and J. Fish a lesser amount. Unspecified work totaling \$33.65 was provided by S. Coborn, J. Franklin, R. Tyng, T. Jarvis, W. Green, and R. Field.

Construction was well underway by June 1, 1806, as was noted in the diary of another William Bentley, the Congregationalist minister who chronicled many Boston-area events in the early 19th century: "The Brick Meeting House for the Blacks was . . . ready for the roof."²¹

The meetinghouse was almost completed when the pastor was installed on December 4, 1806,²² and the building dedicated on December 6.²³ The building committee invited the general public to attend the dedication ceremonies:

The floor of the meeting house will be reserved for the accommodation of the company who wish to attend, and the galleries will be for the accommodation of the Africans and people of color.²⁴

¹⁹ Horton and Horton, p. 40.

²⁰ Ellen F. Rosebrock, "A Historical Account of the Joy Street Block Between Myrtle and Cambridge Streets" (typescript dated December 22, 1978, and January 30, 1979; on file at the Museum of Afro American History, Boston), p. 20.

²¹ William Bentley, *Diary of William Bentley, DD: Jan. 1803-Dec. 1810, Vol. 3* (Salem, MA: Essex Institute: 1911), p. 229.

²² Horton and Horton, p. 40.

²³ "Historical Sketch of The Peoples Baptist Church of Boston Massachusetts in Its Connectional History," *170th Anniversary Celebration: Peoples Baptist Church* (1975).

²⁴ Friedman, p. 2.

One Boston newspaper reported on December 8 that the attendance at the dedication had been “large and respectable” despite the “very unfavorable” weather.²⁵

Exterior Appearance

Almost no documentation has been discovered for the African Meeting House’s early exterior appearance. An 1817 account says that it was “built of brick forty feet by forty-eight, three stories high.”²⁶ As stated earlier, the first known view of the African Meeting House is an 1843 engraving (fig. 2). It is likely that this view gives a fairly accurate picture of the meetinghouse as constructed, however. As will be described shortly, the meetinghouse’s congregation experienced financial and organizational difficulties for much of the period 1806-1843, which probably would have precluded the execution of extensive alterations. Repairs undoubtedly were made during these years, which witnessed several notable storms, including the “Great September Gale” of 1815 and the “New England Hurricane” of September 1838, during which the roofs of some Boston churches were reported to have blown off.²⁷

The 1843 engraving shows the north and east elevations of the building. The meetinghouse is pictured as being three stories high; square, or almost so, with four bays on each side; and having a gable roof with projecting cornice. The pattern of the brick walls is not detailed, but the brick walls of today’s building indicate that mason A. Barbados conformed with the prevalent neighborhood style, as described in the book *Beacon Hill: Its Ancient Pastures & Early Mansions*:

With a few exceptions brick houses built before 1810 on all sides of the Hill . . . were laid up in Flemish bond, at least in the front walls. Side walls, even when exposed and sometimes back walls, of such houses were usually laid up with from five to twelve courses of stretchers . . . with one course of headers.²⁸

Both doorways and ground-story windows are set into blind arches in the wall. The bottom story of the east elevation is unfortunately obscured by another wall, except for the northeast corner, where the shadow of a doorway is shown. The upper two stories on both elevations have two rows of what appear to be rectangular sash windows, six-over-six, with square-cut lintels and sills. On the ground story of the north elevation, facing the passageway, two windows of similar size to the upper windows are located between two doorways. We know from an 1853 appeal for funds that

²⁵ See footnote 23. Name of newspaper not given in Friedman’s article.

²⁶ Shaw, pp. 269-270.

²⁷ Carl Seabury, *Boston Observed* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1971), pp. 21, 24-25.

²⁸ Chamberlain, p. 285.

the windows installed in the 1806 meetinghouse had been salvaged from the West Church built in 1736.²⁹ These windows, which must have been extant in 1843—because they are mentioned in the 1853 appeal for funds—are shown in the engraving of the meetinghouse as being six-over-six sashes. While this may appear to be large for 1736, it was not an unknown window style in 18th-century America. Imported panes of large window glass were available as early as 1737, as evidenced by an order placed by Thomas Hancock of Boston for “380 squares of best London crown glass, all Cutt Exactly 18 inches long and 11 inches wide.”³⁰ Alternatively, it is possible that the windows salvaged from the old West Church were replacement windows installed in the West Church sometime after 1736, but before 1806, when it was dismantled.

The roofing material cannot be determined in the engraving of 1843, but it was undoubtedly slate shingles, since slate was one building material listed in the accounting for 1808.³¹ This type of roof would have conformed with the Statute of 1798 that required all roofs in the City of Boston to be “entirely covered with slate, tile, or some incombustible composition.”³²

Interior Plan

Several written accounts offer a glimpse of the interior layout of the 1806 meetinghouse. These accounts generally refer to the first story of the meetinghouse as the “basement.” Apparently this area was not finished in time for the dedication, since the 1808 petition to submitted the Massachusetts Legislature stated that:

In the Basement Story a convenient school room for the instruction of the Children of Colour throughout the town, and a tenement for their minister . . . are nearly finished.³³

²⁹ First Independent Baptist Church, “To the Public.” Studies of the Old West Church might illuminate the nature of the windows and other material reused at the African Meeting House, but no such studies are on file at the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities—the organization that has taken the greatest interest in the Old West Church.

³⁰ Charles E. Peterson, ed., *Building Early America* (Radnor, PA: Chilton Book Co., 1976), pp. 156-157.

³¹ “Cost of the African Meeting House.”

³² Chamberlain, p. 287.

³³ “Cost of the African Meeting House.”

This appears to have been a fairly innovative floor plan. The Rev. Bentley says in his diary:

The lower story is prepared for a school and for the reception of the minister. The first provision of the kind ever made in New England, excepting in the new Catholic Chapel in Boston.³⁴

Concerning the sanctuary, Bentley goes on to say, "This House will have convenient galleries and will be finished in the usual style of meeting houses with pews and benches."³⁵

The 1808 petition to the Legislature describes the number of pews in the sanctuary as being "sixty on the lower floor and eight in the Gallerys."³⁶ The 1817 account says that "The upper two stories are well finished with pews, pulpit, galleries &c."³⁷ The 1843 engraving of the meetinghouse is accompanied by a narrative, which says in part that the building "is very plain and commodious, being capable of seating 600 persons."³⁸

Remaining Building Debt

As stated previously, \$4,772.54 was eventually raised for the construction of the African Meeting House. Actual costs far exceeded that amount, however. The advertisement issued by the building committee, inviting the public to the dedication of the meetinghouse, stated that although the committee members had:

most strictly adhered to the principle named in [the] subscription paper; and have faithfully applied all that has been received by subscription to the purchase of the same . . . the expenses of the House . . . have exceeded the former subscription twenty-five hundred dollars [sic].³⁹

³⁴ Bentley, p. 229.

³⁵ See footnote 33.

³⁶ "Cost of the African Meeting House."

³⁷ Shaw, pp. 269-270.

³⁸ S.N. Dickinson, *The Boston Almanac for the Year 1843* (Boston: Thomas Groom & Co., 1843), p. 88.

³⁹ Friedman, p. 2. No primary source or date given.

A collection was taken up at the dedication to defray this overrun, but—despite the large assembly—only \$123.54 was collected.⁴⁰

Following the dedication of the African Meeting House as the “First African Baptist Church” in December 1806, money was still owed to members of the building committee who had contributed private funds to construct the building. Consequently, an appeal was made by the committee to the public:

It is hoped that a generous public will be willing to aid this benevolent design, and by their subscriptions assist in discharging the remaining balance, and in completing the school room, for the education of the people of color of all denominations.⁴¹

An outstanding debt of \$2,918.94 existed when a petition was made for relief to the Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in 1808.⁴² In this petition it was stated that the total expense of the land and brick building was \$7,691.48, and that the basement rooms were “nearly finished.” Subscriptions and other fundraising efforts had accrued \$4,772.54, leaving the aforesaid unpaid balance. A proposal was made in response to the petition to grant the petitioners unappropriated lands in the District of Maine. This compensation was amended on March 2, 1808, from lands in Maine to the sum of \$2,000. Despite the efforts of the petitioners, however, the proposal was not accepted by the House of Representatives, and the African Baptist Church remained in debt.

The money owed to the meetinghouse building committee was apparently not paid off until 1819. On September 17th of that year, the land and meetinghouse thereon were officially conveyed by committee members Daniel Wild and William Bentley to the deacons of the African Baptist Church.⁴³

⁴⁰ “Cost of the African Meeting House.”

⁴¹ Friedman, p. 4. No primary source or date given.

⁴² “Cost of the African Meeting House.”

⁴³ Suffolk County Registry of Deeds, Book 264:18.

Use of the Schoolroom

Much information about the origins of the schoolroom in the basement of the African Meeting House is found in a report made in 1833 by a committee investigating the by-then poor condition of the schoolroom. The report stated in part:

Meantime the site of the present school house & meeting house [the African Meeting House] was purchased, the purchase money raised by subscription. On behalf of the School the coloured Inhabitants subscribed a considerable sum, and the late Chief Justice Parsons, the late Abiel Smith, Lieut. Gov. Phillips, and seven other gentlemen subscribed one hundred dollars each. The African Baptist Church erected the house of which the basement story is now occupied in part by the School. There appears to have been a verbal agreement that the whole of that story should be appropriated for a school room, for the coloured youth of Boston, of all religious denominations, and it also appears that Judge Parsons, and other gentleman made that a condition of their donation. Some difficulty appears to have arisen in finally adjusting the respective rights of the Church & School, which was terminated by a committee of the latter consenting to accept a part of the basement story for a school room. The remainder was leased for dwelling houses, and the rents devoted to the support in part of the ministry in said Church.

It remained for the coloured inhabitants to finish the interior of the School room. This they did by subscription; about two hundred dollars appear to have been subscribed, but much of it being subscribed by coloured seamen, and the embargo coming on, only ninety eight dollars were in effect collected. The whole expense was about three hundred dollars, and the deficiency of about two hundred appears to have been made up by the committee of the coloured Inhabitants, viz: Mssrs Primus Hall, Fortune Symones and Cyrus Vasall. Mr. Abel Barbadoes generously contributed to the labor of lathing and plastering. In 1808, the room was completed and was immediately occupied by the School.

Upon the death of the late Abiel Smith Esq. in the year 1815, the City assumed the entire care & support of the School. The only expense, which the City has paid for the school room has been for repairs, but this has been less than the income from Mr. Smith's truly charitable bequest. . . .⁴⁴

One 20th-century secondary source states that classes were meeting regularly in the basement of the African Meeting House by 1806, and that they were being taught by Elisha Sylvester, a white

⁴⁴ *Records of the School Committee, 1815-1836*, October 11, 1833, pp. 401-402. One of a group of handwritten, leather-bound volumes in the Rare Books and Manuscripts Division of the Boston Public Library.

schoolmaster.⁴⁵ This statement is contradicted by four 19th-century sources. One of these is the above-cited School Committee record. A second is the 1808 petition to the Massachusetts legislature, which states that the schoolroom was not finished at that time. A third is an 1817 book that says the first instructor was Prince Saunders, “a man of colour and of education,” whose school “generally consisted of about forty scholars.”⁴⁶ Finally, an 1894 book says that the schoolroom was completed in 1808, whereupon classes began immediately.⁴⁷

All sources agree that prior to 1812, funding for the school consisted of subscriptions and tuition.⁴⁸ The Town of Boston officially recognized the school in 1812 by granting it \$200 per year, under the direction of the Boston School Committee.⁴⁹ In 1815, white merchant Abiel Smith willed more than \$4,000 worth of securities to the city of Boston for the education of black children.⁵⁰ As described by Brayley, “In 1815 Mr. Abiel Smith died and left a legacy of about \$5,000, the income from which was to be appropriated ‘for the free instruction of colored children, in reading, writing, and arithmetic.’”⁵¹ Smith is said to have done this because of his regard for, and at the request of, Prince Saunders.⁵² After the estate was settled and income from the bequest started to become available for use in 1817, the City assumed the entire care and support of the school.⁵³

This arrangement apparently suited the church. When the members of the building committee gave clear title to the meetinghouse property to the deacons in 1819, the deed of conveyance mandated specific uses for various parts of the building. Concerning the schoolroom, it stated that:

the room in the basement story, which has been hitherto occupied for a school room, to be used for that purpose for children of colour throughout the Town of every denomination and to be under such direction of the select

⁴⁵ Horton and Horton, p. 70.

⁴⁶ Shaw, pp. 269-270.

⁴⁷ Arthur Brayley, *Schools and Schoolboys of Old Boston* (Boston: Louis P. Hager, 1894), p. 48.

⁴⁸ Brayley, p. 48; Horton and Horton, p. 71.

⁴⁹ Brayley, p. 48; *A Volume of Records Relating to the Early History of Boston Containing Minutes of the Selectmen's Meetings 1811 to 1817, and part of 1818* (Boston: Municipal Printing Office, 1908), p. 315.

⁵⁰ Horton and Horton, p. 71.

⁵¹ Brayley, p. 48.

⁵² “Report to the Primary School Committee,” June 15, 1846 (Boston: City Document No. 23, 1846), p. 17.

⁵³ *A Volume of Records Relating to the Early History of Boston Containing Minutes of the Selectmen's Meetings, 1811 to 1817, and part of 1818* (Boston: Municipal Printing Office), pp. 206 and 212.

However, it appears that the practice of charging tuition continued: one secondary source says that by 1820, tuition was 12-1/2 cents per week per pupil.⁵⁵

In November 1816, a Sunday school was organized that probably also held its classes in the schoolroom. This Sunday school at times had more members than did the church.⁵⁶ The heavy use received by this room probably explains why the room needed repairs only 10 years after it had been completed. This was mentioned in the Boston Selectmen's minutes for 1818:

The Chairman reported that he and Mr. Austin had viewed the school for people of colour in Belknap street and directed Mr. Ellins what repairs to make.⁵⁷

An excellent source of information about the church's Sunday school from 1830 to 1835 is the minutes of the Boston Baptist Association, to which Boston Baptist churches submitted annual reports for the years 1812-1848. The African Baptist Church had been a charter member of the association. "When the [Boston Baptist] Association was founded in 1811, the African Baptist Church withdrew from the Warren Baptist Association of Rhode Island, with which it had been affiliated since 1805, to become a charter member of the new Boston Association."⁵⁸

In 1830, the Boston Baptist Association formed a school union. "School" in this case probably referred to Sunday schools, which would have been organizationally separate from the public school system. The association's minutes for the years 1830-1835 give statistics for the Sunday schools that were members of the union. The Sunday school at the African Baptist Church was reported in 1830 to have a superintendent (C.C. Dean), 20 teachers, 141 scholars, and 140 volumes in the library (see figure 3). The same figures were reported for 1832. In 1834, the number of scholars dropped to 110, of which it was reported that 33 were enrolled in the infant classes, and 30 were enrolled in the Bible classes.⁵⁹

⁵⁵ Horton and Horton, p. 71.

⁵⁶ Coleman, p. 43.

⁵⁷ *A Volume of Records*, p. 275.

⁵⁸ Horton and Horton, p. 40. Although the Boston Baptist Association was formed in 1811, its *Minutes*—which listed member churches—did not begin until 1812.

⁵⁹ Minutes of the Boston Baptist Association, 1812-1848.

YEAR	TEACHERS	SCHOLARS	VOLUMES IN LIBRARY	WINTER CLASSES	INFANT CLASSES	ADULT CLASSES	BIBLE CLASS	CLASSES
1831	20	141	140	YES	-	-	-	-
1832	20	141	140	-	-	-	-	-
1834	24	110	200	-	2 TEACH. 33 SCHOL.	-	30 SCH.	-
1835	-	-	-	-	-	-	23 SCHOL.	-
1853	14	70	400	-	-	4	-	14
1854	9	70	-	-	-	4	-	13
1855	8	50	-	-	-	-	-	9
1856	7	40	312	-	-	-	-	7
1859	8	30	400	-	-	1	-	7
1860	6	66	400	-	-	6	-	5
1861	10	55	500	-	-	4	-	9
1862	9	50	500	-	-	4	-	9
1863	5	40	-	-	-	1	YES	5
1864	6	36	100	-	-	5	YES	6
1866	5	45	-	-	9 SCHOL.	-	-	5
1894	-	-	-	-	-	-	11 TEACH 40 SCH.	-

Figure 3. Sabbath School Records, 1831-1894.

This Sunday school was probably held initially in the same basement schoolroom where the public school classes were held. The adjacent "minister's rooms" would not have been available to the Sunday school until 1832; as will be discussed shortly, these rooms apparently were rented out until that year. After 1832, the Sunday school could have used these rooms, in addition to the schoolroom.

The basement schoolroom was not only used for public-school classes, and possibly Sunday school classes, but also for meetings. The meeting at which the New England Anti-Slavery Society was formed was held in the schoolroom on the evening of January 6, 1832.⁶⁰

By 1833, the poor condition of the schoolroom had caught the attention of the City of Boston School Committee. A committee was formed to investigate, and it reported its findings in the *Records of the School Committee, 1815-1836* as an entry dated October 11, 1833. Part of this report has already been quoted in this text. The report went on to say:

The situation of the room is low and confined. It is hot and stifled in summer and cold in winter. But this is not the only or greatest objection to it. The obvious contrast between the accommodations of the coloured, and other children, both as to convenience and healthfulness seems to your committee to be the principal cause of this school being so thinly attended.

The committee are therefore of opinion, that it is just as expedient that a suitable building be forthwith provided.⁶¹

The following year, construction commenced on a new school building on the adjacent lot east of the African Meeting House; it was dedicated on February 10, 1835.⁶² It was named the "Smith School," in honor of Abiel Smith.⁶³

Thereafter, the city no longer used the basement schoolroom in the African Meeting House for public-school classes. In June 1835, and again in October 1835, an amendment to the African Meeting House deed of 1819 was therefore entered in the Suffolk County Registry of Deeds:

Whereas said Town of Boston has ceased to provide any instruction for a school in said basement room, but has made provision for instruction elsewhere, it was the original intention that in such case the improvement and control of said basement room should be in said Church of People of

⁶⁰ Coleman, pp. 81-82.

⁶¹ *Records of the School Committee, 1815-1836*, October 11, 1833, pp. 401-402. One of a group of handwritten, leather-bound volumes in the Rare Books and Manuscripts Division of the Boston Public Library.

⁶² Brayley, p. 48; William Minot, "Address at the Dedication of the Smith School, Boston," 1835, p. 5.

⁶³ For more information on the Abiel Smith School House, see *Smith School House: Draft Historic Structure Report*, by Barbara A. Yocum (Cultural Resources Center, North Atlantic Region, NPS), 1990.

Color and whereas questions have arisen as to who the right of improvement and control of said basement room belonged, it is thought desirable to remove such questions and that said church should have entire control of such basement room heretofore for a school room.⁶⁴

Having thus established clear title to the basement schoolroom, the church conveyed it in 1837 to the "Infant School Association for the Education of Colored Youths in Boston."⁶⁵ In the deed of conveyance, the deacons of the church agreed to "forever quit the right of sd. Church to the possession, occupancy and use of sd. room." The deacons did this "without requiring, asking, demanding, recovering or receiving any tax, profit, income, assessment contributions, levy or payment of any kind."⁶⁶

It is not known if the church continued to have a Sunday school. Such a school would have been able to meet in the "minister's rooms," which remained vacant until about 1850. However, in 1836 the Boston Baptist Association minutes cease to include statistics for all churches' Sunday schools. It appears that the post-1835 statistics were published separately, and that those for the period 1836-1852 could not be located.⁶⁷ The statistics for the period 1853 onward are available as part of the minutes of the Sabbath School Teacher's Convention. These apparently were preserved by being incorporated into the minutes for those years of the Boston South Baptist Association, which had been created out of the old Boston Baptist Association in 1848. Around 1840, the Infant School Association vacated the basement schoolroom.⁶⁸ The association's legal right to the space remained in effect, however, so it is unlikely that the church used the room during the 1840's.

Use of the "Minister's Rooms"

The documentary evidence indicates that in addition to the schoolroom, the basement/first story of the 1806 meetinghouse contained a suite of rooms intended for use as a parsonage. However, the first minister of the church—Thomas Paul, who served from 1806 to 1829⁶⁹—apparently never lived there. The city directories list Paul's address as Belknap Street in 1813, Cambridge Street in 1821, and George Street after 1823. It is likely that school instructor

⁶⁴ Registry, Books 391:289 and 401:199.

⁶⁵ Registry, Book 423:102.

⁶⁶ Minutes of the Boston Baptist Association.

⁶⁷ The records do not exist in the library of the Andover-Newton Theological School.

⁶⁸ Registry, Book 676:302.

⁶⁹ Minutes of the Boston Baptist Association, 1812-1848; "Historical Sketch (1975)."

Prince Saunders lived in the basement rooms at least for awhile, since the 1813 city directory lists his address as May's Court.⁷⁰

It is not known whether or not Saunders' residence was part of a formal lease by the church, or merely a convenient, informal arrangement. However, beginning in 1821, the "minister's rooms" became an active rental property. When the last of the money owed to the building committee was paid off in 1819, members of that committee officially conveyed the land and the church "thereon" to the deacons of the African Baptist Church. The deed of conveyance mandated specific uses for various parts of the building. Concerning the "Minister's rooms," it stated that:

The other rooms in the basement (the rent of these) to be for the sole purpose of paying the debts that have been or ever shall be incurred (as far as it will go) for benefit of said church's ministers.⁷¹

In 1821, the deacons of the African Baptist Church followed the dictates of the 1819 deed and leased to their minister, Thomas Paul, for 30 years:

the rooms in the basement of the Meetinghouse . . . in Belknap Street, excepting the room in the basement which has hitherto been occupied for a schoolroom . . . in consideration of the release by sd. church of the debt due him from said church amounting to \$2,825.⁷²

Immediately following the granting of the 30-year lease in 1821, Paul sublet the basement rooms to stockbroker Samuel Dana. Dana in turn sublet to a carver and gilder, Daniel Kidder, in 1822.⁷³ From 1826 to 1831, Domingo Williams, "waiter," is listed in the city directories as living "under the Church" on May's Court, although the rooms were not officially sublet to him. Whether or not Dana, Kidder, and Williams worked out of these rooms or only resided there is not known. William's vocation as a waiter was described in his 1832 obituary in *The Liberator*:

Mr. Williams . . . has held the post of Attendant General to fashionable parties, assemblies, and social entertainments, both public and private. Whenever any such entertainment has been decided on, he has been sent for

⁷⁰ Detwiller, "African Meeting House," pp. 8-9. According to Chamberlain (pp. 115, 249), the passageway off Belknap Street on which the African Meeting House was located became known as May's Court in 1812, and Smith's Court in 1848. Belknap Street itself was renamed Joy Street: the portion on the south slope of Beacon Hill was renamed in 1851, while the part on the north slope was renamed in 1855.

⁷¹ Registry, Book 264:18.

⁷² Registry, Book 273:193.

⁷³ Rosebrock, p. 20; Registry, Book 273:193.

and consulted, as to the preliminary arrangements, and the ways and means of bringing it about in a proper manner.⁷⁴

For almost 20 years after Williams' death, no listings appear in the city directories for persons living in the basement of the church. The "minister's rooms" may have been used during this period by the church's Sunday school, especially if such a school continued to exist after the schoolroom was conveyed legally to the Infant School Association in 1837. By 1850, however, someone may once again have been residing in the basement of the church. The tax assessment records for 1850 list one Isaak Barbados as living "under the church."⁷⁵ The *City Directory* listing for 1850 describes "Isaac Barbadoes" as a musician, living in a house at 4 Smith Court. The latter address is not the church; perhaps Barbados moved about this time.

Financial and Organizational Problems

The difficulty experienced by the African Baptist Church in paying off its construction debts has already been discussed. In the late 1820's, the church began to suffer organizational problems, as well. "That harmony and christian union which had so long and so happily existed between pastor [Thomas Paul] and people became interrupted" about 1828.⁷⁶ Paul resigned in 1829, but dissention continued (see figure 4). In 1832, there were references to "internal trials resulting in divisions and party feelings."⁷⁷ In 1835, the congregation itself admitted to containing "majority" and "minority" factions.⁷⁸ Several members had withdrawn, while others had returned.⁷⁹ The congregation was forced in both 1835 and 1836 to seek financial aid from the First and Second Baptist Churches to help pay its pastor's salary.⁸⁰ Nonetheless, the church reported that, "We have our Meeting-house regularly attended."⁸¹ Given this situation, it is surprising that the church requested no compensation for the conveyance of its schoolroom to the Infant School Association in 1837.

⁷⁴ Garrison, ed., "Obituary, Domingo Williams."

⁷⁵ Beth A. Bower, "A Research Design for a Data Recovery Program at the African Meeting House, Boston Massachusetts" (Roxbury, MA: Museum of Afro American History, n.d. [ca. 1985]), p. 6.

⁷⁶ Minutes of the Boston Baptist Association; "Independent Baptist Church, Boston," included in the minutes of the Boston South Baptist Association for 1849.

⁷⁷ Minutes of the Boston Baptist Association.

⁷⁸ *Records of the First Baptist Church, Vol. III (1831-1835)*, April 18, 1835; *Records of the Second Baptist Church (1833-1847)*, April 28, 1835.

⁷⁹ Minutes of the Boston Baptist Association.

⁸⁰ Coleman, pp. 59, 69.

⁸¹ Minutes of the Boston Baptist Association.

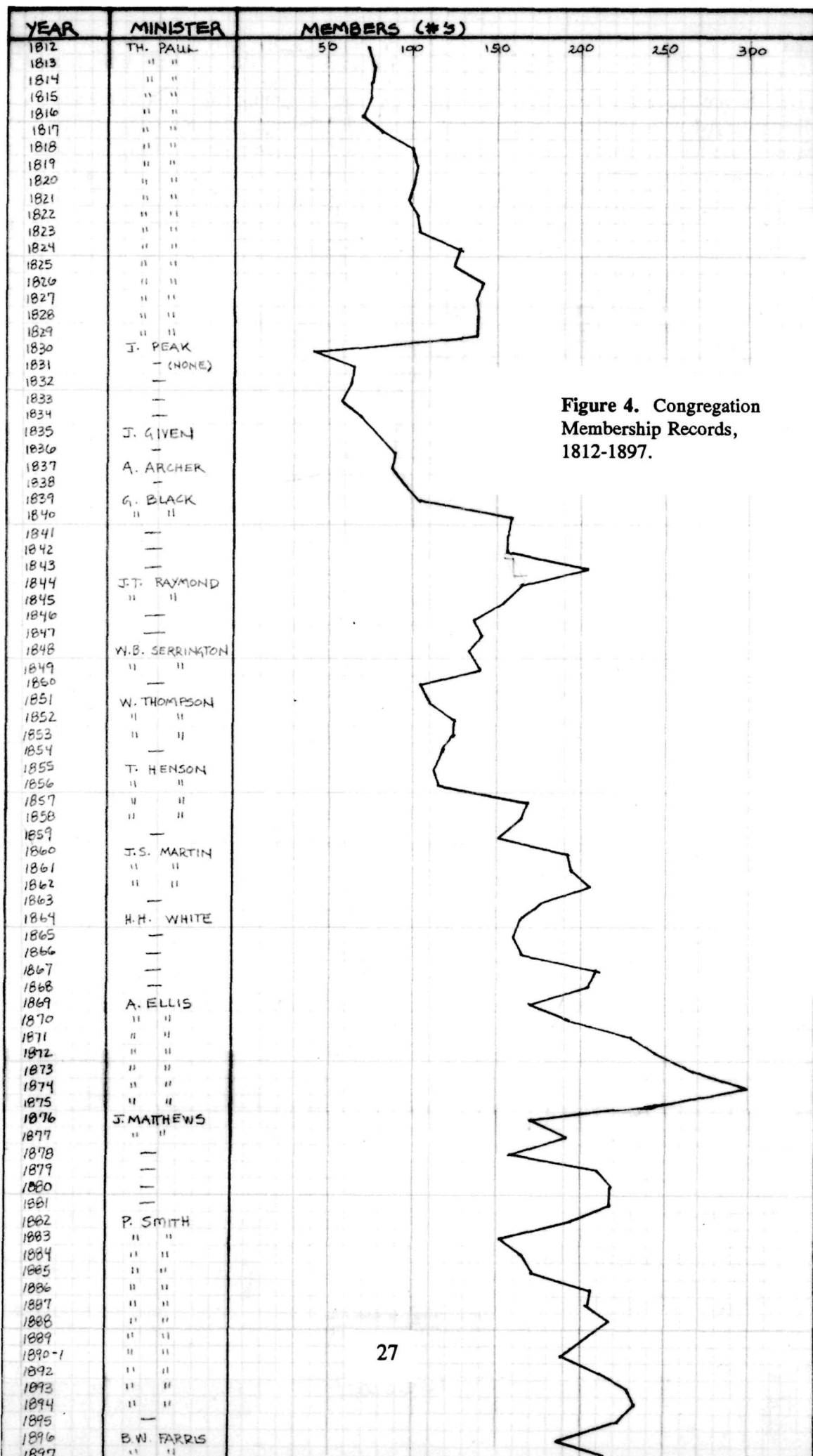


Figure 4. Congregation Membership Records, 1812-1897.

The precise reasons for this dissention are unclear. Its timing coincided with a sharp increase in Boston antislavery sentiment and activity; one author believes that the congregation was split between those members who thought the church should champion social reform, and those that did not.⁸² Other scholars think that Paul was forced to resign because of illness and his frequent trips away from Boston, and that the subsequent absence of strong pastoral leadership allowed personal differences to fester.⁸³ In November 1838, the Rev. George H. Black became pastor of the church. Efforts were made in 1838 to resolve the “troubles and disputes, lawsuits and controversies” that had plagued the congregation in former years. A new constitution and bylaws were adopted, and the church incorporated under the new name of the “First Independent Baptist Church and Society in Boston.”⁸⁴ The reason given for changing the church’s name from “African” to “First Independent & C.” was that, “The term African is ill applied to a church composed of American citizens.”⁸⁵ It was further reported that “Peace and brotherly love prevails.” However, by 1840 “existing antagonisms” increased “until they rose to such a height as to rend the Church in twain.”⁸⁶ The Rev. Black and about 40 members withdrew and established themselves in the loft of an adjacent building. The next year, both factions wrote to the Boston Baptist Association, claiming to be the actual church. The association investigated, and appointed a committee in 1842 to study the problem.⁸⁷ Several meetings were held, and the committee’s 1843 report stated that harmony had apparently been restored. The committee noted that despite the church’s difficulties, “their meetings have been regularly held and their pulpit has been supplied by students from Newton.”⁸⁸

The dissidents did not return to the church in large numbers, contrary to expectations. What the Baptist Association committee assumed to be their acquiescence was apparently only silence due to a lack of leadership; Black had died in 1842.⁸⁹ The group must have decided to make the 1840 split permanent in 1843, because the church reported to the Boston Baptist Association that 46 members withdrew that year.⁹⁰ These persons formed the Second African Baptist Church, which became the Twelfth Baptist Church in 1848.⁹¹ The membership of the First Independent Baptist Church continued to fluctuate. Other Baptist churches in Boston were complaining in 1848 “of the

⁸² George A. Levesque, “Inherent Reformers-Inherited Orthodoxy: Black Baptists in Boston, 1800-1873,” *Journal of Negro History*, No. 4 (1975), pp. 501-504.

⁸³ Horton and Horton, pp. 41-43.

⁸⁴ Registry, Book 435:171.

⁸⁵ Minutes of the Boston Baptist Association, 1838. Horton and Horton incorrectly begin the quotation with “The name”

⁸⁶ Levesque, p. 506.

⁸⁷ Minutes of the Boston Baptist Association.

⁸⁸ See footnote 81.

⁸⁹ Levesque, p. 512.

⁹⁰ Minutes of the Boston Baptist Association.

⁹¹ “Historical Sketch (1975).”

loss of many of their members by emigration into the country.”⁹² However, the black congregation of the First Independent Church was probably reduced less by emigration and more by competition: by 1860, there were five other black churches in Boston.⁹³

The old Boston Baptist Association reorganized in 1848, dividing into a north and a south branch. The Independent Baptist Church became affiliated with the Boston South Baptist Association, which continued to issue minutes in the same manner as had the old Boston Baptist Association. The next year, the Independent Church submitted its church history, which was printed at the end of the Boston South Baptist Association minutes for that year.⁹⁴ Unfortunately, very little mention is made of their building in this history.

⁹² Annual Reports of the Massachusetts Baptist Convention, 1824-1854.

⁹³ Horton and Horton, pp. 4, 43.

⁹⁴ Minutes of the Boston South Baptist Association, 1849-1867.

THE YEARS 1852-1897

Fund-Raising for Renovations

A serious effort was begun in 1852 to raise funds to repair the African Meeting House, then known as the “First Independent Baptist Church and Society in Boston.” The Massachusetts Baptist Convention summarized in their annual report that “The Independent Church, Boston, are trying to repair their house, and have a strong claim upon their brethren for help.”⁹⁵

An appeal to the public for funds was prepared in June 1852, which stated in part:

The church at this time finds the meetinghouse to be very much in want of repair, and in quite a dilapidated state, from the fact that when the house was built, the windows and a greater portion of the timber had been in use for years before, in the Rev. Dr. Lowell’s Church, which they were at that time repairing, consequently it is very much decayed. . . . It is estimated that the repairs will cost about Twenty-Five Hundred Dollars.⁹⁶

The appeal was endorsed by several people, one of whom stated that “the repairs proposed . . . would contribute greatly to the comfort of the congregation there.”⁹⁷

This appeal does not appear to have been published until August 1853, however: printed on the same sheet as the appeal is a section clearly written in August 1853, and so dated. It seems that little money was raised in the intervening period: the 1853 section of the appeal refers in part to “The church, wishing . . . to have the work [of fund-raising] commence immediately.”⁹⁸

One likely explanation for this delay was the disruption of church life caused by the enforcement of the Fugitive Slave Law in Boston in 1852. The effect of this law on the Independent Church is described in a resolution passed by the Boston South Baptist Association, viz:

Resolved, that we deeply sympathize with our brethren of the Independent Church in their sufferings and trials from the operation of the Fugitive Slave

⁹⁵ Annual Reports of the Massachusetts Baptist Convention, 1824-1854.

⁹⁶ First Independent Baptist Church, “To the Public.”

⁹⁷ See footnote 90.

⁹⁸ See footnote 90.

Law, by which some of their leading members have been obliged to flee to Canada for protection.⁹⁹

The Rev. Dr. Lowell, retired pastor of the West Church, learned of the remodeling plans proposed by the Independent Church, and attempted to rescue the pulpit that had formerly been in the old West Church:

I heard in my retirement that the Society were about to remodel their house, and fearing that the pulpit with which so many interesting associations were connected would be destroyed, I expressed a wish to my physician (Dr. Shattuck) that the pulpit might be rescued from destruction, and secured by purchase to the parish to which it had originally belonged!¹⁰⁰

By 1855, the church apparently had collected enough money to begin repair work. This can be inferred from a document filed March 1, 1855, by the deacons of the Independent Baptist Church in an effort to repossess officially the basement schoolroom from the Infant School Association. This "Evidence of Possession" document stated that:

Whereas it is expedient that some alterations and repairs now necessary should be made. . . . Therefore . . . Deacons of this Church, be authorized . . . to enter upon and into said Basement Room and School Room, and take possession thereof . . . and to make such convenient and necessary alterations in the staircase and otherwise and cause such repairs to be made on the premises as they think necessary and proper. . . . The Church resolves to take the foregoing measure . . . under the circumstances and neglect which have heretofore existed, and now exist, they expressly declare that they have no hostile feelings towards said Association.¹⁰¹

Architectural Alterations

Renovation of the meetinghouse was completed in 1855, as was reported by the Massachusetts Baptist Convention: "the Independent Church in Boston made extensive repairs on their house of worship."¹⁰² Concerning these renovations, William C. Nell made the following

⁹⁹ Minutes of the Boston South Baptist Association, 1849-1867.

¹⁰⁰ Boston *Christian Register*, October 6, 1853.

¹⁰¹ Registry, Book 676:302.

¹⁰² Annual Reports of the Massachusetts Baptist Convention, 1851-1860.

remarks at a meeting of the First Independent Baptist Female Society on Friday evening, October 8, 1858:

Modern improvements have converted Belknap Street church and its vestry into acceptable audience-rooms [sic], and which with the Twelfth Baptist Church . . . are ample for the meetings necessary in this locality.¹⁰³

The meeting took place in the “vestry” of the meetinghouse, about which Nell commented:

Several friends now present, with myself, assembled here for most if not all the schooling we ever received, many of whom in this very room passed through the primary and intermediate classes.¹⁰⁴

Nell also mentioned the old West Church pulpit that the Rev. Dr. Lowell had attempted to save prior to the 1855 renovations:

Through some procrastination, this purpose . . . was not accomplished, and the pulpit has, ere this, been consigned to the shades of oblivion, with the exception of some portions retained as relics.¹⁰⁵

A photograph taken by Josiah Johnson Hawes (fig. 5) shows the exterior of the meetinghouse as it probably appeared soon after renovations in 1855.¹⁰⁶ Hawes took a number of photographs that have been dated to “between the middle 1850’s and middle 1880’s” by Homer; the view that is figure 5 has been dated to “about 1860.”¹⁰⁷ This date is supported by independent historical research on the buildings adjacent to the meetinghouse. Figure 5 shows a two-story building to the right of the meetinghouse, which was built in 1853.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰³ Garrison, “Decade Meeting.”

¹⁰⁴ See footnote 97.

¹⁰⁵ See footnote 97.

¹⁰⁶ Rachel J. Homer, ed., *The Legacy of Josiah Johnson Hawes’ 19th Century Photographs of Boston* (Barre, MA: Barre Publishers, 1972), p. 42.

¹⁰⁷ Homer, p. 9.

¹⁰⁸ Rosebrock; Detwiller, “African Meeting House,” between pp. 16-17.



Figure 5. First Independent Baptist Church (circa 1860).

The Hawes photograph, compared with the engraving of 1843, shows that while some original (1806) architectural elements remained unchanged in 1855, a large number of them were altered. For example, the cornice seen in the 1843 engraving is projecting and elaborate, while the one seen in the ca.-1860 photograph is very plain. This may mean that the 1806 cornice was constructed of wood and removed in 1855, or simply that the engraving was inaccurate in depicting the cornice. A downspout for a gutter appears in the photograph, at the west end of the north (front) elevation.

The two original ground-level doorways on the north elevation, located in the outer two of the four blind arches on this elevation, were bricked up in 1855. Two new doorways were created in the center two blind arches, where two windows had been located originally. Each doorway had a pair of two-panel doors set deep into the brick wall. A small opening in the brickwork surrounding the west doorway may have been a fresh-air intake for the basement furnace. A gas lamp was installed between the doorways; the vertical pipe seen in the photograph below the lamp indicates that the gas was supplied from the street. A commemorative stone plaque honoring Cato Gardner can be seen between the doorways, near the lamp supports. The original doorway at the north end of the east elevation appears to have remained unchanged in 1855.

The second- and third-story windows on the north elevation were enlarged in 1855 into two-story, arched windows. The second- and third-story windows on the east elevation were lengthened slightly; although those seen in the photograph closely resemble the six-over-six windows seen in the engraving, careful study of the photograph shows them to be slightly longer, and mortar patching can be seen on the lower brick window jambs.

The window sills on both north and east elevations are the same in both the engraving and the photograph—plain, squared, and probably of wood. (These sills were described as being of wood by the Historic American Buildings Survey drawings done of the building in 1934.) The 1843 engraving shows window lintels on both elevations, but the photograph shows them only on the north elevation. This may mean that the east-elevation lintels were removed in 1855, or simply that the engraving erred in including them.

Interior shutters of louvered and bi-fold design are seen at all windows in the ca.-1860 photograph. Since all of these windows appear to have been altered in 1855, it is thought that the shutters also date to that time.

The ca.-1860 photograph also shows a front sidewalk of brick, with cut stone curbing, and a board fence extending eastward from the northeast corner of the building. The fence is not seen in the 1843 engraving, and so probably dates to 1855. It includes a gate that appears to be a cut-down four-panel door—perhaps one of the 1806 exterior doors, altered and reused in this location.¹⁰⁹

The exterior brickwork seen in the ca.-1860 photograph does not appear to be painted, while the window casings, window sills, and the cornice board on the gable end appear to be a light color. The absence of paint on the brick walls is indicated by the ability to discern the mortar patches on the lower window jambs of the east elevation. Had the building been painted, these patches probably would not have been visible in the photograph.

¹⁰⁹ Detwiller, "African Meeting House," p. 18.

No documentary or photographic evidence exists for changes made to interior spaces in 1855. As will be described in Chapter III, these were quite extensive. Nevertheless, the church's Sunday school appears to have continued to function without interruption during the work. As stated earlier, the minutes of the Boston South Baptist Association began in 1853 to include the minutes of the Sabbath School Teacher's Association, which gave statistics for member churches' Sunday schools. These indicate that in 1853, the Independent Church had a "Sabbath School" consisting of 14 classes, 70 scholars, 14 teachers, and 400 volumes in the library.¹¹⁰ It is possible that the school made use of the basement schoolroom, even though that room had been conveyed "forever" to the Infant School Association in 1837.¹¹¹ The Infant School Association had not used the room since 1840, and the association itself had been discontinued in 1850.¹¹² The "minister's rooms" in the basement also may have been used for Sabbath School classes, although—as previously mentioned—the rental of these rooms may have resumed circa 1850.

The annual letter from the Independent Baptist Church for 1855, summarized in the minutes of the Sabbath School Teacher's Convention, makes no mention of disruption due to renovations of the basement area, or to the new facilities provided as a result of the work. The letter reports only that:

The loss and the want of teachers is doubtless the great reason why we are not in a more prosperous condition than we were last year. . . . Our school is orderly, and we can say that much better attention is paid to getting their lessons.¹¹³

Post-1855 Changes

For the 10-year period 1856-1866, written documentation on the meetinghouse is limited primarily to the minutes of the Sabbath School Teacher's Convention and membership records. Enrollment in the Sunday school continued to decline after 1854, with the exception of a brief resurgence in 1860. The declining number of scholars in 1862 was attributed to some of their young men leaving and "rendering efficient service to our Army of the Potomac."¹¹⁴ By 1864, the number of volumes in the Sunday school library dropped from a high of 500 to a low of 100, because the church "sent many of our books that had been read, to the freedmen of the South."¹¹⁵

¹¹⁰ Minutes of the Sabbath School Teacher's Convention, 1853.

¹¹¹ Registry, Book 423:102.

¹¹² Registry, Book 676:302.

¹¹³ Minutes of the Sabbath School Teacher's Convention, 1855.

¹¹⁴ Minutes of the Sabbath School Teacher's Convention, 1862.

¹¹⁵ Minutes of the Sabbath School Teacher's Convention, 1864.

In this time period, church membership fluctuated from a low of 115 members in 1856 to a high of 205 members in 1862. Three different pastors occupied the pulpit.¹¹⁶

In the next 10 years, the largest number of members in the history of the Independent Baptist Church and the meetinghouse was reached: 298, in 1874.¹¹⁷ This apparently was related to the great popularity of the Rev. Alexander Ellis, who came to the church in 1869. Ellis left in 1876, along with 42 members of the church to found the Day Star Church (Morning Star).¹¹⁸

A photograph of the meetinghouse taken about 1875 (fig. 6) shows us what the building exterior looked like at that time.¹¹⁹ As with the ca.-1860 view, the photograph is difficult to date precisely based on the surrounding buildings. However, it obviously postdates circa 1860, because of alterations to the building and various signs of deterioration. Two black women are included in the photograph, one standing in front of the meetinghouse and one on the steps of the adjacent building. This probably indicates a pre-1898 date, before the neighborhood became primarily Jewish and the meetinghouse was sold by the black Baptist Church.

The ca.-1875 photograph shows that a number of changes occurred to the meetinghouse after circa 1860. The board fence is seen to have been raised, piecemeal, and the gate removed. The fence appears to be in a dilapidated condition. Deteriorating brick is seen on the east elevation, beneath the sill of the northernmost third-story window. The lower section of the north-elevation downspout is missing. The small hole in the brickwork surrounding the west doorway on the north elevation has been filled in. The brick walls appear to have been painted by this time, since the window-jamb patches are almost indistinguishable, and the brick walls are mottled where some paint has weathered off. Another, more subtle change concerns the exterior gas lamp, which has received a different-style hood. The rest of the lamp appears to have remained the same and the gas line still runs from the street.

¹¹⁶ Minutes of the Boston South Baptist Association, 1849-1867 and 1868-1898.

¹¹⁷ See footnote 110.

¹¹⁸ "Historical Sketch (1975)."

¹¹⁹ Detwiller, "African Meeting House," between pp. 25-26.

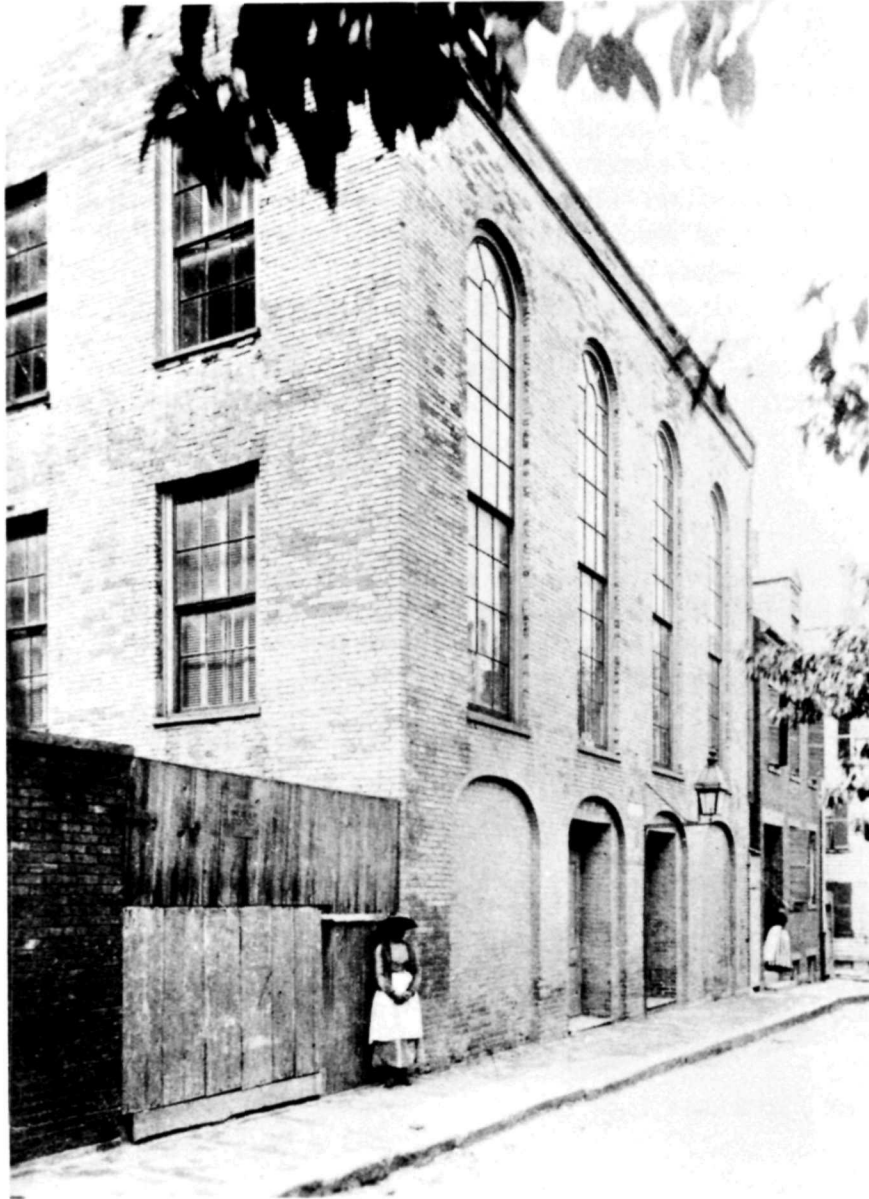


Figure 6. First Independent Baptist Church (circa 1875).

In 1883, the 152 members of the “First Independent Church and Society in Boston” changed its name to “St. Paul Baptist Church.”¹²⁰ It continued to be a member of the Boston South Baptist Association, but in 1893, the association reorganized, and St. Paul’s became affiliated with the Boston West Baptist Association.¹²¹ Fortunately for the purposes of this report, the new West Baptist Association continued to issue minutes in the same manner as had the South Baptist Association.

By 1884, the minutes of the Boston South Baptist Association began to include a detailed accounting of financial statistics for member churches. In 1890, “Home Expenses” for St. Paul Church had increased \$1,305 from the previous year—a significant amount that is unfortunately not further defined. Conceivably, some of this amount could have been spent on the building. In 1892, the minutes’ financial tables began to include a new category for “building or repairing.” This category appears—under the title “Church Building Repairs and Improvements”—in the minutes of the new Boston West Baptist Association for 1893 and thereafter. St. Paul’s can be seen to have spent no money in this category from 1892 to 1897, except for \$76.50 in 1893. Although no details are known about the work done in 1893, it did not increase the stated property value of the meetinghouse property, which remained at \$22,000 from 1892 to 1897, with the building being valued at \$10,000.¹²²

¹²⁰ Minutes of the Boston South Baptist Association, 1868-1898.

¹²¹ Minutes of the Boston West Baptist Association, 1893-1917.

¹²² Annual Reports of the Massachusetts Baptist Convention, 1881-1890 and 1891-1894; minutes of the Boston South Baptist Association, 1868-1898; minutes of the Boston West Baptist Association, 1893-1917.

THE YEARS 1898-1971

The End of Black Ownership

By 1898, St. Paul Baptist Church was in need of new quarters:

Owing to the increase of its membership, the majority of whom were living at the South End, . . . [the church] decided that, as the building on Smith Ct. was not large enough, it should be sold and the society move to its present place of worship on Camden st.¹²³

The meetinghouse on Smith Court was purchased on November 10, 1898, by Samuel Tarplin for \$11,000.¹²⁴ A mortgage for \$11,000 was granted to Tarplin that same day by Kendall Taylor, one of the trustees of St. Paul Baptist Church. In the mortgage deed, Tarplin specified his schedule of payments to Taylor. In addition, Tarplin agreed:

I will, or my heirs or assigns shall begin on or before the twentieth (20th) day of November current to improve the buildings on the granted premises and shall within two months thereafter expend upon and improve said buildings to the extent and value of not less than two thousand dollars.¹²⁵

Taylor in turn transferred the mortgage and deed to the Benevolent Fraternity of Churches of Boston in 1898, and the Benevolent Fraternity transferred the mortgage and deed to the North End Savings Bank in 1899.¹²⁶

Samuel Tarplin is listed in the 1898 *City Directory* as being in "real estate," and he may have purchased the meetinghouse as an income property. A Jewish congregation new to Boston, the Anshe Stonier, is listed in the 1899 *City Directory* as being located at "3 Smith Ct." Since there is no other church building on Smith Court, and since the street numbering system appears to have changed over the years, this no doubt referred to the meetinghouse. The following year, a different Jewish congregation—Anshe Zytomir—is listed at this address; it remained there through 1903. Tarplin most likely rented the building to these groups.

¹²³ "Began with Twenty Members."

¹²⁴ Registry, Book 2566:305.

¹²⁵ See footnote 118.

¹²⁶ Registry, Books 2573:310 and 2640:112.

In 1903, an agent of the North End Savings Bank reported that Samuel Tarplin had defaulted on his mortgage, and that the property “with the church building thereon” would be sold at public auction on December 12, 1903. Notice of the auction was published in at least one newspaper, the *Boston Traveler*, on November 21 and 28, and December 5. The auction on December 12 was adjourned to Monday, December 21, for unspecified reasons. On December 21, the property was sold to Charles C. Barry of Melrose for \$4,900.¹²⁷ Barry, who may have been acting as an agent, immediately transferred the property “in consideration of \$1” to Max Solomon of Malden and Barnard Weinberg of Boston. Solomon and Weinberg obtained mortgages from the St. Paul Baptist Church (\$3,200) and the North End Savings Bank (\$4,500).¹²⁸

In 1904, there is no Jewish organization listed in the *City Directory* at the Smith Court meetinghouse. It is possible that Solomon and Weinberg, who obtained a combined mortgage \$2,800 in excess of the purchase price of the building, planned on making repairs and/or renovations. Max Solomon experienced financial difficulties, however, and declared bankruptcy in mid-1904. One-half interest in the Smith Court property was conveyed to David Stern, who dealt in real estate, for \$125.¹²⁹ That same month, Weinberg mortgaged his half interest in the property to Stern for \$200. The building at that time was “now numbered 2 on Smith Ct.”¹³⁰ The property changed hands once again when carpenter Simon Dobkin purchased David Stern’s half interest, and Weinberg and Solomon’s half interest (subject to three mortgages), for \$1 each in July 1904.¹³¹ Dobkin undertook immediately to register the land.¹³²

The Congregation Anshi Libavitz

Being a carpenter, Simon Dobkin may have purchased the building in 1904 with the intention of repairing it and selling it at a profit. In fact, certificate of title on the land was officially transferred only four months later—in November 1904—to the Jewish Congregation Anshi “Libaviz.”¹³³ This name is found in the documentation also spelled, “Libavitz,” “Libovitz,” “Libawitz,” “Lebavitz,” “Lebawich,” “Lebovitz,” and “Labavit.” The most common spelling appears to be “Libavitz,” which will be used throughout the rest of this report.

¹²⁷ Registry, Book 2940:562.

¹²⁸ Registry, Book 2940:563, 565, 568.

¹²⁹ Registry, Book 2980:90; 1904 *City Directory*.

¹³⁰ Registry, Book 2976:177.

¹³¹ Registry, Book 2980:92; 1904 *City Directory*.

¹³² Registry, Book 2985:430, and Land Registration Book 3:123, Cert. #723.

¹³³ Registry, Land Registration Book 3:127, Cert. #723.

Since the Congregation Anshi Libavitz purchased the meetinghouse in 1904, one would assume that it occupied the building after that time. The city directories, however, are confusing on this point. From 1899 to 1901, Anshi Libavitz is listed at 188 Hanover Street. It does not appear in any city directory again until 1927. Rather, "Adath Jesura Nusach Ari" is listed at "Joy, cor. Smith Ct." from 1905 to 1907; at "2 Smith Ct." from 1908 to 1914; and at "8 Smith Ct." from 1915 to 1926. All of these addresses probably refer to the meetinghouse. Both "Adath Jesura Nusach Ari" and the Congregation Libavitz are listed at "8 Smith Ct." from 1927 to 1932. Anshi Libavitz alone is listed at "8 Smith Ct." after 1932.

While it may appear from the city directories that the "Adath Jesura Nusach Ari" occupied the Smith Court meetinghouse from 1905 to 1926, and shared the building with the Congregation Libavitz from 1927 to 1932, in fact the two groups are most likely one and the same. Anshi Libavitz, translated from Yiddish to English, means "the men of Libavitz." "Adath Jesura Nusach Ari" means "The Congregation Which Prays According to the Ari Rituals."¹³⁴ This term could have been one way of describing the Congregation Libavitz. Also, the minute book for the years 1908-1914 of the Congregation Libavitz, which purchased the meetinghouse in 1904, makes no mention of leasing the building or sharing it with another congregation.

In conclusion, the documentation suggests that the Congregation Libavitz prayed "according to the Ari Rituals" from circa 1905 to at least 1932, and occupied the African Meeting House from 1905 until the 1970's.

The earliest extant record book of the Congregation Libavitz is a minute book for the period November 1907 (almost exactly three years after the congregation purchased the meetinghouse) to November 1914. Entries made in this book that refer specifically to the building have been translated from Yiddish to English. Major renovations appear to have been made during this time period, including the installation of electricity in 1908, and perhaps additional electrical work in 1911, and unspecified work of major proportions in 1912. The entries for these years are summarized below:

- 1907 Utility expenses include bills for gas and coal
- 1908 Electric lighting installed during the summer. Gas bills decrease after installation, but do not disappear (e.g., Nov. 17, 1907 - \$6.10 vs. Dec. 20, 1908 - \$3.04)
Plumbing job (no details - \$20.)
- 1909 Roofing job, \$15 (March)
Sidewalk repaired, \$10.15 (July)
Sewage system repaired, \$81 (August)
- 1910 Floor repaired in the hallway
Fence installed along eastern boundary across from new building (total cost for floor and fence - \$30)

¹³⁴ Translator David Fishman to Barbara Pearson, May 6, 1982.

- 1911 Roofing, \$30.00
Fixing electrical system, \$105.81 (this may have been an extension of the existing system)
- 1912 Unspecified work done throughout the summer and fall. Committee on Repairs appointed to oversee alterations and repairs. Three-year extension granted on \$4,500 North End Savings Bank mortgage, and second mortgage for \$1,500 taken out.¹³⁵ Synagogue funds transferred to committee. Building committee records have not survived
Carpentry, \$37 (July)
All reparations [sic] completed by minutes of November 10
- 1913 Platform for the cantor and reading of the Torah reconstructed (total for lumber, carpentry, and painting, \$233.89)
- 1914 Bills for coal reappear after 2-year absence
Window repaired, \$15

The next records of the Congregation Libavitz, written in Yiddish, are the minute books spanning the years 1923 to 1936, and the cash books covering 1930 to 1946. These books were not reviewed by anyone familiar with Yiddish for this study; as recommended in Chapter I, they should be translated into English. Other sources researched for this time period included the building records that are part of the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS), and magazine articles.

The records of the City of Boston Building Department in 1915 cite an unspecified building violation concerning a one-story building at the rear of 8 Smith Court. This building may very well be the “shed” shown on the 1934 HABS drawings in the southwest backyard. The shed depicted in 1934 may have been the remains of a longer “slate clad” shed shown on the *Boston City Atlas* of 1873, corrected to 1882.¹³⁶ The Congregation Libavitz acquired the land on which the shed stood in 1909.¹³⁷ Neighborhood residents remembered that an oil tank was located in the shed.¹³⁸

The earliest known architectural drawings of the meetinghouse are the HABS drawings done in 1934 (figs. 7-9). Exterior photographs also were taken by HABS, in 1937 (e.g., fig. 10). Those photographs taken from the same location as the 1843 engraving, and the ca.-1860 and ca.-1875 photographs, show that a number of changes had occurred to the building since circa 1875.

¹³⁵ Registry, Book 3657:301-302.

¹³⁶ Detwiller, “African Meeting House,” between pp. 16-17.

¹³⁷ Registry, Book 3426:553.

¹³⁸ Bower, pp. 16-17, 19.

On the north elevation, the two-panel doors of the two double doorways had been changed to four-panel doors with two-light transoms. The doors had also been repositioned, so as to be flush with the exterior surface of the brick wall. The two-story windows had been divided by a middle spandrel and fitted with new, double-hung sashes containing stained glass. The gas lamp was removed, and replaced by an electric fixture above the left doorway. The arched lintels above the doorways of the blind arches and the two-story arched windows were painted a light color. On the east elevation, a vertical sewer pipe and a board sign were added. The wood sill of the upper-story window, right side, was replaced by bricks. The board fence also had been altered, and the interior louvered blinds removed.

The earliest interior photographs of the meetinghouse are those taken by HABS at the same time the exterior was photographed, in 1937 (figs. 11-17). While no photographs of the first-story entry or basement rooms are included, the 1934 HABS floor plan of this area gives us an idea of the layout and some materials used. The first story was divided into an entrance lobby, two toilets (located beneath the stairs), an office, a "heater room," and a large meeting room. The walls in the meeting room are described as "beaded sheathing painted." The upstairs was divided into a front foyer and a main sanctuary with apse and U-shaped gallery.

By the early 1940's, the fortunes of the Congregation Libavitz had begun to decline. A contemporaneous account says that the congregation had "fallen on famine days. Its constituency from the north and west ends [had] moved to more modern districts of the city."¹³⁹ This may have been somewhat of an overstatement, since the congregation continued to occupy the meetinghouse for another 30 years. It does, however, provide a sense of the financial limitations that affected the upkeep of the meetinghouse for those three decades.

¹³⁹ Friedman, p. 1.

Figure 7. "Abolition Church," Plans of Basement, Main Story, and Balcony (1934).

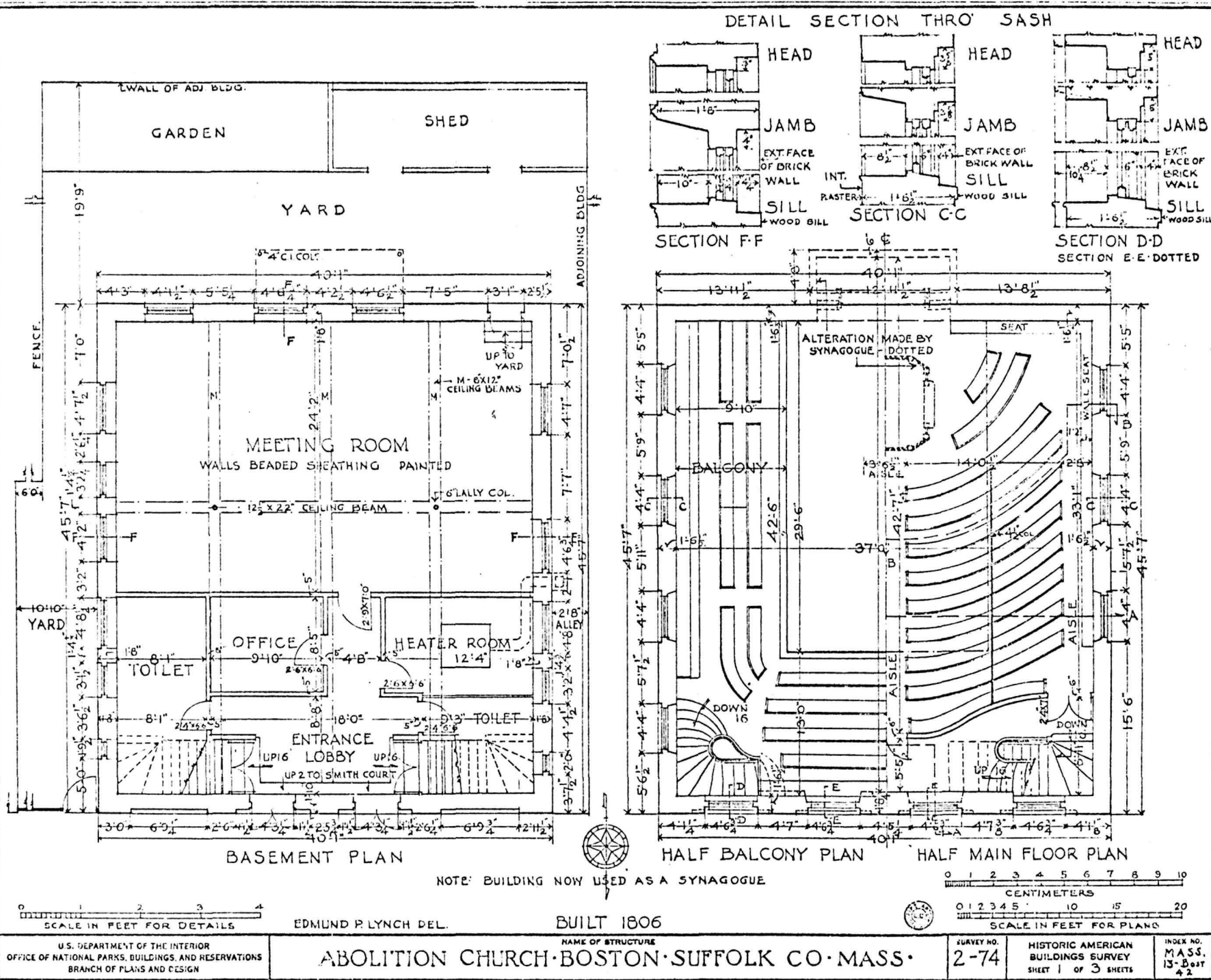


Figure 8. "Abolition Church," East and North Elevations, and Details of Main Cornice, Entrance Doors, and Stone Tablet (1934).

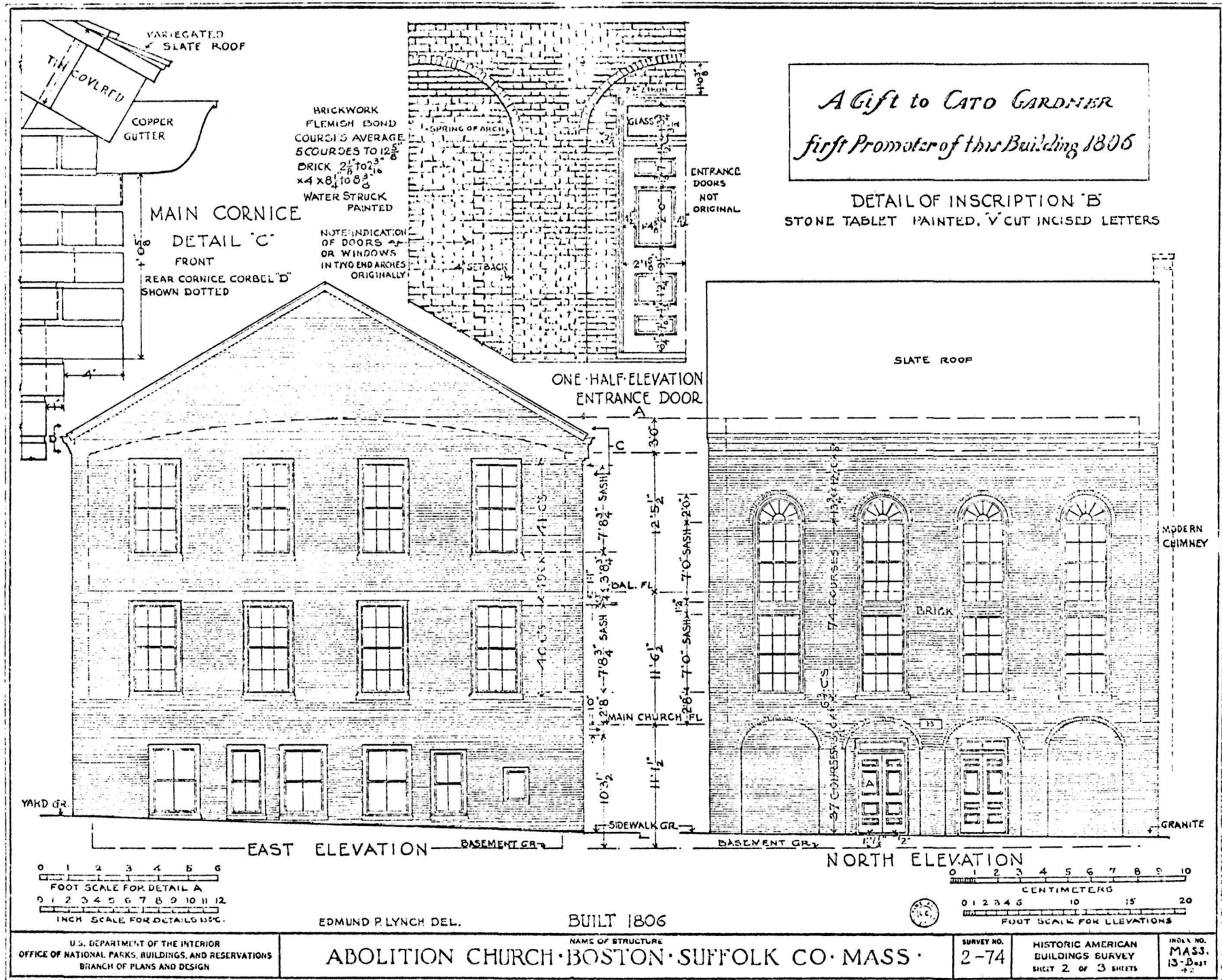
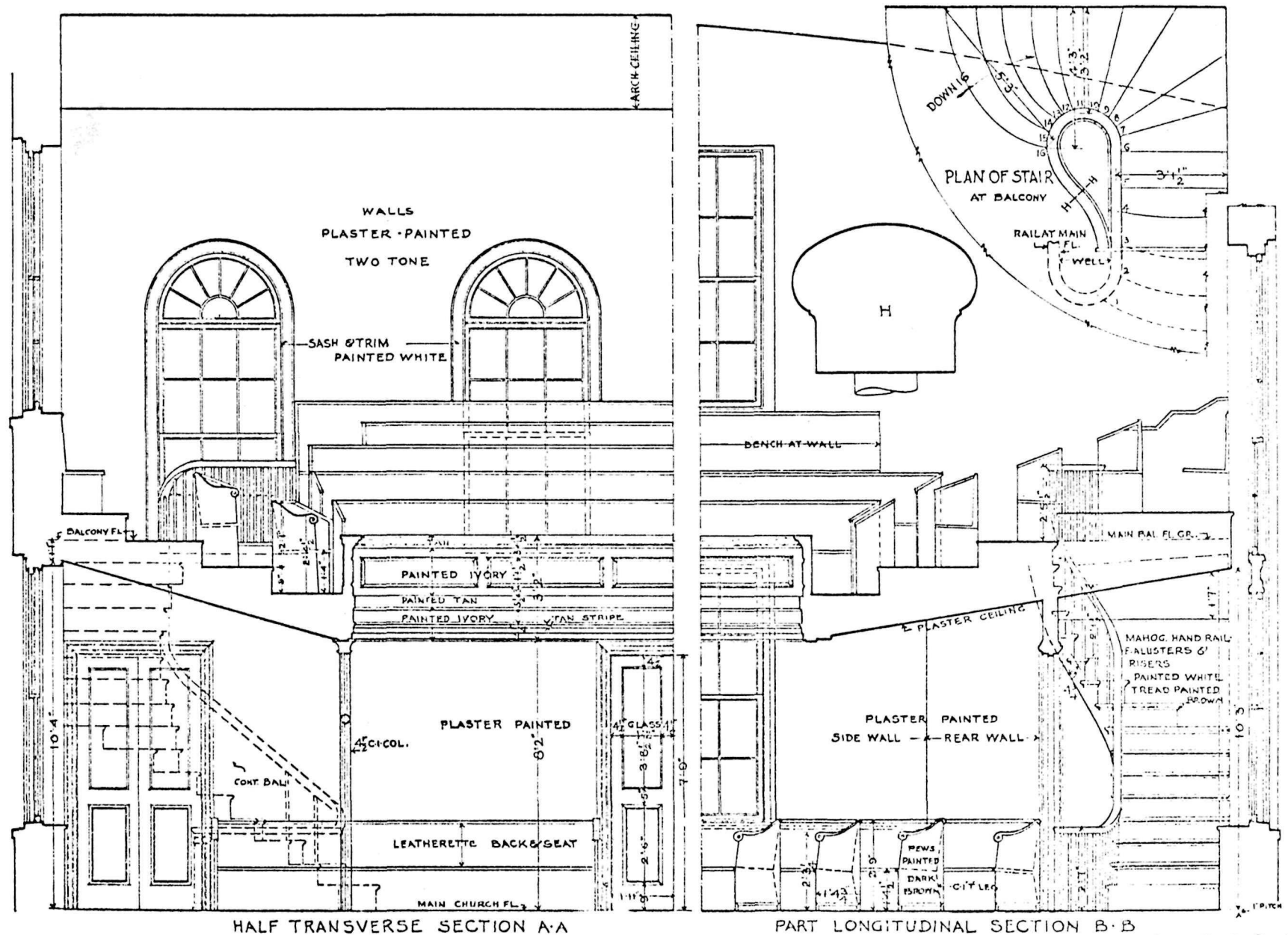


Figure 9. "Abolition Church," Half Transverse and Longitudinal Sections, and Plan of Stair (1934).



0 1 2 3 4
INCH SCALE FOR DETAIL H

EDMUND P. LYNCH DEL.

BUILT 1806

NAME OF STRUCTURE
ABOLITION CHURCH · BOSTON · SUFFOLK · CO · MASS ·

SURV. NO.
2-74

HISTORIC AMERICAN
BUILDINGS SURVEY
SHEET 3 OF 3 SHEETS

INDEX NO.
MASS.
13-2037

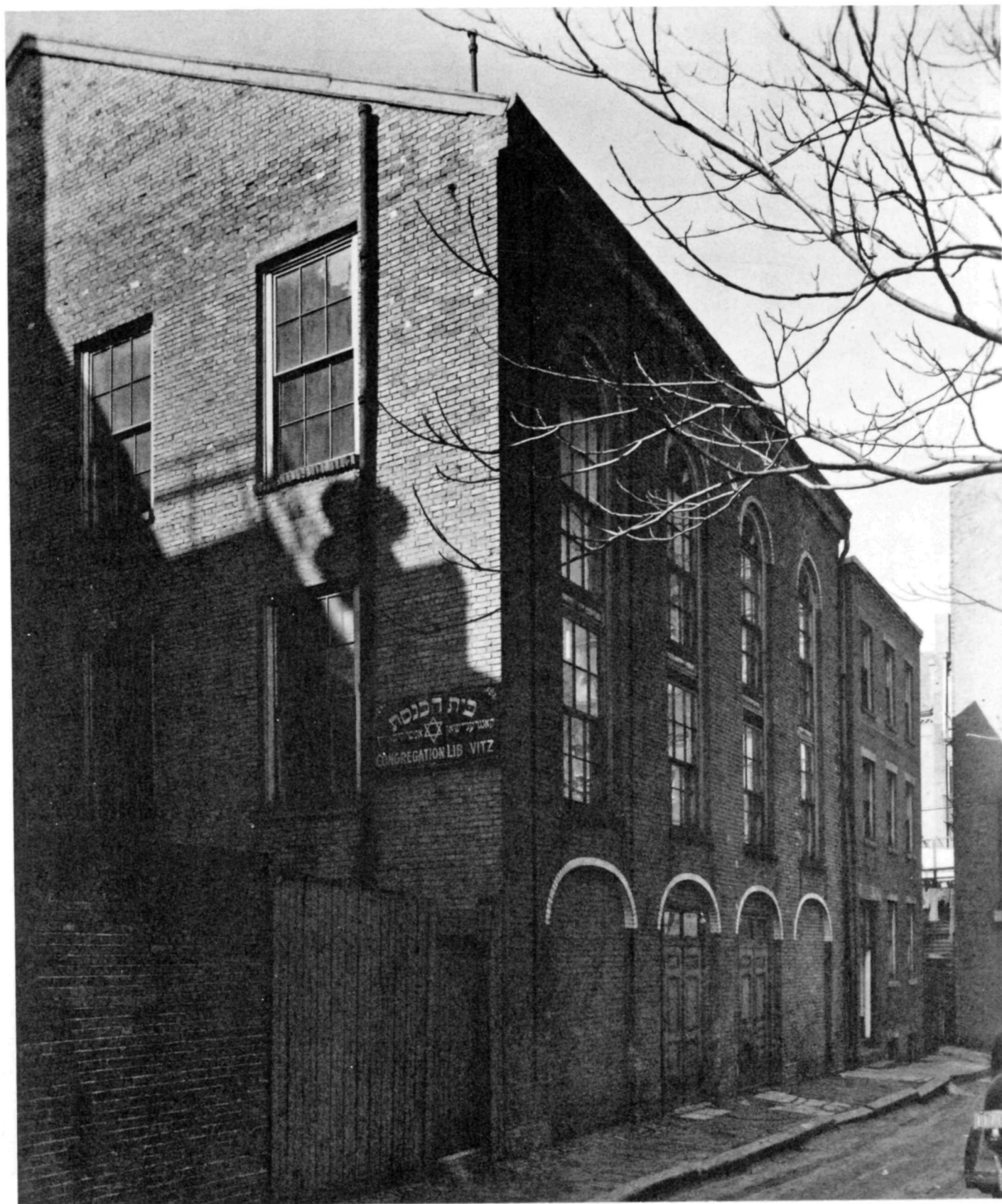


Figure 10. Synagogue of Congregation Libavitz, North and East Elevations (1937).



Figure 11. Interior of Synagogue, West Gallery Stair (1937).



Figure 12. Interior of Synagogue, South Wall of Sanctuary and Gallery (1937).



Figure 13. Interior of Synagogue, Southeast Corner of Sanctuary and Gallery (1937).

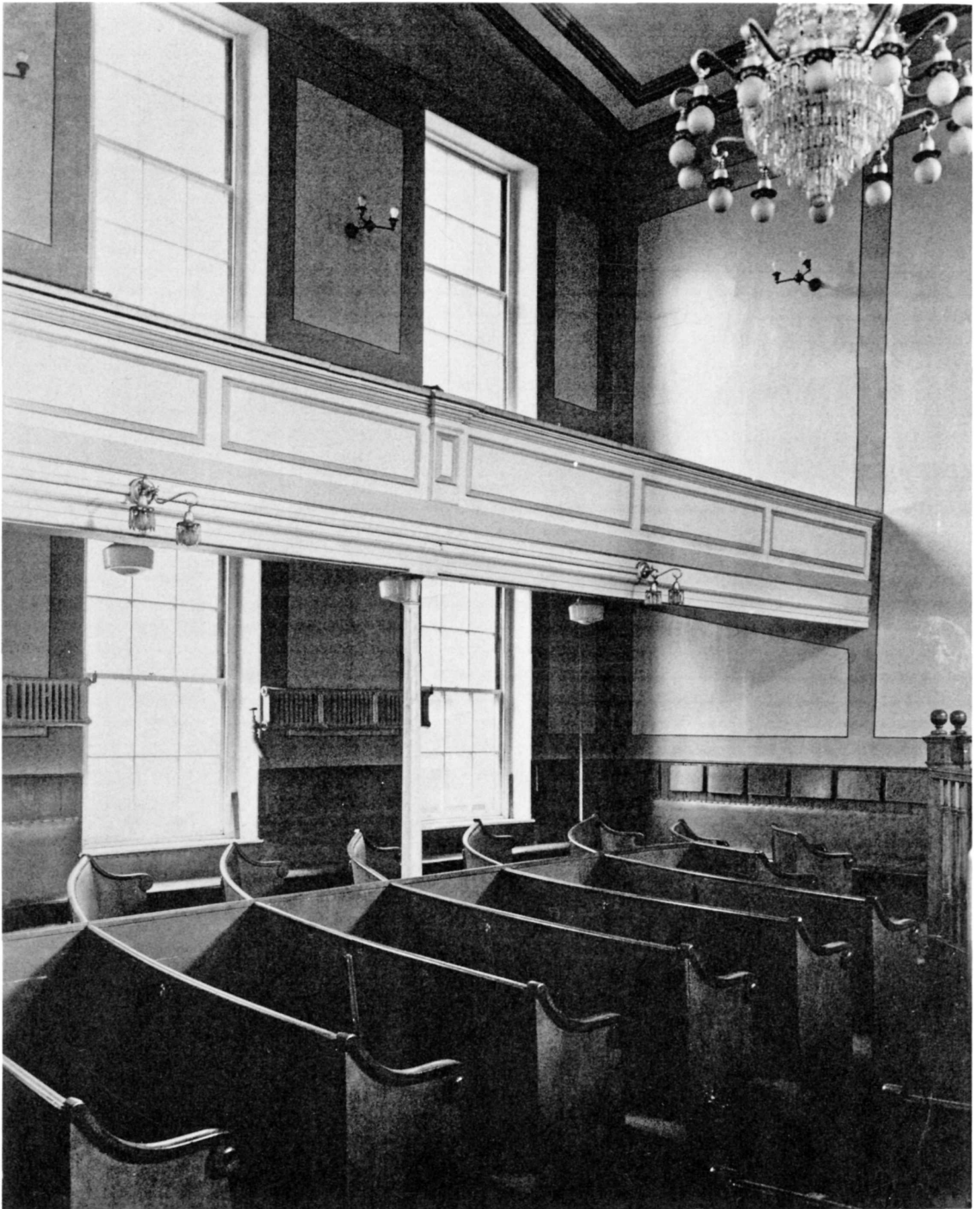


Figure 14. Interior of Synagogue, Southeast Corner of Sanctuary and Gallery (1937).

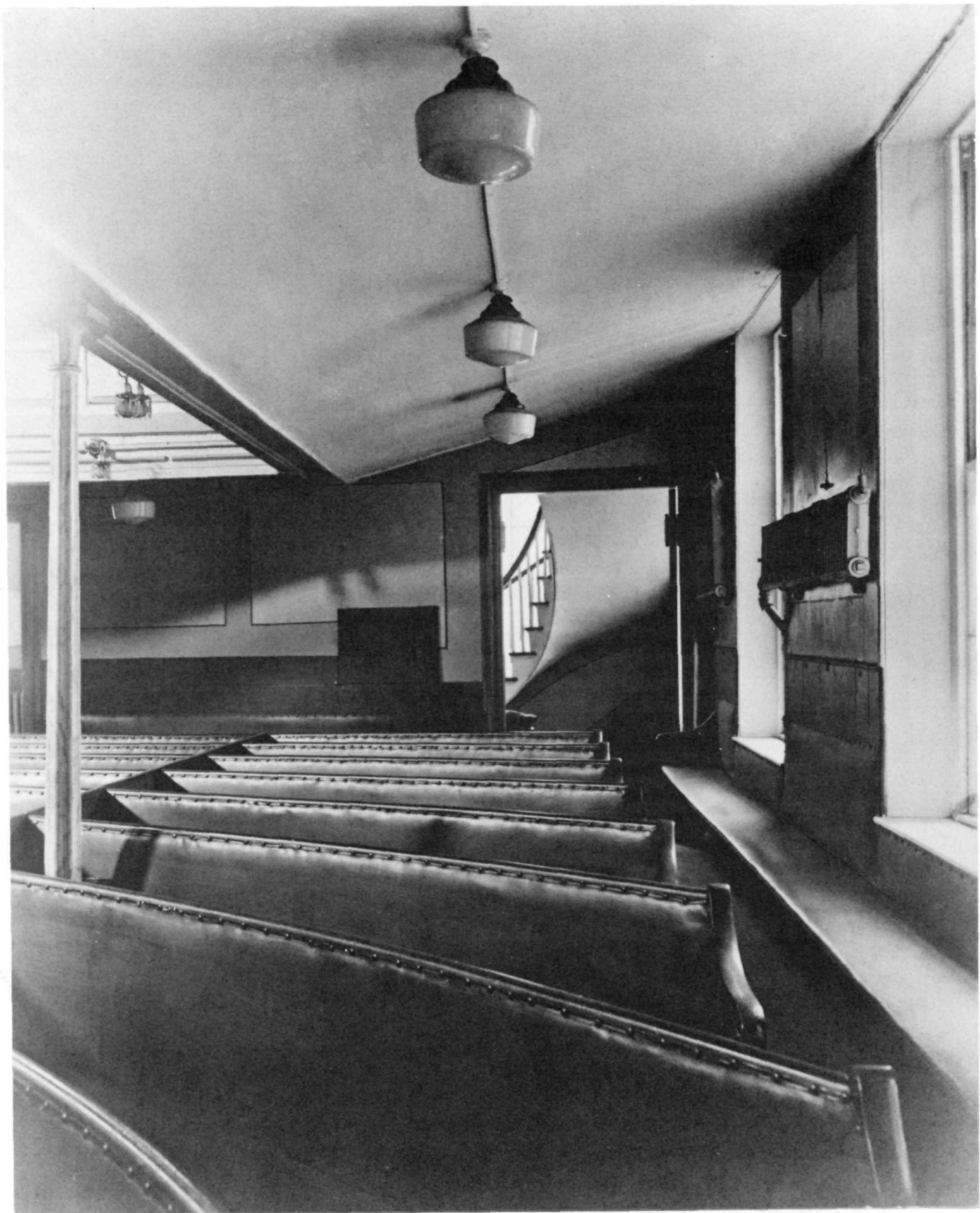


Figure 15. Interior of Synagogue, Northeast Corner of Sanctuary and Gallery (1937).



Figure 16. Interior of Synagogue, Southeast Corner of Sanctuary and Gallery (1937).

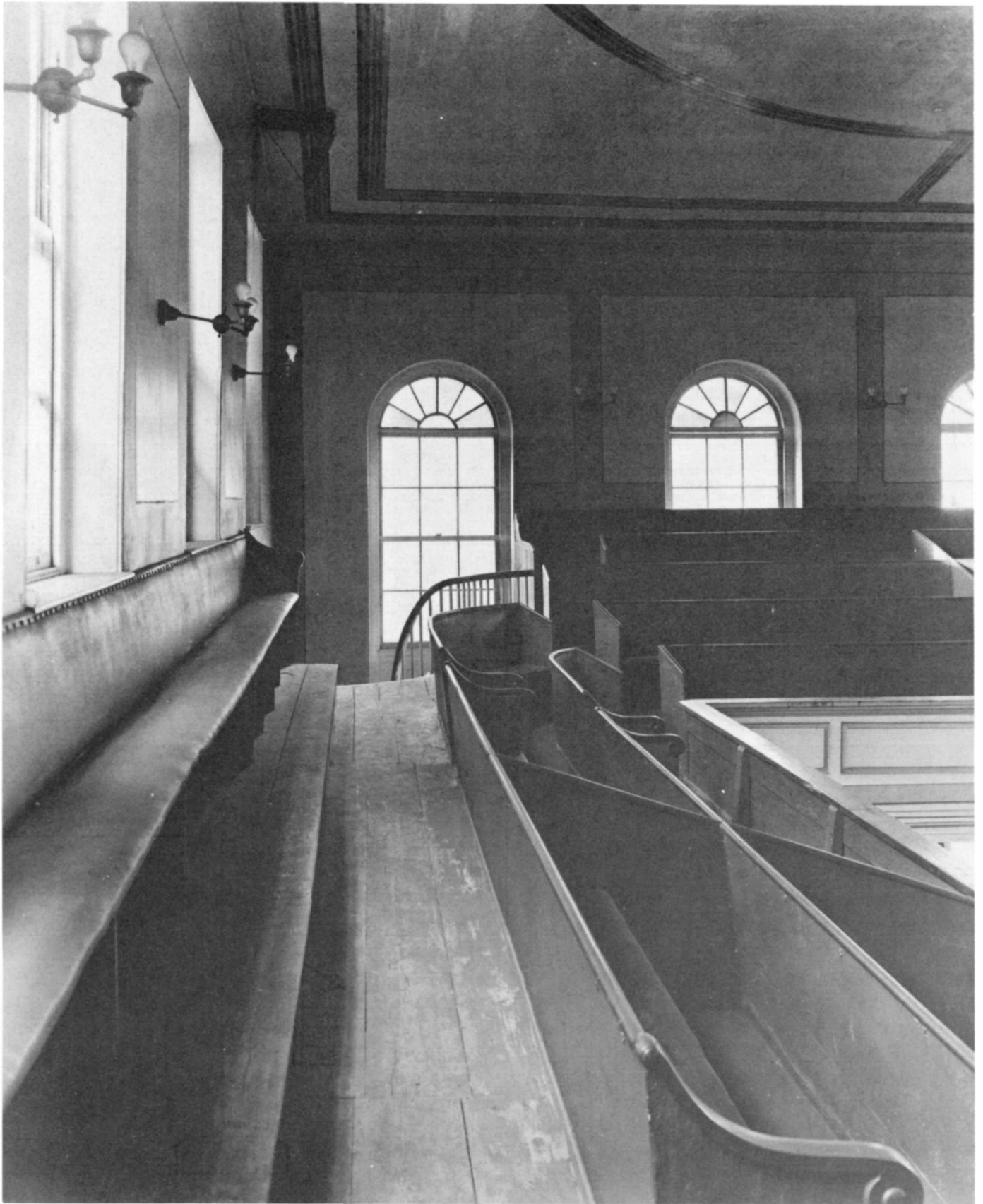


Figure 17. Interior of Sanctuary, Northeast Corner of Gallery (1937).

The cash-book records of the Congregation Libavitz for the years 1943 to 1946 are written in Yiddish; as stated, they were not translated. Selected entries from the 1947-1953 cash books include not only routine maintenance and repair costs, but also extensive painting in 1947, and what appears to be the installation of a new oil-burning furnace in 1948:

1947	Early payments of coal to "Mrs. Feldman coal acct"	
3/2/47	Morris Katy painter in full	1000.00
7/1/47	To roofer on acct.	100.00
12/7/47	2 qts. paint	2.30
8/1/48	Mass. Wharf on acct. "oil bour." [burner?]	300.00
11/7/48	1 pane glass	1.90
	Repair door latch	3.00
	Electrician	1.00
	Roofer paid in full	175.00
	Mass Wharf "oil bour," bal.	390.98
12/5/48	Mass Wharf coal (this may have been for a needy member of the congregation, since in 1947 the congregation had bought its coal from "Mrs. Feldman." Alternatively, the entry could reflect a transition from coal to oil heat in the building.)	10.58
3/6/49	Metal for chimney (probably at furnace flue in basement)	2.25
	Advance to painter	25.00
	Painter paid in full	110.00
4/3/49	City of Boston oil permit	.50
	Electrician for repairs	6.00
3/26/50	Mass Wharf oil	113.20
1/7/51	Atlas Roofing Co.	320.00
3/2/52	Repair window	1.00
	Clean chimney	5.00
2/1/53	Repair floor	28.83

No records have been found for the year 1954. A minute book for the Congregation Libavitz covers the years 1955 to 1964. The congregation by this time had acquired a cemetery with a chapel, and in some cases it is difficult to differentiate whether the meetinghouse or chapel is being referenced in the minutes. Only those entries that specifically refer to the meetinghouse are included here. Work on the building during this period primarily involved repair and redecorating. Probably

due to dwindling membership and finances, the Congregation Libavitz agreed in 1960 to share the building with the Congregation Beth Hamedrosh. This group contributed money for improving the building after 1960.

All of the following entries are from the Congregation Libavitz's 1955-1964 minute book, except as noted:

- | | |
|----------|---|
| 1/26/58 | "The building committee stated that a crack in the ceiling upstairs would have to be repaired" |
| 3/2/58 | "Repairs to the ceiling upstairs were taken up at this time and after a prolonged discussion was tabled" |
| 7/13/58 | "Repairs to the upstairs hall were discussed and the committee will try to have some bids by the next meeting" |
| 8/3/58 | "A communication was received from the Washington Construction Co. relative to repainting and redecorating the upstairs schuol [synagogue]" |
| 8/10/58 | Special Meeting "a motion was made . . . to accept a contract with the Washington Construction Co. for \$2235.00. . . . Terms of payment are to be \$700 to be paid after plastering and rear wall are finished. \$700 more to be paid when the job is completed and final payment is to be made 60 days on completion of the entire job" |
| 10/12/58 | Expenses. Washington Roof Co., \$900 |
| 11/1/59 | "one of the steam pipes upstairs has to be replaced. . . . The Washington Construction Co. [will be contacted]" |
| 3/10/60 | Congregation Libavitz agreed to lease the meetinghouse to the Congregation Beth Hamedrosh ("Russell St. group") for \$100/year |
| 5/1/60 | "Russell St. group [has] agreed to share the expense of painting the downstairs and figures will be asked from one or two other contractors" |
| 7/3/60 | "prices [have been gotten] for repairs to the downstairs floor and the painting" |
| 8/7/60 | "Question of repairs at the schuol [synagogue] were discussed and the necessary arrangements will be made" |
| 12/4/60 | "The question of putting down a tile floor was discussed and the estimated cost will be in the vicinity of \$300.00" |
| 2/12/61 | "The Russell St. group would like to have us consider putting down a tile floor and repairing the steps which lead into the synagogue at a cost somewhere about \$450.00" |

- 3/5/61 "The No. Russell St. school group expect to get their money in the near future and would like to make some improvements in our building"
- 5/7/61 "The No. Russell St. group is already getting different bids from different contractors and we should be hearing about some definite plans soon"
- 6/4/61 "Repairs to the front gutters at our school have to be made"
- 10/1/61 "Discussion on fixing of the toilets and general area said to cost in the vicinity of \$1,000"
- 11/5/61 "general discussion regarding the work to be done and remodeling of our downstairs accommodations"
- 2/4/62 "general discussion regarding the projected future for our synagogue with regard to repair or future renovations"
- 6/17/62 Invoice from Brighton Plumbing Co. for \$620.00 for work in toilet rooms, viz: installing water closets, sink, urinal, and change water pipes¹⁴⁰
- 8/5/62 "The No. Russell St. group had requested that the men's toilet and floors be retiled and had tendered a check for \$600.00 to help defray this expense. The work is in the process of being done. . . . The gutters in the rear of the school should be checked and necessary repairs made"
- 9/9/62 Expenses. Atlas Roofing Co., \$134.50 [probably for gutter repairs]
- 2/3/63 "The question of repair to the front doors of our Congregation was again brought up . . . and tabled"
- 5/5/63 "[Reviewed] three different figures for our projected repairs to the front doors, fence, and floor . . . finalize arrangements with Grossman's of Quincy"
- 6/9/63 "final arrangements . . . consummated with Grossman's for repairs to the school"
- 6/24/63 permission granted to repair 10 ft. board fence, hang 2 pairs exterior doors swing out, level 150 sq. ft. flooring in downstairs area¹⁴¹

¹⁴⁰ Congregation Libavitz, *Miscellaneous Ledger*.

¹⁴¹ Boston Building Department, "Application to the Building Commissioner for Alterations, Repairs, or Change of Occupancy," 6/24/63.

7/14/63 “—reported that Grossman’s had completed most of the work and hoped to see it finalized before July 30th and also that he had painted the fence and doors which had just been installed”
Expenses. \$4.00 gal. paint
 2.20 wall brackets
 2.50 shellac
 1.75 varnish

5/3/64 Washington Construction Co. to make some minor repairs to gutter at 8 Smith Ct.

The record books of the Congregation Libavitz for the years 1965 to 1972 have not been located. However, a building permit issued by the City of Boston in February 1966 states that the congregation planned to “remove about 600 sq. ft. floor, replace rotted floor timbers, and install rough flooring and plywood flooring.”¹⁴² This no doubt referred to the basement floor.

¹⁴² Boston Building Department, 2/16/66.

THE YEARS 1972-1982

In July 1972, the Museum of Afro American History purchased the meetinghouse and adjacent land.¹⁴³ The building became known as the African Meeting House.

Work was planned shortly after purchase of the building to stabilize the unsound roof structure. A permit for this work was obtained from the Boston Building Department on January 11, 1973, by Nicholas, Norton and Zaldastari, consulting engineers for Mitchell, Burditt & Associates, Inc., Architects.¹⁴⁴ During this work, a spark from a worker's welding torch ignited a fire.¹⁴⁵ This fire, which occurred on February 14, 1973, "destroyed the roof of the building. Fortunately the fire was confined to the roof structure with most of the interior architectural detail preserved."¹⁴⁶ Although still in place, the wooden roof trusses were completely burned, and the exterior brick walls were of questionable structural safety.¹⁴⁷ The roofing material at the time of the fire was slate, and the exterior walls of the rear apse were clad with wooden shingles.¹⁴⁸

Plans to enclose the roof after the fire were undertaken immediately. The contractor firm Archibald-Shepherd of Dorchester, working with Mitchell, Burditt & Associates, Inc., obtained a building permit on February 16, 1973, to "remove fire-burned trusses and replace with bracing system" for an estimated cost of \$7,000.¹⁴⁹ A permit for a "new temporary roof" costing an estimated \$4,000 was granted on March 16, 1973.¹⁵⁰

In April 1975, the Boston architectural firm of Bastille-Neiley prepared specifications and drawings for renovation and restoration work at the African Meeting House.¹⁵¹ Contractor John Deary of Weston was granted a building permit on October 27, 1975, that was revised on November 5th. Deary proposed to "remove present temporary roof. Install steel trusses, plaster ceiling, new slate roof with wood framing. Repair or replace missing windows. Construct apse as shown on

¹⁴³ Registry, Book 8548:746, and Land Registration Book 411:192, Cert. #83192.

¹⁴⁴ Boston Building Department, 1/11/73.

¹⁴⁵ Byron Rushing, Director of the Museum of Afro American History, to Barbara Pearson, 5/4/82.

¹⁴⁶ Mitchell, Burditt & Associates, p. 3.

¹⁴⁷ Boston Building Department, 2/16/73.

¹⁴⁸ Rushing to Pearson.

¹⁴⁹ Boston Building Department, 2/16/73.

¹⁵⁰ Boston Building Department, 3/16/73.

¹⁵¹ Copies on file at the Cultural Resources Center, Lowell, MA.

drawings and new fire escape from auditorium level. No mechanical work.”¹⁵² The specifications by Bastille-Neiley also described other work, as cited below.

Exterior Work

- Remove remains of burned apse, including columns (to be reused) and wood floor structure.
- Construct new apse with exit door and metal fire escape.
- Install new lead-coated copper gutters and rain leaders.
- Rebuild tops of brick walls.
- Provide new entrance doors, north elevation.
- Various door and window openings to be either bricked up or opened.
- Mortar used for brickwork to consist of “non-staining Portland cement, hydrated lime, clear washed sand and potable water. Color . . . subject to approval by the Architect.”
- Other site work.

Interior Work

- From basement, remove furniture, misc. debris, boiler, hot water heaters, kitchen equipment, some plumbing fixtures, piping, wiring, partitions, plywood paneling, etc.
- Install new plank subfloor in basement (first story) on existing joists.
- Remove lighting, wiring, miscellaneous debris and steam radiators from sanctuary and balcony.
- Repair and rebuild stairs.
- Check entire structural frame; jack and level floors, strengthen timber frame.

¹⁵² Boston Building Department, 10/27/75 (revised 11/5/75).

- Construct new apse platform.
- Strip extant plaster walls and ceilings.
- Miscellaneous new work/construction.

Some of the work outlined in the 1975 specifications was actually done, but much was not. Work that was completed at this time is described in Chapter III of this report.

In July 1975, while planning for the restoration work was in progress, a report entitled "African Meeting House: An Architectural/Historical Analysis" was prepared for the building. Its author was Frederic C. Detwiller of the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities.

III. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

INTRODUCTION

Analytical References

As indicated in Chapter II, the documentary evidence provides only limited information about the appearance of the African Meeting House at various times in its history. This information has been supplemented here by the results of technical analysis of architectural fabric, particularly paint, wallpaper, mortar and plaster, nails, and other hardware. Whenever samples of these materials have been used to establish a fact about an element, the identification numbers of the samples are cited in the text.

The identification numbers for the samples have been assigned on the basis of the Integrated Research Organization System (IROS) used by the Building Conservation Branch of the Cultural Resources Center. In this system, a typical sample identification number will include a four-letter park code, a one- or two-digit structure code, a letter denoting the type of sample, and a three-digit number unique to that sample. For the African Meeting House, the park code is BOAF, while the structure code is 01. The letter "P" denotes a paint sample; the letter "W" identifies a wallpaper sample; the letter "M" signifies a mortar or plaster sample; and the letter "A" specifies an artifact, such as a nail or hinge. Thus, the sample, "BOAF 01 P001" would be the first paint sample taken at the African Meeting House, while the sample "BOAF 01 M022" would be the 22nd mortar/plaster sample taken there.

Since all of the samples cited in the text are from the meetinghouse, the numbers of the samples have been abbreviated to include only the type and number of the sample (i.e., P001).

Doorway and Window References

During the preparation of this report, numbers were assigned to doorways and windows extant during the historic period. The locations of these openings can be seen in figures 23 and 24. The word "Doorway" is abbreviated as "D," while the letter "W" stands for "Window Opening." Thus, the following text contains references such as "D-101" and "W-112."

ORIGINAL 1806 APPEARANCE

Exterior Elements

Walls

The African Baptist Church as constructed in 1806 was a three-story brick building with a gable roof, judging by early written accounts and the 1843 engraving (fig. 2). It is not known if there was an apse projecting from the south elevation. The exterior brick walls, which remain largely intact today, were of double thickness with a space between. While this space may have been created for insulation purposes, it more likely was intended to prevent condensation on the interior walls. Relieving arches were incorporated into the inner thickness of bricks above the window openings, as can be seen today.

The pattern of the exterior brick walls—then as now—was a combination of Flemish and common bond. Flemish bond was used on the front (north) elevation, and on the highly visible east elevation from the bottom of the second-story windows to the roof. Common bond was used on the basement/first story of the east elevation, and on the rear (south) and west elevations.

Mortar used in the brick walls was a strong mix of approximately one part sand to one part lime. No hair binder was used. The sand component of this mortar was fine and light gray (M035). See Appendix C for more information.

A small tablet commemorating Cato Gardner, who helped to raise money for the building, was incorporated into the north elevation.

The foundation for the brick walls was—and still is—fieldstone, although this material may not have been exposed on the exterior of the building.

Roof

The roof covering in 1806 was probably slate shingles, since “slate” was listed in the accounting made in 1808.¹ This would have complied with a 1798 statute requiring that all roofs in the city of Boston be made of an incombustible material.

Gutters and leaders may not have been installed at this early date. The earliest view of the building (fig. 2) shows no evidence of either.

¹ “Cost of the African Meeting House and a Resolve.” House Documents and Papers/Unpassed, Nos. 6402 and 6404, 1808; in the State Archives, Boston.

Chimneys

Two chimney flues were incorporated into the space within the south wall to accommodate stoves in the sanctuary and possibly in the basement. An exterior brick chimney on the exterior of the west elevation would appear to be a later addition, because it was not incorporated into the wall. However, 1806 plaster molded around openings into this flue in the sanctuary and the basement proves that this chimney also is original.

Doorways

There appear to have been five exterior doorways in 1806 (fig. 18). All five have since been altered, but the documentary and physical evidence provides some clues as to their appearance. The 1843 engraving (fig. 2) shows two front doorways, located at either end of the north elevation, and one basement doorway (D-101), toward the north end of the east elevation. The front doorways would have been the entrances to the church sanctuary. They were bricked up in 1855. D-101 would have accessed the north end of the basement, where it is thought that the schoolroom was located. This doorway has since been converted to a window. A second entrance to the schoolroom was located in the west elevation, directly opposite D-101. This doorway was converted to a window circa 1855, and bricked up completely in 1975. The fifth original basement doorway (D-102) appears to have been located toward the south end of the east elevation. It would have provided a private entrance to the south end of the basement, where it is thought that the “minister’s rooms” were located. This doorway was later converted to a window.

The wooden doorway frame of D-101 is of lightweight, nonstructural construction. This is consistent with its use in the east brick wall of the meetinghouse, which is self-sustaining. However, the frame could be reused material, because the wooden frame of D-102—also an 1806 doorway—seems to have been reused. This frame is of heavyweight, structural construction, much more substantial than necessary for its present use in the east brick wall. Interestingly, the jambs of this doorway bear remnants of stucco containing the fine gray sand (M054) characteristic of 1806 meetinghouse mortar. Such remnants were not found on the jambs of D-101. The jambs of the 1806 west-elevation doorway were buried in brick infill in 1975.

Windows

Like the exterior doorways, all of the 1806 window openings and their sashes have been altered. Again, documentary and physical evidence—the latter chiefly visible from the interior of the building—gives an idea of their form. The 1806 basement windows were approximately 4 feet square. They later were lengthened, judging by the brickwork of their jambs’ lower ends, which shows signs of have been broken out and rebuilt.

The 1806 second- and third-story windows on the east, south, and west elevations also were shorter than they are today, by about a foot. As with the basement windows, altered brickwork is visible at the lower ends of the windows’ jambs. The size of these original windows can be seen

on the south elevation, where 1806 window openings were bricked up in 1855, when the other windows were being lengthened. Comparison of the 1843 engraving (fig. 2) and the ca.-1860 photograph (fig. 5) confirms the fact that the 1806 windows were shorter.

The 1806 windows on the second and third stories of the north elevation resembled those of the other three elevations. This is clear from comparison of figures 2 and 5, and from the altered brickwork around the lower ends of one of these windows' jambs, visible inside the building beneath the present east stairway.

Judging by the 1843 engraving of the meetinghouse, the window openings on the second and third stories of the north and east elevations of the building in 1806 contained six-over-six sashes. There were also two windows located between the doorways in the north elevation. The documentation suggests that most, if not all, of these sashes were material salvaged from the old West Church, built in 1736 and rebuilt in 1806. The reuse of building materials was a common practice in the 18th and 19th centuries.² Reused material included, "the windows and a greater portion of the timber."³

Light Fixtures

There was probably no exterior light on the meetinghouse in 1806. Even in 1832, a description written about a meeting at the church indicates that the streets of Beacon Hill were not lighted:

The streets were full of slush. They were dark too, for the City of Boston was very economical of light on "Nigger Hill."⁴

² E. Blaine Cliver, Chief of Historic Preservation, North Atlantic Region, to Barbara E. Pearson, 4/1/82.

³ First Independent Baptist Church and Society in Boston, "To the Public, and all who Encourage Religious Elevation" (subscription dated 1853; on file at the Museum of Afro American History, Boston); William Lloyd Garrison, "Decade Meeting in Joy St. Church," *The Liberator*, November 19, 1858; and "Cost of the African Meeting House."

⁴ William G. Nell, *The Colored Patriots of the American Revolution* (Boston: R.F. Wallcut, 1855), p. 345.

Interior Elements

The interior of the African Meeting House in 1806 was composed of an unfinished basement/first story, and a second-story sanctuary “with pews, pulpit, galleries &c.”⁵ Sixty pews were located on the main story of the sanctuary, and eight in the galleries.⁶ The sanctuary in 1843 was described as being “very plain and commodious.”⁷

Basement/First Story

Plan

As noted in Chapter II, the first story of the African Meeting House has historically been known as the “basement.” The early documentation indicates that the basement was completed circa 1808, and that it contained three or more rooms: a schoolroom, and probably two other rooms originally intended for a minister’s residence. A likely configuration for these rooms would have been for the larger schoolroom to have been located in the north end of the basement, and the other rooms at the south end, as shown in figure 18. The schoolroom was frequently used by groups other than the church congregation, and the “minister’s rooms” were often rented out to private individuals. It is thus not surprising that each area—sanctuary, schoolroom, and “minister’s rooms”—should have had separate entrances, as described in Section A, “Doorways.”

Floor

The floor level of the basement and stairway enclosures was lowered from its 1806 location sometime after 1880. However, joist pockets remaining in the east and west walls from the original floor indicate its location. These joists were placed 25 inches on center.

Walls

In general, the masonry basement walls were left unfinished in 1806; no evidence has been found in most areas of either plaster or wall paint from this time. The exception is the northeast and northwest corners, where 1806 wall plaster recalls the former location of the two original stairways to the second-story sanctuary. Structural evidence confirms that the stairways were located in these corners. This evidence includes paired joists pockets for stairway headers; a joist pocket in the north brick wall, next to the eastern original front doorway; and joist pockets for floorboards (fig. 19).

⁵ Charles Shaw, *Topographical and Historical Description of Boston* (Boston: Oliver Spear, 1817), pp. 269-270.

⁶ “Cost of the African Meeting House.”

⁷ S.N. Dickinson, *The Boston Almanac for the Year 1843* (Boston: Thomas Groom & Co., 1843), p. 88.

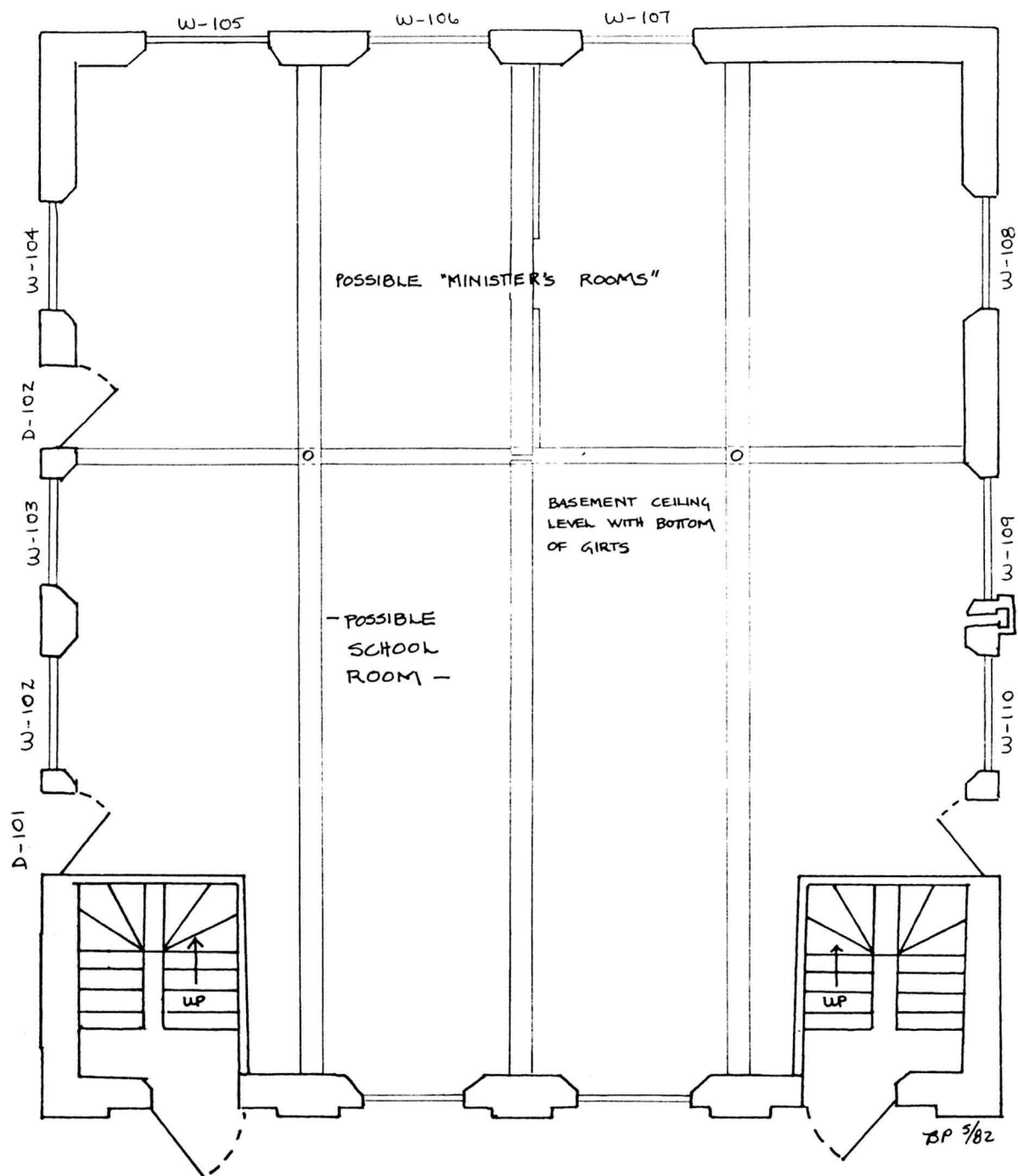


Figure 18. Conjectural 1806 Basement Plan.

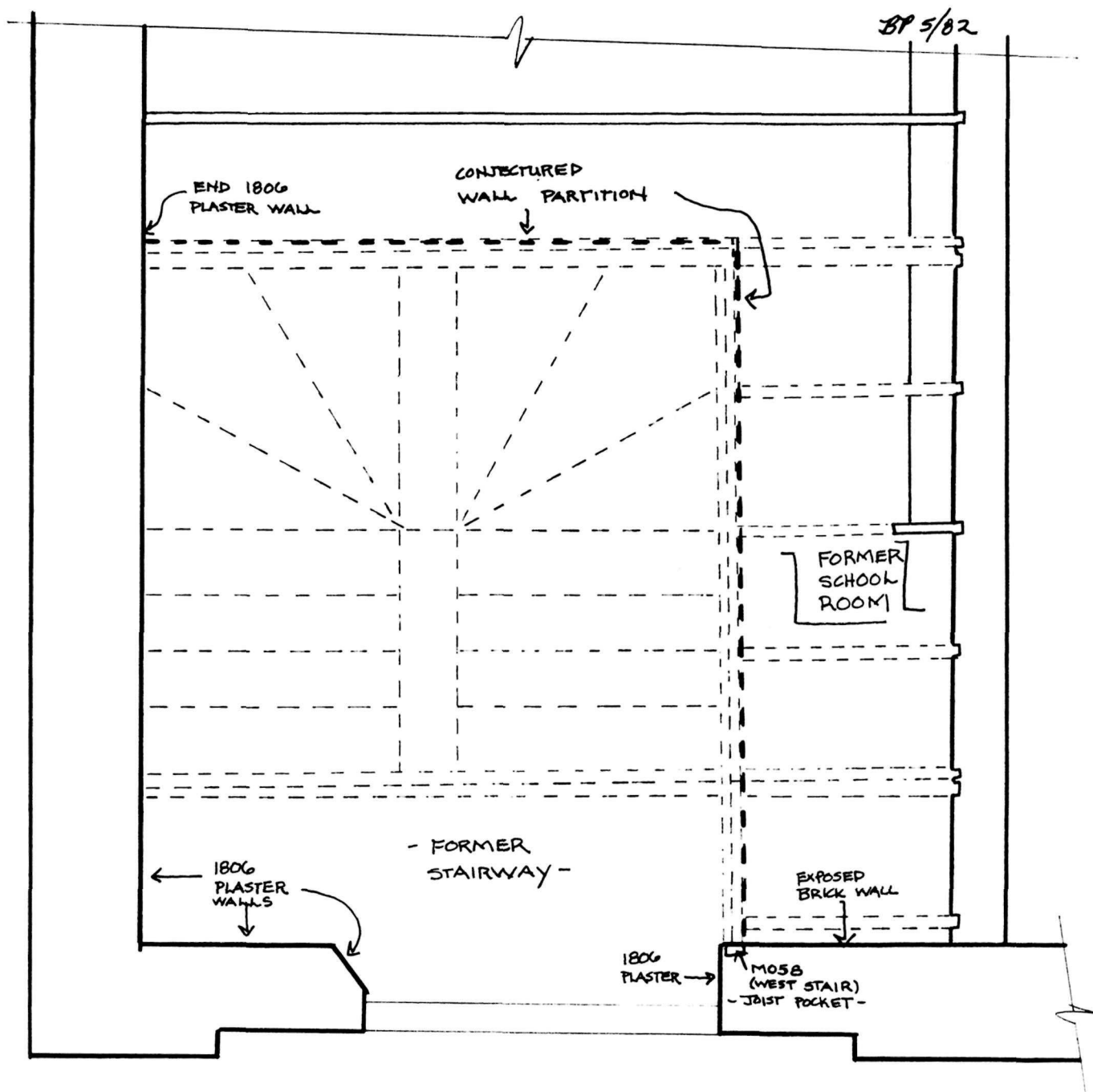


Figure 19. Conjectural Plan of 1806 East Basement Stair.

The locations of these elements strongly suggests that the two 1806 stairways were quite compact. Indeed, the two stairways were altered radically in 1855, when the Church's deacons desired to "make convenient and necessary alterations in the staircase."⁸

Compounding the stairways' small size was the fact that they apparently were completely enclosed, such that a person could ascend to the sanctuary without ever seeing the rest of the basement. The clearest evidence for stairway partitions is provided by the 1806 plaster in the northeast and northwest corners of the basement. This plaster was applied directly to the brick walls, and contained the same fine gray sand as the brick mortar of 1806 (fig. 20). As with the brick mortar, this plaster was a fairly strong mix and contained no hair binder (M002, M004). As stated previously, the rest of the basement walls show no signs of ever having been plastered. Thus, the lines where areas of 1806 plaster and areas of exposed brick meet indicate the former locations of partitions enclosing the stairways.

The areas of 1806 plaster occur at the north ends of the east and west walls, and at the east and west ends of the north wall (now under the present stairways to the sanctuary). The plaster on the north wall extends onto the extant jambs of the former front doorways, now closed up. The north wall between the former doorways shows no evidence of ever having been plastered. This suggests that the room in the north end of the basement—presumably the schoolroom—extended between the two corner stairways to the north wall, where two windows provided light.

Evidence in the basement of the partition wall between the schoolroom and the back rooms, and the partition(s) subdividing the latter space, is more obscure. The most likely place for the schoolroom partition would have been where the middle girt of the sanctuary floor is divided, where a support beam and/or post(s) must have been located. This location would have allowed room for a private exterior entrance in the east wall, to the back rooms (D-102). The partition between the back rooms has been hypothesized in a position to make two approximately equal-sized rooms. Lack of remaining evidence for these partitions may be explained by the fact that a lowered plaster ceiling, flush with the bottom of the girts, was present in the basement at this time. Any evidence of the partitions on this ceiling would have been lost when the ceiling was later removed.

Ceiling

Evidence for the low basement ceiling includes the shadows of furring boards, to which lath would have been nailed, on the bottom of the middle girt, and the shadows of strap hangers on the side of alternate joists (fig. 21). These shadows were made when a fire occurred in the basement while the low ceiling was still in place. No documentary evidence has been found concerning this fire. Many wrought nails (fig. 22) that once held the straps are still located on the joists, and reused furring boards found in the ceiling indicated that the lath nails were an early cut type.

⁸ Suffolk County Registry of Deeds, Book 676:302.

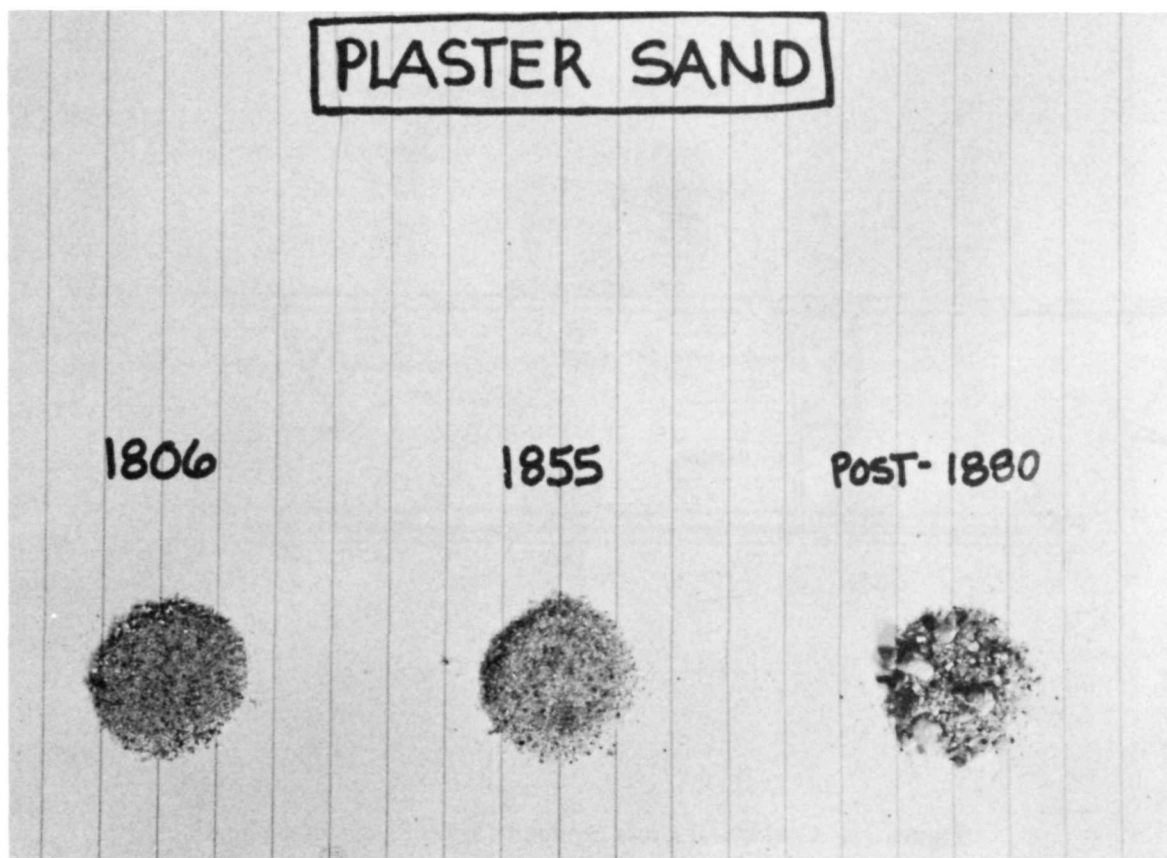
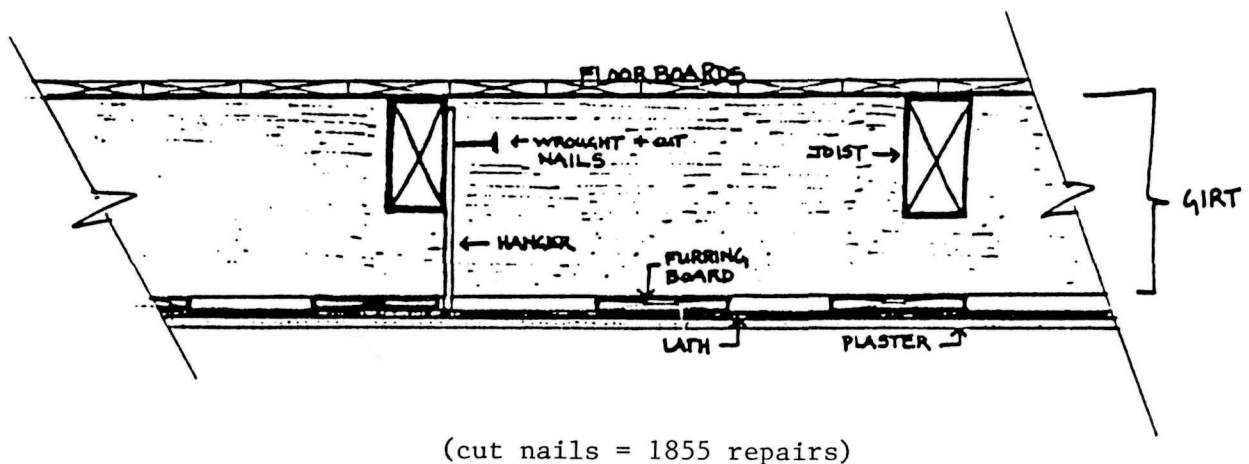


Figure 20. Sand samples from 1806, 1855, and Post-1880 Plaster.



(cut nails = 1855 repairs)

Figure 21. Conjectural Cross Section of 1806 Basement Ceiling.

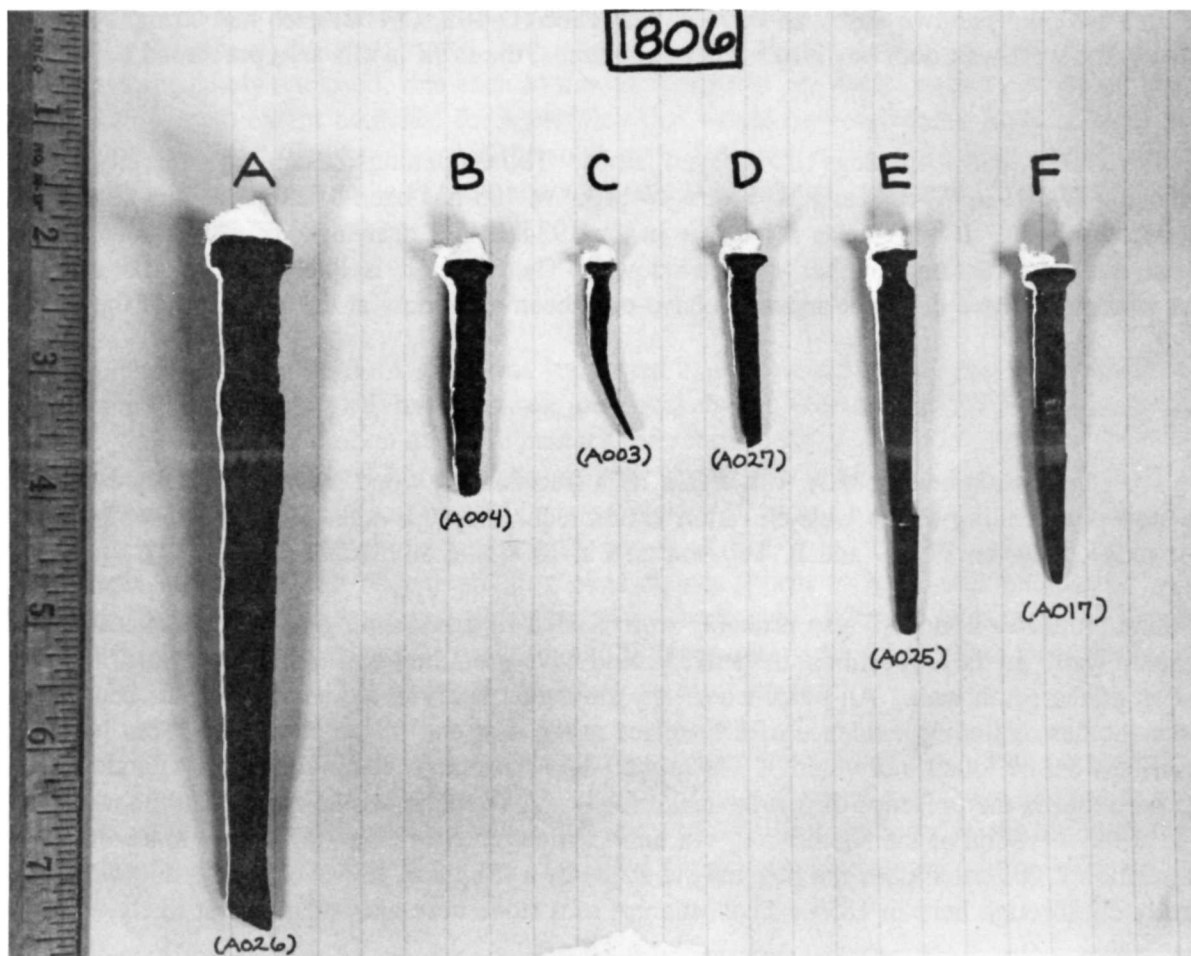


Figure 22. Representative Samples of 1806 Nails Found at the African Meeting House.

Doorways and Windows

Figure 18 shows the probable locations of 1806 basement doorways and windows. The form of the jambs of the original front doorways provides an additional clue as to the location of the partitions enclosing the 1806 stairways. The outer jambs of both doorways are splayed, but the inner jambs of both are straight, as if specifically designed to align with a partition close by each doorway (see figures 18-19). The two east-wall doorways of 1806 (D-101, D-102) each had straight jambs. Presumably the west-wall doorway also had straight jambs; the infill in this area precluded definitive research.

The 1806 window openings had splayed jambs. Those openings remaining generally intact today include W-102 to W-104, and W-106 to W-110. W-105 has been bricked up, and so cannot be dated definitively. It appears as a window in the 1934 HABS drawings, of approximately the same size and construction as other 1806 windows. Therefore, it is likely that W-105 was an original window. There does not appear to have ever been a window at the west end of the south wall.

Heating System

The schoolroom undoubtedly was heated by a freestanding wood stove along the west wall, with a stovepipe leading to the west-elevation exterior chimney. Evidence of the stovepipe hole remains today, between W-109 and W-110, encased in 1806 plaster (M028).

The “minister’s rooms” also probably were heated by freestanding stoves, one at each end of the south wall. In these locations, the stoves could have used the two flues incorporated into the brickwork of the south wall. All evidence of any stovepipe holes in the south wall has been lost. Detwiller alludes to finding evidence of a fireplace at the east end of the south wall,⁹ but he does not describe what he found, nor where it was found. The fact that a seemingly original window was located here makes the presence of a fireplace unlikely. A fireplace would have been theoretically possible at the west end of the south wall. An unidentified patch of brick infill does mark the wall at this location. The patch does not suggest the shape of a fireplace, however, and a doorway was apparently cut through here in 1855. Thus, the use of a stove here also seems most likely.

Alterations

Improvements to the basement schoolroom were made in 1833, and probably again between 1835 and 1837.¹⁰ However, it was not possible to distinguish what these improvements may have been.

⁹ Frederic C. Detwiller, “African Meeting House: An Architectural/Historical Analysis” (typescript dated July 1975; on file in the SPNEA library, Boston), p. 8.

¹⁰ Arthur Brayley, *Schools and Schoolboys of Old Boston* (Boston: Louis P. Hager, 1894), p. 48; Registry, Books 392:289 and 401:199.

Second Story

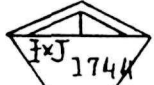
Plan

The second story of the meetinghouse contained the sanctuary, with its gallery forming a third story. As will be described shortly, the physical evidence indicates that the gallery ran around the entire length of the east, north, and south walls of the sanctuary. It was accessed by two stairways, probably enclosed, one each in the northeast and northwest corners of the building (fig. 23). There is no extant evidence for a partition that would have formed a foyer at the north end. The pulpit was most likely centered at the south end. It is not known if the 1806 floor plan included a projecting apse in the middle of the south wall, since the only apse elements remaining from before the 1973 fire date to 1855.

Floor

The sanctuary floor in 1806 was supported by three north/south girts that remain in place today (fig. 18). These girts have disused joist pockets and mortises that indicate previous use in another building. Based upon the documentary reference to “a greater portion of the timber” being reused from the old West Church, it seems logical that the three girts came from that building. These girts are hand-hewn, and measure approximately 10 inches high by 12 inches wide. The east and west girts are of one continuous length, about 47 feet long. The middle girt consist of two beams placed end to end. Their abutting ends do not appear to have ever been attached to one another. Today, both ends rest on a modern steel I-beam. In 1806, the ends may well have rested on a post in the basement that was part of a partition separating the schoolroom from the “minister’s rooms.” The extant 1806 floor joists also show signs of reuse.

The sanctuary floor in 1806 consisted of a subfloor and a finish floor, both composed of wide planks. This floor remains in place today, although it was covered over after 1880 with a tongue-and-groove floor held with steel cut nails. Evidence of renailing and inscriptions found on the finish floorboards may indicate reuse from the 1736 West Church or some other building. The inscriptions include:

1. Tally marks “XX” and “XXII”. These may have signified the number of boards in a stack, such as at a lumber yard.
2. “W x W” and , both found on one board and the functions of which are unknown.

Walls

In general, the walls of the sanctuary were finished with plaster applied directly to the brick. The lower portions of the east and west walls were covered with wooden wainscot (fig. 24), which remains in place today. Paint samples (P117, P130) indicate that at least some sections of the wainscot were reused from the 1736 West Church. It is not known whether or not there was similar wainscot on the south wall, because of later alterations in this area.

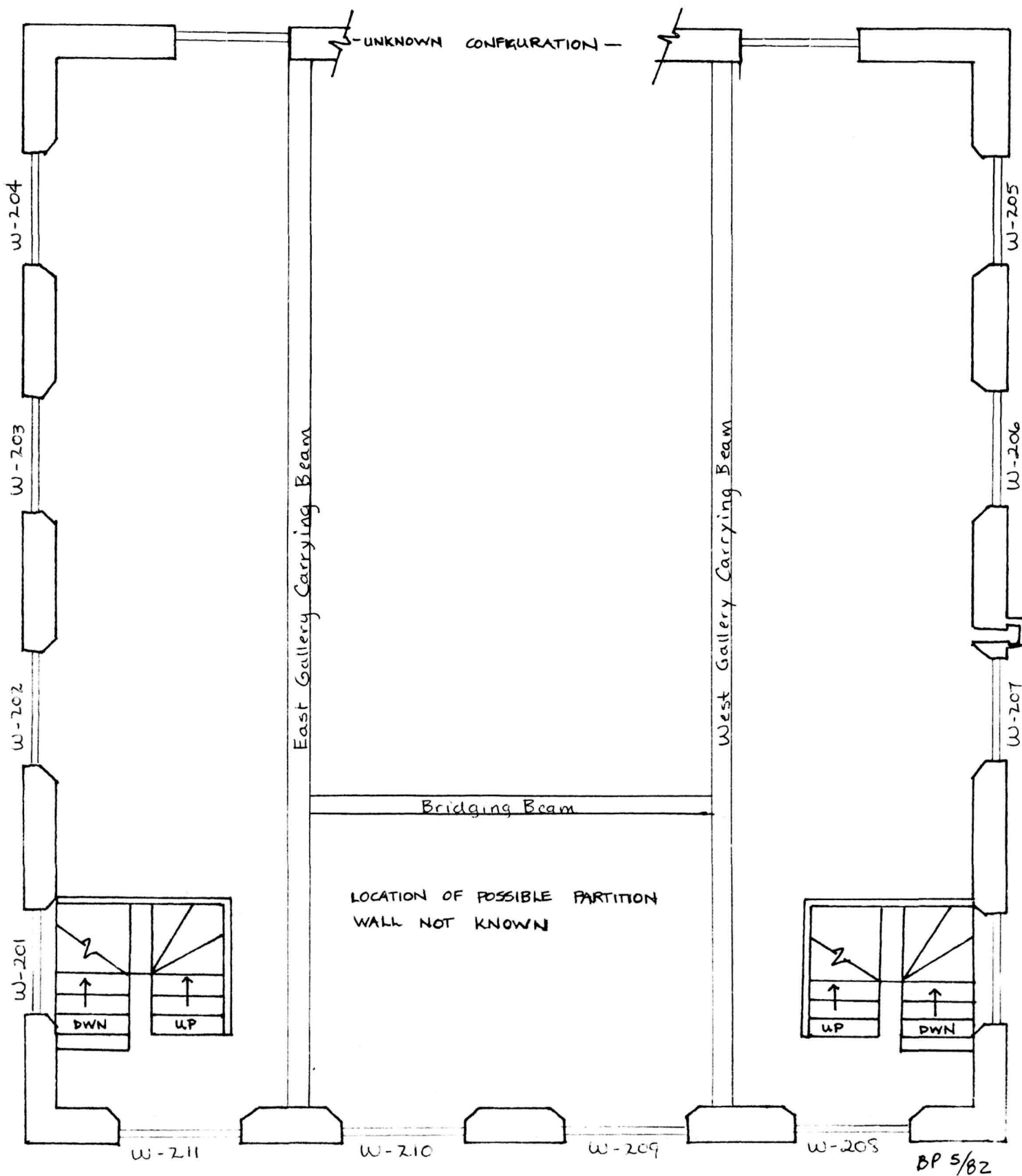
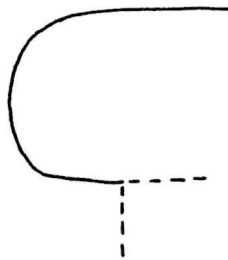


Figure 23. Conjectural 1806 Second-Floor (Sanctuary) Plan.



WAINSCOT TOP MOLDING, SANCTUARY
EAST + WEST WALLS



WINDOW SILL, W-103 + W-203

BP 5/82

Figure 24. Examples of 1806 Molding Profiles
Found at the African Meeting House.

Ceiling

It is likely that the curved lower chords of the roof trusses (to be described shortly) would have resulted in an arched plaster ceiling. Detwiller notes that this was a fairly rare feature, shared only in the immediate area by the Hollis Street Church (1810).¹¹ Fragments of this ceiling remained in place as late as 1982 (M051). In the northwest corner of the ceiling was a trap door to the attic that required a ladder to reach.¹² This trap door is seen in one of the 1937 HABS interior photographs (fig. 17).

Doorways and Windows

The only doorways in the 1806 sanctuary would have been those accessing the enclosed corner stairways. The rectangular window openings in the second and third stories have already been discussed in Section A, "Windows." Detwiller hypothesizes that there was a large arched window centered in the south wall, behind the pulpit.¹³ Interior window jambs were finished with wooden jamb boards. This is known because paint outlines of these boards remain on the window sills (P124), behind the present jamb boards. (The current sanctuary-window sills are those installed in 1806, and reused in 1855, as indicated by paint analysis; also see figure 24.)

Stairways

The two corner stairways to the gallery would have been a continuation of the two enclosed basement stairways leading up to the sanctuary. As stated, the absence of evidence for a foyer suggests that the stairways were enclosed.

Main-Story Pews

Paint outlines on the east- and west-wall wainscot indicate that the ends of the main-story pews butted up against those walls, and that the pews were box-style pews typical of the 1806 period.¹⁴ Without the presence of a foyer, the pews probably would have continued all the way back to the north wall.

Pulpit

The pulpit installed in 1806, presumably at the south end of the sanctuary, was salvaged material reused from the 1736 West Church. Nothing remains of this pulpit, which was taken out in 1855 and subsequently lost. See Appendix E for more information.

¹¹ Detwiller, "African Meeting House," p. 10.

¹² Byron Rushing, Director of the Museum of Afro American History, to Barbara E. Pearson, 7/2/84.

¹³ Detwiller, "African Meeting House," between pp. 10-11.

¹⁴ Detwiller, "African Meeting House," pp. 10-11.

Gallery

The general configuration of the 1806 gallery has been deduced from a variety of clues. Its outer edge intersected the east, north, and west walls at a level midway between the second- and third-story windows. This is known because a line of 1806 joist pockets remains in the east and west walls at this level; some pockets still contain the cut-off ends of their joists. The north wall has no such line of pockets; brickwork alterations have obscured evidence of exactly how the outer ends of the joists here were supported. (One possibility is the use of a wooden ledger beam.)

The inner ends of the 1806 gallery joist rested on east and west carrying beams, and on a bridging beam running between these two beams (fig. 23). This is known because the carrying beams remain in use today. Both beams have beaded edges. They display not only paint sequences dating back to 1806, but also bear up to seven layers of even earlier oil-base, lead paint (P147, P166-167), which suggests that they are reused 1736 West Church material. The 1806 bridging beam also may have been reused 1736 West Church material, but it was removed in 1975.

The beams were supported by two pairs of columns, as indicated by paint lines and other marks on the undersides of the carrying beams. One pair was located about where the present 1855 columns sit, somewhat south of the beams' midpoint. The other pair was located at the intersection of the bridging beam with the carrying beams. Paint lines indicate that the north/south dimension of the capitals of these columns was about 10 inches (the east/west dimension could not be determined in the same manner). This dimension is larger than that for the capitals of the extant 1855 cast-iron column. It suggests that the 1806 columns were made of wood, with the larger size being needed to offset the weaker material employed.

The exact locations of the carrying beams in 1806 are unknown. Since they rested on columns, it is logical for them to have been positioned above the east and west girts of the sanctuary floor framing. The beams also would have had to intersect the south sanctuary wall between the two second-story windows extant here in 1806. Specific evidence, however, is lacking. The 1806 columns left no marks on the floorboards, and the brickwork where the beams might have intersected the north and south walls has been altered extensively.

It appears as though the 1806 gallery was edged with a solid, raised-panel balustrade salvaged—at least in part—from the 1736 West Church. This balustrade was reused virtually intact in 1855; it can be seen in the 1937 HABS photographs (e.g., figs. 12-14), and portions of it remain in storage after its removal in 1975. The chief evidence for this consists of paint samples such as P207, which display layers dating back to 1806, and even earlier.

Heating and Lighting Systems

Heating of the 1806 sanctuary was accomplished by the use of three stoves. The locations of these stoves are recalled by flue openings: one (now bricked up) at either end of the south wall, leading to the flues incorporated into the 1806 brickwork, and one in the west wall, adjacent to the west-elevation exterior chimney. All three openings are known to date to 1806. The two in the south wall were closed up and covered over when the gallery was lowered in 1855. The one in the west wall has original plaster molded around it.

Interior lighting probably was supplied by oil lamps. The only remaining evidence of interior lighting in 1806 was a pulley mechanism located above the sanctuary ceiling and discovered during demolition work in 1975.¹⁵ Since the ceiling plaster was determined to be original (M051), this mechanism probably served an oil-lamp chandelier that could be lowered and raised. This pulley hardware was stored away in 1975, and could not be located in 1982 by this author.

Finishes

Paint analysis of the plaster walls and woodwork from the period 1806-1853 showed that the plaster walls and ceiling of the sanctuary were finished with water-soluble calcimine paint (P132-133, P158), and the woodwork with oil-based lead paint. The walls were painted more frequently than the woodwork.

Attic

The African Meeting House's timber roof trusses survived in situ until the fire of 1973, when they were removed to storage at the Codman House, owned by the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities. Aspects of these trusses suggest that they were used originally in a frame building. Mortises at the ends of the lower chords may have fit onto exterior wall posts, and another mortise is evident that would have been suitable for a brace and interior support post (see figure 25). Thus, the meetinghouse's roof trusses may also have been 1736 material salvaged from the old West Church.

¹⁵ Rushing to Pearson, 5/4/82.

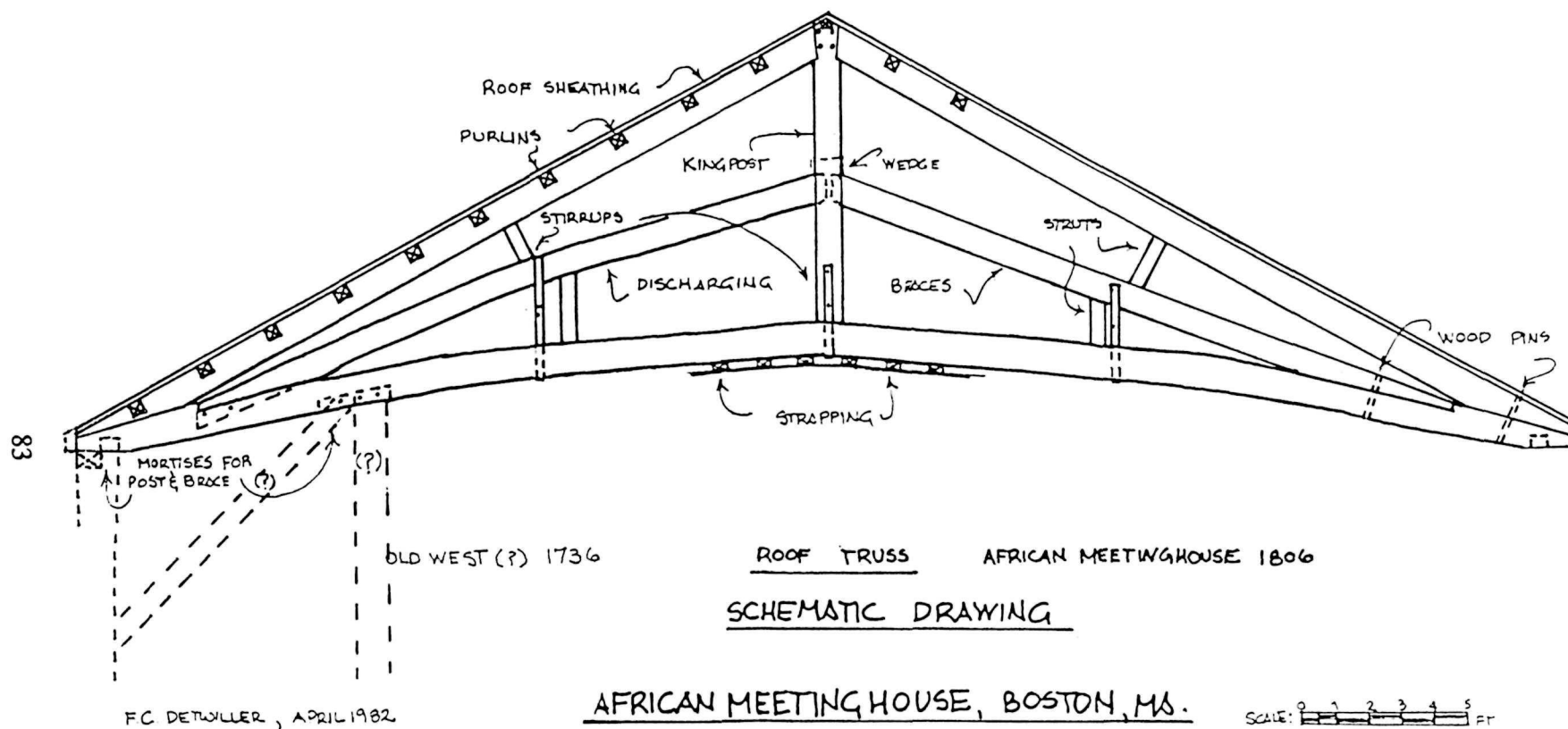


Figure 25. Elevation Drawing of 1806 Roof Truss (drawing is a 77% reduction of original).

ALTERATIONS IN 1855

Major alterations were made to the African Meeting House in 1855. Work could not have begun on the basement or stairways until the schoolroom was officially repossessed from the Infant School Association. This was done in 1855.¹⁶ The second- and third-story windows on the north elevation, however, may have been combined into the present arched windows as early as 1853, because a calendar fragment of that date was found in 1975 in “the area of the front window casings.”¹⁷ The second- and third-story windows on the other elevations also may have been altered at that time.

Exterior Work

Some of the changes made to the exterior during the 1853-1855 period may be seen in the ca.-1860 photograph of the building (fig. 5). Other changes must be deduced from building fabric evidence.

Apse

The ca.-1855 remodeling probably included the construction of an apse on the center of the south wall of the building. The apse projected only from the second and third stories; it was supported at the first story by metal columns. The evidence for the early apse is both documentary and physical. Such an apse did exist by 1937 (see figures 13 and 16); it was still in place immediately after the fire of 1973 (see figures 26-27). Also, the first-story columns supporting the present apse have the same paint layering as window casings known to have been installed circa 1855 (see Appendix A). (Although the early apse was demolished after the 1973 fire and most of its material was discarded, its metal columns were apparently saved and reused when the present apse was constructed in 1975.) Finally, as will be explained in the section on interior elements, the 1855 pews were arranged in relation to the apse.

The 1855 apse may have been of frame construction covered with wooden shingles. This is based upon the photographs taken of the apse immediately after the 1973 fire (figs. 26-27). The 1973 photographs also show a small wood-shingled projection on the apse. This may not have been part of the 1855 apse; it could have been added by the Jewish congregation to house the scrolls of the Torah.

¹⁶ Registry, Book 676:302.

¹⁷ Detwiller, “African Meeting House,” p. 15.

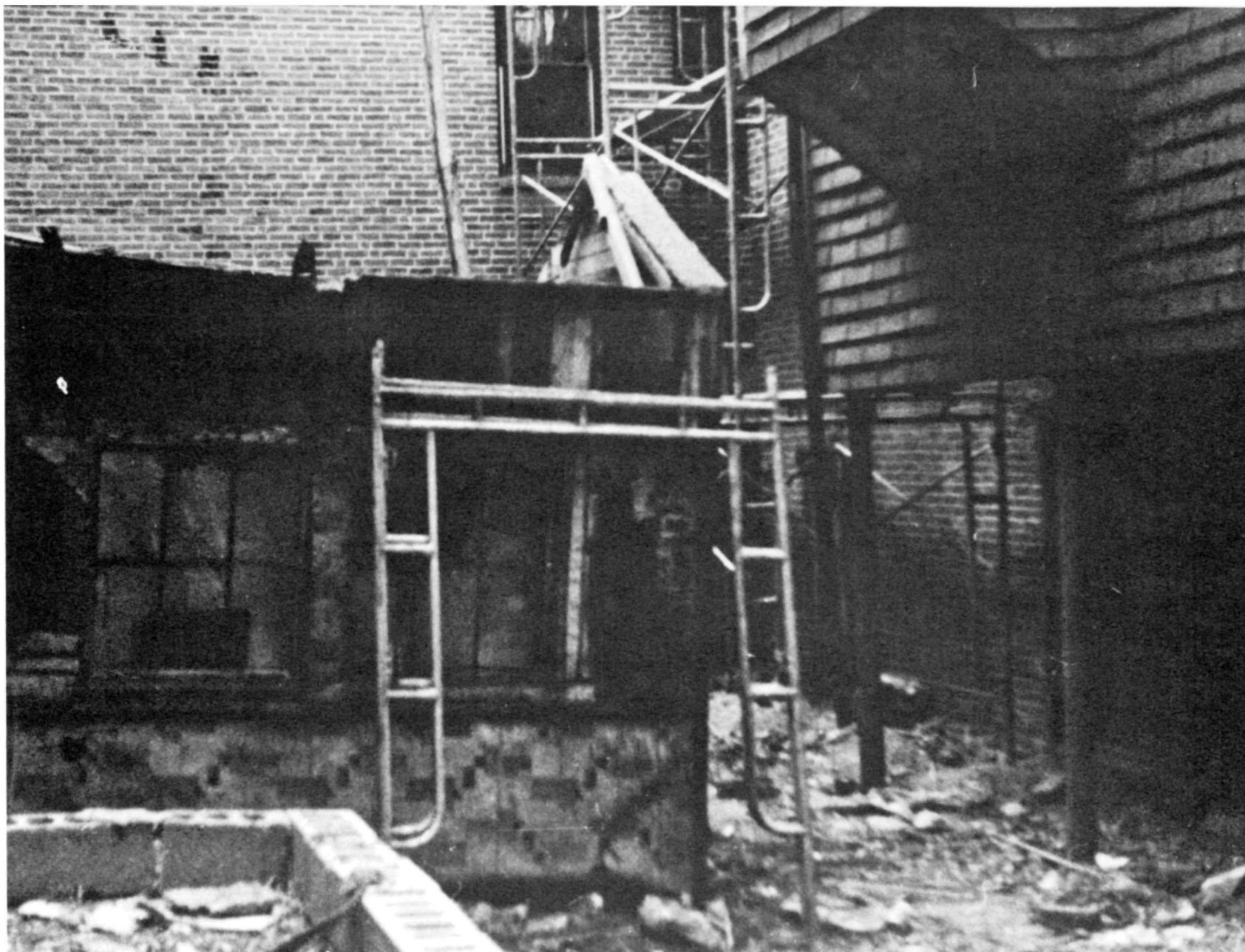


Figure 26. Exterior View of Apse (1973).



Figure 27. Exterior View of Apse (1973).

It is likely that the 1855 apse was roofed with slate shingles; slate was present here in 1873 and 1882.¹⁸

Gutters

Gutters appear to have been added to the meetinghouse in 1855. One downspout can be seen in the ca.-1860 photograph, located at the west end of the north elevation. This suggests the presence of a gutter along the north eave. Extant historic hardware on the south elevation indicates that another downspout was located at the east end of that elevation. This suggests the presence of a gutter along the south elevation.

Doorways

On the north elevation, the original entrance doorways were bricked in, except for a small opening in the west doorway, which will be discussed later. Brick mortar from this area (M001) was found to have a characteristic orange-colored sand. The former first-story windows here were enlarged into double doorways (D-104 and D-105; see figure 28), each with a transom. Detwiller stated that in 1975 he found fragments of a ca.-1855 transom that was apparently five lights wide.¹⁹ These transom fragments could not be located in 1982.

On the east elevation, paint evidence on the interior wooden jambs of D-101 and D-102 indicates that both doorways were retained as such in 1855. The doorway opposite D-101 in the west elevation, however, was probably converted to a window at this time (W-111), since a brick building had been built immediately adjacent to the meetinghouse in 1853.²⁰ Paint evidence could not be obtained to confirm this thought, because the opening was bricked up completely in 1975. A doorway (D-103) may have been cut through the west end of the south elevation during this period of work, to provide access to the back yard.²¹ Again, this opening was completely bricked up in 1975, so no paint evidence could be obtained.

¹⁸ Detwiller, "African Meeting House," between pp. 16-17.

¹⁹ Detwiller, "African Meeting House," p. 18.

²⁰ Ellen F. Rosebrock, "A Historical Account of the Joy Street Block Between Myrtle and Cambridge Streets" (typescript dated December 22, 1978, and January 30, 1979; on file at the Museum of Afro American History, Boston), p. 2 of memorandum dated 1/30/79.

²¹ Detwiller, "African Meeting House," p. 21.

Windows

As mentioned, the original second- and third-story windows on the north elevation were elongated in 1853-1855 to form four two-story, arched windows. This is known from paint, mortar, and photographic evidence. Most of the original second- and third-story windows on the east and west elevations were lengthened by about a foot. Evidence confirming this includes the presence of altered brickwork around the lower part of the windows' jambs, and the use of typical 1855 mortar (M056) with orange sand (fig. 20) to stucco smooth the lower altered jamb areas. The northernmost second-story window on the west elevation was apparently bricked up at this time. The same is true of the four second- and third-story windows on the south elevation, where the outlines of the original 1806 window openings are preserved.

All of the 1806 basement window openings also were lengthened at this time. As with the upper-story windows, this can be deduced from altered brickwork around the lower part of the windows' jambs, and the use of typical 1855 mortar (M053) to stucco smooth the lower altered jamb areas.

As stated, it is thought that the original west-elevation doorway was converted into W-111 circa 1855. Two other windows apparently were created then, as well: W-101, at the north end of the first-story east elevation; and W-112, at the north end of the first-story west elevation. This is known because the entire jamb areas of both windows were finished with the typical 1855 stucco (M052, M055). W-101, which faced the side yard, was larger than W-112, and had a wooden lintel. As discussed earlier, the date of W-105 is unclear. If evidence proves that a fireplace existed here in 1806, then W-105 may have been created in 1855.

Exterior Light Fixture

The exterior gaslight fixture seen on the north wall of the meetinghouse in figure 5 probably was installed in 1855. This light was located between the front doorways, and was fed by a gas line from the street that ran vertically up the building exterior. In Boston, "gas was . . . beginning to replace oil lamps for street illumination . . . by 1843."²²

Finishes

Paint analysis of samples from exterior elements indicates that the doorway and window casings, and the metal support columns of the apse, were painted with white lead-base paint in 1855. The ca.-1860 photograph (fig. 5) suggests that the window sills, and the raking eaves on the gable ends, also were painted white. The same photograph, evaluated in terms of common Greek Revival practices of the day, suggests that the window sashes were painted black, while the doors were painted a medium shade of green. The brick walls remained unpainted. This could be determined

²² Bainbridge Bunting, *Houses of Boston's Back Bay: An Architectural History, 1840-1917* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University, 1967), p. 14.

because the earliest paint on the brick—a mustard-yellow color—was found on a brick patch known by photographic evidence to have been installed sometime between circa 1860 and circa 1875 (P204). See Appendix A for more information on the historic paint scheme.

Interior Work

As will be discussed in detail shortly, both the 1806 basement story and the 1806 second story had their north ends partitioned off in 1855, to make separate rooms. These rooms were the entry and the foyer, respectively.

Entry

Plan

The creation of an entry at the north end of the basement story (fig. 28) seems to have related to improvements made in 1855 to the two stairways to the sanctuary. We know from the “Evidence of Possession” that in March 1855 the deacons of the Independent Baptist Church planned “to make . . . convenient and necessary alterations in the staircase” of the meetinghouse.²³ In fact, both stairways appear to have been completely rebuilt in place at that time, in a form still extant in the meetinghouse. This was determined by comparing paint samples from the stairways (P014-P021) with a paint sample (P087) from one of the front two-story windows known to have been enlarged around 1855. The first paint layer from both the window jamb and the stairway is a white zinc paint, which was not widely used in this country until the 1850’s.²⁴ Earlier lead paint layers (P033-035) also were found on painted pieces of wood reused in the construction of the stairways in 1855.

Floor

While the present entry floor dates only to 1975, the placement of the 1855 stairways indicates that the 1855 floor level was similar to that of the 1806 basement level. The floorboards themselves, however, may have been replaced due to fire damage.

²³ Registry, Book 676:302.

²⁴ Arthur C. Downs, Jr., “Zinc for Paint and Architectural Uses in The 19th Century,” *Bulletin of the Association for Preservation Technology*, Vol. VIII, No. 4 (1976), p. 80.

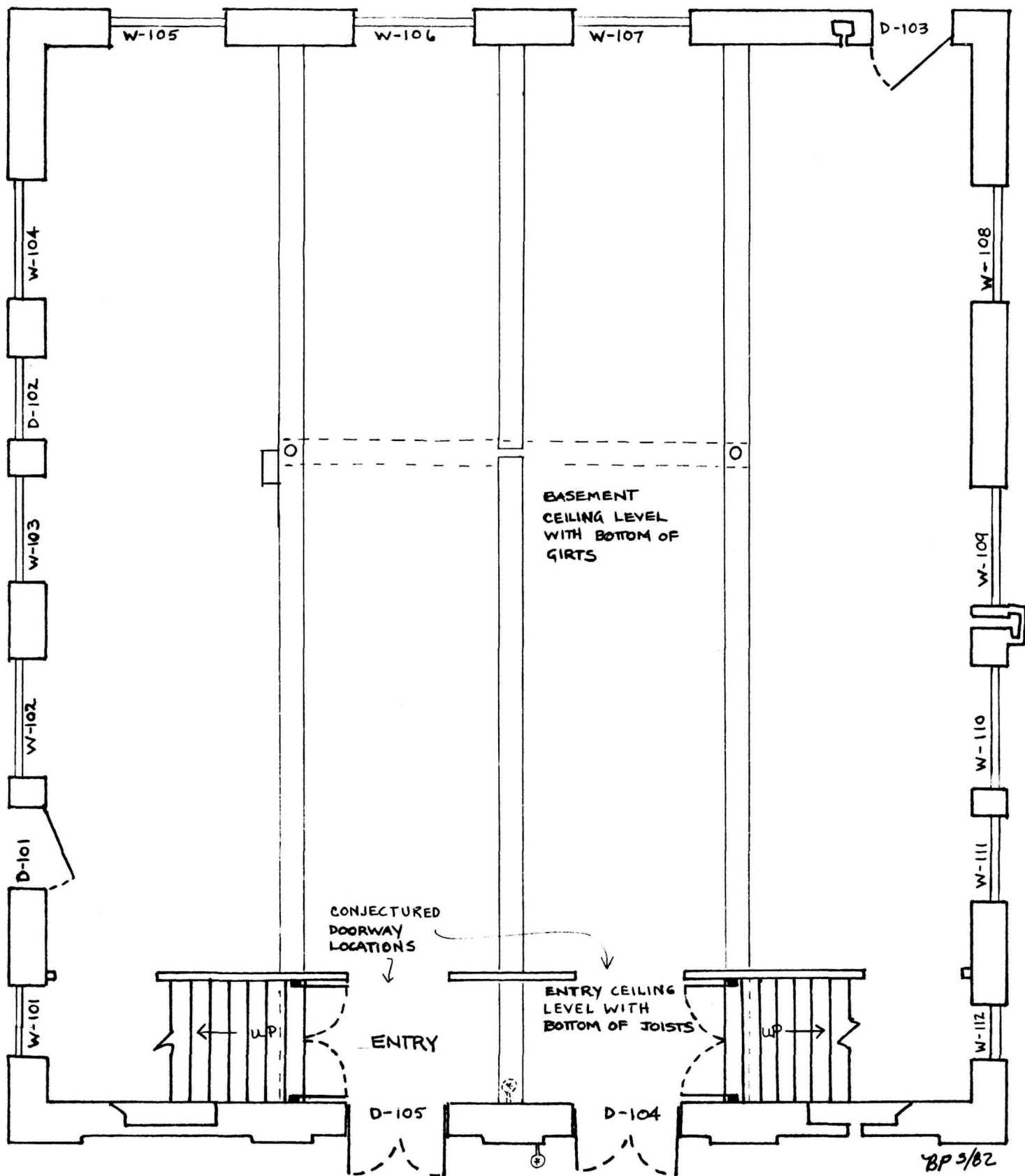


Figure 28. Conjectural 1855 Basement Plan.

Walls

The north wall of the entry consisted of three areas: a section between the two new entrance doorways, and a section on either side of these doorways. In 1808, all three sections were part of the basement schoolroom, and therefore were not plastered at that time. In 1855, the section between the doorways was plastered for the first time. The side sections even today show no evidence of ever having been plastered. It is thus thought that they were paneled in 1855.

Evidence for the 1855 partition wall forming the south wall of the entry can be seen on the east wall of the present basement. This evidence includes a paint line of 1855 calcimine paint (P006) at the former location of the partition. Although no pieces of the partition itself remain, it was undoubtedly plastered: as will be discussed shortly, a similar partition built in 1855 on the second story was plastered.

The east and west ends of the entry were outfitted with new stairways to the sanctuary. These were still enclosed, but they were accessed from the entry. As part of this work, the girts at the stairwell openings were cut back. The outer walls of the stairwells were replastered. A key for the new plaster was made by chipping the 1806 plaster, rather than using lath. The new interior walls of the stairwells also were plastered. The plaster mix used in 1855 was composed of approximately 2.5 parts of sand to 1 part of lime, and the sand is a characteristic orange color (M015-M017; see figure 20). Unlike the 1806 plaster, the 1855 plaster has a wood fiber and hair binder. Baseboards were used on both exterior and interior walls of the stairwells, with the baseboards being embedded in the wall plaster.

Ceilings

The plastered ceiling installed in the entry in 1855 was not flush with the bottom of the large girts, as was the ceiling of the schoolroom in 1808. In 1855, the ceiling was raised to be flush with the ceiling joists. This exposed the bottom part of the middle girt, which may have been encased with woodwork or plaster. Evidence for this raised ceiling includes iron cut nails extant on the bottom sides of the first three rows of joists out from the north wall (A029, fig. 29). These nails, which postdate the early (1806-1808) meetinghouse nails, and predate the post-1880 steel cut nails, would have attached furring boards to the joists. These furring boards would have provided a nailing surface for the plaster's lath.

The reasons for removing the old, low schoolroom ceiling in the vicinity of the new entry are clear. This action was necessary to build the new stairs. Also, the church apparently desired to install gas ceiling lights here. The physical evidence suggests that two such lights were in fact installed on the middle girt of the sanctuary floor, but that one of them soon started a fire. This evidence includes charred second-story floor joists within the ceiling of the entry; the outlines of the two ceiling lights on the middle girt; and marks on the first-story floor joists within the lowered basement ceiling. This fire must have occurred early in the remodeling campaign, since the 1855 stairways and plastered walls show no signs of fire damage. No documentation about the fire could be located.

The reasons for installing the new 1855 ceiling at a higher level than previously are less obvious. Perhaps the church wanted a more spacious appearance for its new entry.

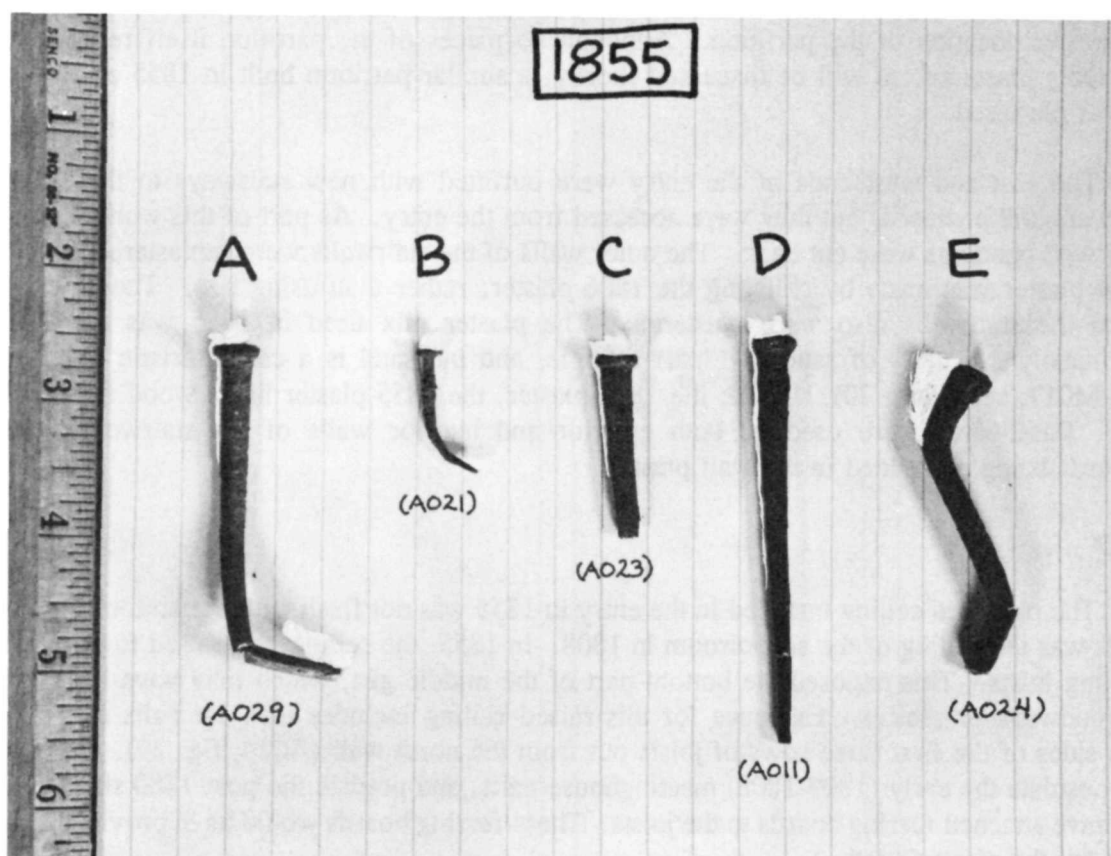


Figure 29. Representative Samples of 1855 Nails Found at the African Meeting House.

Although the plaster ceiling of the entry was completely removed in 1975 or later, except for the furring nails, a photograph of the prior ceiling was taken in 1975 (fig. 30). This photograph shows a decoratively painted plaster ceiling near the north wall between the exterior doorways. Based on the remaining nail evidence in 1982, there is a very good possibility that the ceiling extant in 1975 was the same ceiling installed in 1855. The date of the decorative painting is less certain; it seems unlikely that the 1855 paint would have survived, exposed, over so many years. This could not be verified by paint analysis, because all of the ceiling plaster appears to have been discarded in 1975.

The ceilings of the two stairwells—i.e., the soffits of the stairways to the gallery—also were plastered in 1855.

Doorways

As discussed in Section A, the original two doorways at the ends of the north elevation were bricked up in 1855 to permit the reorientation of the sanctuary stairways. Two new front doorways (D-104, D-105) leading into the entry were created out of the two original windows that had sat between the two original doorways. These 1855 doorways have since been altered. The locations of doorways in the south partition wall could not be determined, based on remaining evidence. However, it is likely that there were two doorways, one opposite each exterior doorway.

It would appear that the openings to the east and west stairways, as built in 1855, contained doorway frames. At the east stairway, there is a finished edge of ca.-1855 plaster that abuts the jamb, and there is no paint on the first step near the wall. At first, it was thought that this evidence indicated the former presence of pilasters framing the stairway openings. However, woodwork for two doorways—four jambs and two headers—was later found stored in the basement area. The pieces seem to constitute the doorways shown in one of the 1934 HABS drawings (fig. 7, left), and in a 1975 color slide (fig. 31), as flanking the east and west stairway openings. This thought is confirmed by the paint on the jamb pieces (P208), which has a ca.-1855 zinc white as its first layer. The doorway frames probably were removed during the 1975 stabilization work.

Lath and plaster line evidence on the girt cut back circa 1855, in a location that would have been covered over by the doorway header, most likely indicates a plaster coat was applied immediately prior to the ca.-1855 installation of the doorway trim and prior to the final plastering of the walls. This anomaly may be the result of damage done to the entry by the fire that occurred early on during the ca.-1855 remodeling of the meetinghouse.

Close examination of the doorways' woodwork revealed the following information.

- Each jamb pair consisted of a “thick” and a “thin” jamb, with the thick jamb in both cases being located at the north brick wall.
- The header for the west-stairway doorway was modified, using new woodwork, about the same time the exterior doors were made flush with the exterior brick walls (circa 1912). This thought is based on paint analysis of the new wood.

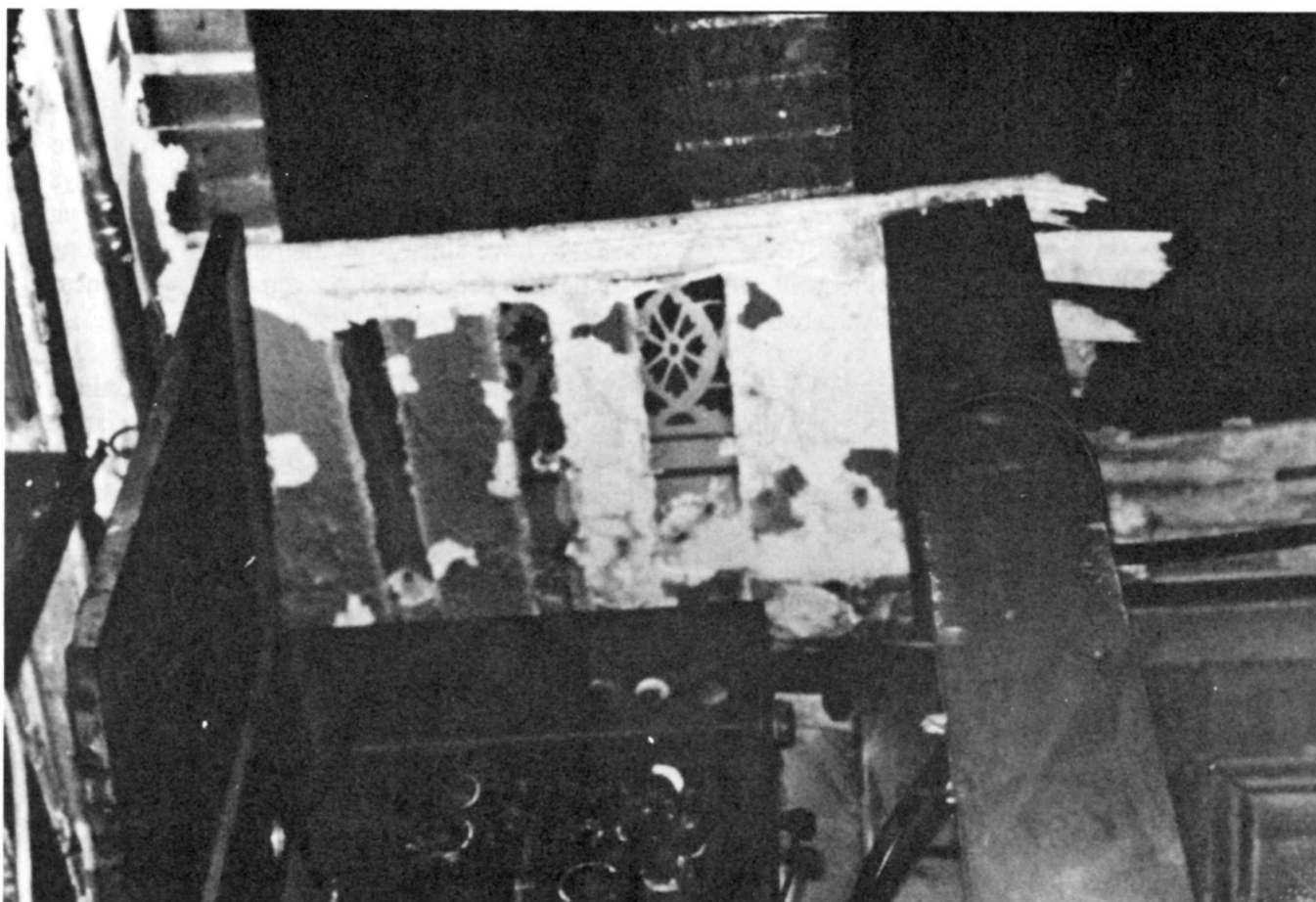


Figure 30. Entry Ceiling, Showing Decorative Painting Above North-Wall Doorways (1975).



Figure 31. Entry, East Sanctuary-Stair Doorway (1975).

- The door hardware, held with gimlet screws, is relatively modern. Earlier screw holes indicate the door hinges were situated in about the same locations as the present modern ones. Each jamb, both left and right, appears to have had two three-screw hinges (circa 1855).
- Based on the door-hinge evidence and the size of the doorway openings (about 7 feet 6 inches high by 4 feet 6 inches wide), each doorway circa 1855 was fitted with a pair of doors. What these doors looked like circa 1855, and whether or not they were replaced at the same time as the door hardware, is not known, since no doors were found.

Heating and Lighting Systems

Although the entry itself probably was not heated, framing for a hot-air heat register for the second-story foyer above is located in the entry ceiling. This register appears to be part of the heating system installed in 1855, which will be described shortly.

After the ca.-1855 fire, the decision apparently was made to remove the two ceiling gas fixtures from the girt, and to install instead one gas fixture on the north wall, between the two exterior doorways. The gas-supply pipe for this fixture was incorporated into the ca.-1855 plaster of the north wall. This is known because the extant ca.-1855 plaster here still contains a distinct impression of the pipe, protected over the years by a later plaster patch (M048). The wall fixture itself disappeared before the 1937 HABS photographs were taken of this area, so there is no record of its appearance.

Finishes

Paint finishes in the entry in 1855, based on building fabric remaining from that period, were austere. This further discounts the possibility of an elaborately painted ceiling in 1855. The plastered walls were finished with a white calcimine paint in the entry (P042) and stairways (P090). There is no evidence here of wallpaper, as used circa 1855 in the foyer and sanctuary. The stairway treads, risers, balusters, and baseboards were finished with a zinc white paint (P014, P017, P019-021). The newel posts and second-story handrails were stained and varnished (P015-016).

Basement/First Story

Plan

The evidence for the ca.-1855 entry has already been discussed. Little ca.-1855 material remains in the rest of the basement area. The evidence for the entry partition wall suggests that a small closet was located under each of the two corner stairways to the sanctuary. As will be discussed shortly, it is possible that a brick enclosure was built along the west wall to house the new furnace. The need for a direct route between the furnace and the rear, south yard—where fuel was stored— suggests that at least the southwest “minister’s room” was downgraded to become part of this route. It is not known if the southeast “minister’s room” remained intact.

The documentation is also limited. One contemporary observer stated that the former schoolroom had become the “vestry.”²⁵ However, Sabbath School classes continued to be held.²⁶ No mention is made of the “minister’s rooms.”

Floor

The level of the basement floor, like that of the entry floor, probably did not change in 1855.

Walls

The wall treatment in the majority of the basement in 1855 appears to have been plaster above a three-foot-high wooden dado. Sections of wall in the northeast and northwest corners, which had been plastered in 1806 as part of the enclosed stairways to the sanctuary, retained their plaster (M002-006, M010, M013-14, M018-019). The rest of the brick walls, which had been left exposed in 1806, were now plastered. Some of this plaster remains on the walls between D-101 and W-102 (M025), and between W-102 and W-103 (M027). The primary evidence for the existence of a dado was found in 1975 on the basement side of the entry partition.²⁷ This wall has since been lost. However, some nails located in the lower sections of the exterior walls appear to be iron cut nails (e.g., A009), and may be evidence that the ca.-1855 dado continued onto the exterior brick walls.

Ceiling

The basement ceiling in 1855 appears to have remained level with the bottom surface of the girts. Nail evidence indicates that most of the 1806 plaster ceiling was retained in 1855, but that the portion of the ceiling that was damaged by the entry fire circa 1855 was repaired. For example, the nails used to attach the ceiling’s strap hangers to the sides of the joists that were located farthest from the entry fire are wrought iron (circa 1806-1808). However, strap-hanger nails located close to the entry (e.g., A023) are cut iron nails, similar to other nails used in 1855 (see figure 21). There is no nail or plaster evidence for a basement ceiling located flush against the ceiling joists as in the entry in 1855. No ceiling plaster remains from the ca.-1855 period.

The ca.-1855 remodeling seems the most likely origin of the two basement cast-iron columns that support the east and west girts of the sanctuary floor. This was the date when cast-iron columns were introduced in the sanctuary to support the gallery. The paint evidence corroborates the ca.-1855 date. Five layers of paint (P143) were found applied directly to the columns, beneath a later application of wire and plaster that was dated as being post-1880 (M040). These five layers correspond approximately to the number of times the basement plaster walls were painted with calcimine before the post-1880 alterations. The first paint layer on the east column is a white lead paint, which would match the 1855 white paint scheme. Lead paint may have been used rather than white zinc paint because of the metal composition of the columns. Presumably the 1806 wooden post supporting the cut in the middle girt of the sanctuary floor remained in place circa 1855.

²⁵ Garrison, “Decade Meeting.”

²⁶ Minutes of the Boston South Baptist Association, 1849-1867 and 1868-1898.

²⁷ Detwiller, “African Meeting House,” between pp. 18-19.

A large patch in the floor of the sanctuary, and hence in the ceiling of the basement, is located in the southeast corner. There has been some thought that it is the remaining evidence of a small spiral staircase.²⁸ However, insufficient evidence remains of this feature to determine its original use or configuration.

Doorways

Two exterior doorways are known to have existed in the basement area at the end of the 1855 alterations. One was the original schoolroom doorway toward the north end of the east elevation (D-101), which is seen in the ca.-1860 photograph (fig. 5). The other was the original doorway to the back rooms (D-102), located toward the south end of the east elevation. Paint evidence indicates that the conversion of both of these doorways to their present role as windows occurred after 1855. Paint samples taken from sections of original doorway woodwork (frames and jamb paneling) contained ca.-1855 layers (see P044-045 and P209-210), while the window sills and wainscot below have only later layers (P047, P211).

A third doorway, at the west end of the south elevation (D-103), may have been in place in 1855. It was bricked up in 1975, so no woodwork was available for paint sampling. It appears to have been installed at a time before the floor was lowered, and so may date to 1855. This doorway would have provided access to the back yard, where fuel for the ca.-1855 furnace was most likely stored.²⁹ The style of the three exterior doorways' doors in 1855 is not known, although they may have been stylistically similar to the front doors installed in 1855 (see figure 5).

Windows

Paint and mortar evidence indicates that the following windows were extant in 1855: W-101, W-102, W-103, W-104, W-106, W-107, W-108, W-109, W-110, and W-112. Many paint samples taken from these windows' jambs, lintel boards, sills, and casings have early lead paint layers predating the 1855 zinc-white paint layer. However, stucco mortar on the exterior lower brick jambs, and interior mortar sealing the window frames, contain orange sand characteristic of 1855 mortar (e.g., M026). Since the mortar evidence indicates that the basement windows were lengthened in 1855, but the paint evidence indicates that the window openings are earlier, it appears that painted wood was reused during the enlargement of the windows in 1855. It may even be possible that window woodwork removed from elsewhere in the meetinghouse at this time (such as from the upper stories) was reused in the basement. Two smaller windows having no early paint are W-101 and W-112, although 1855 stucco on their exterior jambs suggests that they were installed—probably as closet windows—in 1855 (M052, M055). W-101 was larger than W-112 in 1855, as indicated by the later brick infill (M008) used to reduce W-101 to its present size.

Window openings W-105 and W-111 were bricked up in 1975, and all datable woodwork was lost. As indicated in "Original 1806 Appearance," Section B, "Basement/First Story," it is likely that W-105 was an original window, and so was extant in 1855. W-111, which began in 1806 as

²⁸ Detwiler, "African Meeting House," p. 13.

²⁹ Beth A. Bower and Duncan Ritchie, "Preliminary Archaeological Investigations at the African Meeting House, Boston, Mass." (typescript dated 1975; on file at the Museum of Afro American History, Boston), p. 3.

a doorway, probably was converted into a window during the ca.-1855 work, as discussed earlier in this section.

The window sashes in all of the basement windows were replaced at a later date. There is no photographic or other documentation of the appearance of the 1855 window sashes. It is therefore possible only to conjecture that the basement sashes were similar in style to the upper-story windows in 1855, being six-over-six sashes.

Heating and Lighting Systems

The framing for heat registers for the second-story sanctuary may be seen in the ceiling of the basement. These were part of a central heating system installed circa 1855. The type of system used, known as "gravity" heating, was:

developed in the mid-nineteenth century. In such furnaces, cold air was drawn in from outdoors, where it became heated and rose through ducts to the various rooms. . . . The smoke generated in the combustion chamber of the gravity furnace was piped to a chimney and thence outdoors.³⁰

The furnace for this system would have been located in the basement. The exact site is unknown; no base or ductwork for such a furnace is now evident. The furnace probably utilized the flue opening in the west wall. The cold-air intake for the furnace ideally would have been located on the exposed side of the building. In fact, a small hole seen circa 1860 (fig. 5) in the brickwork of the north elevation at the bottom of the former location of the west (1806) doorway may be the cold-air intake. Therefore, the location of the 1855 furnace probably was similar to the furnace location shown on one of the 1934 HABS drawings (fig. 7, left). The furnace itself probably was surrounded by a brick enclosure. Although no physical evidence was found for such an enclosure, other furnaces of that time period frequently had them.³¹ Ducts leading from the furnace would have been round, probably made of tin, and inclined at an angle from the furnace to the heat registers. Heat ducts therefore would have been visible in the ceiling of the basement.

Heating of the basement itself may have been limited to the heat given off by the basement furnace and its ducts. No evidence of a separate heating system for the basement in 1855 was found, but there is no reason why a stove could not have continued in use at the east end of the south wall.

The way in which the basement was lighted in 1855 could not be determined. No evidence remains of an early gaslight system, as existed in the entry, foyer, and sanctuary. In fact, if the original 1806 ceiling was retained in 1855, it would not have been possible to conceal the piping for such a system. It is therefore likely that oil lamps continued to be used in the basement at this time.

³⁰ Gary Vanderweil, "Draft Heating and Ventilating Systems of The Victorian Era," *19th Century* (Spring 1976), p. 15.

³¹ Based on the 1854 furnace at Martin Van Buren NHS; Orville W. Carroll, "A Signed and Dated 1851 Furnace in Rome, N.Y.," *Bulletin of the Association for Preservation Technology*, Vol. III, No. 4 (1971), p. 89.

Finishes

Paint finishes used in the basement in 1855 were similar to those used in the entry. Plastered walls were painted with white calcimine, and woodwork (i.e., windows) with white zinc paint. Although no samples of the 1855 ceiling plaster or dado were available for analysis, the white scheme probably also was used for these elements.

Foyer

Plan

Just as the north end of the 1806 basement story was walled off circa 1855 to create the entry, the north end of the 1806 second story was partitioned off to form the foyer (fig. 32). This foyer is the terminus of the stairways to the sanctuary—already described as part of the entry—and the start of the stairways to the gallery. These two gallery stairways, located at the east and west ends of the foyer over the sanctuary stairways, display an open plan. They remain intact from circa 1855, as does the south partition wall.

Floor

The present foyer floor consists of modern tongue-and-groove boards. The height of this new floor suggests that the historic floor was removed before the new floor was laid. The 1855 floorboards were probably similar to those found in the sanctuary under the modern floor.

Walls

The north, east, and west walls of the foyer, which were part of the sanctuary in 1806 and so plastered at that time, were replastered circa 1855. The south wall—the new partition wall—was built in a serpentine shape (fig. 32). It also was plastered. A baseboard approximately 9-1/2 inches high was used on the three exterior walls. This baseboard is extant on the east and west walls, and marks of it remain on the north wall. A smaller baseboard was used on the south partition wall, and as a skirtboard for the gallery stairways. The 1855 baseboard has disappeared from the south partition, but the blocking that supported it is extant. Most of the 1855 gallery-stairway skirtboards remain intact (see figure 33, center). During the ca.-1855 work, the wall plaster was applied after the baseboards were installed.

Ceiling

The foyer ceiling in 1855 would have been the soffits of the east and west stairways to the gallery, and the soffit of the north-wall section of gallery. The HABS photographs show that the soffits of the stairways were plastered (fig. 11), and suggest that the soffit of the north-wall section of gallery also was plastered (fig. 15).

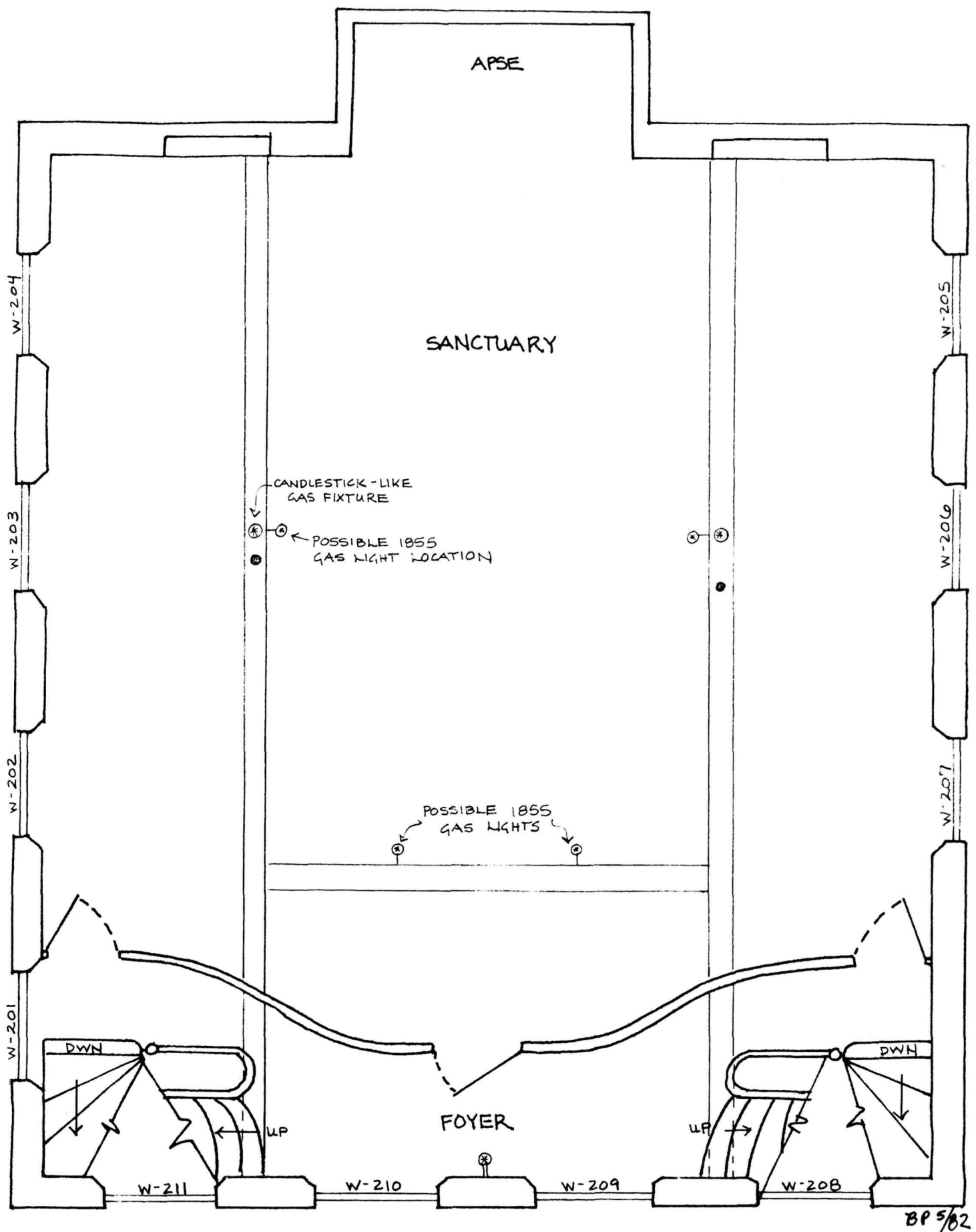
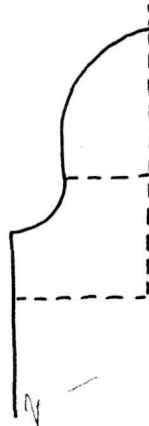


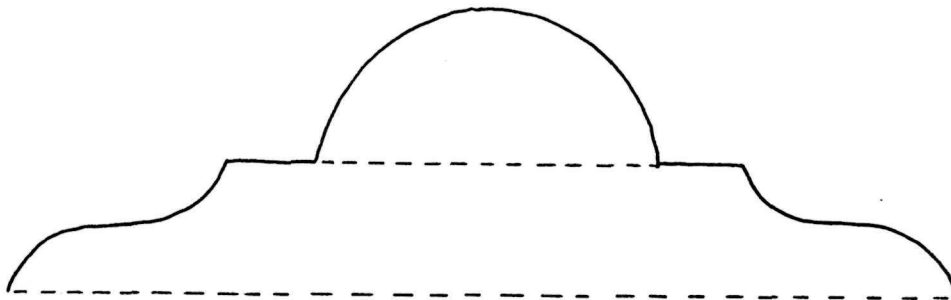
Figure 32. Conjectural 1855 Second-Floor Plan.



WAINSCOT INFILL MOLDING NEXT TO W-207,
SANCTUARY



BASEBOARD MOLDING,
WEST GALLERY STAIRS



DOORWAY MOLDING, NORTH
PARTITION WALL, SANCTUARY

BP 5/82

Figure 33. Examples of 1855 Molding Profiles Found at the African Meeting House.

Doorways

Three doorways were located in the south partition wall circa 1855. These doorways remain today, but were altered sometime after 1880 using wire nails. However, sufficient evidence remains to reconstruct their 1855 appearance. New lath and plaster, and cut-off studs above the doorways, suggest that in 1855 the doorways were approximately 7 inches higher and 7 inches narrower than today. On the doorway jambs (reused but rearranged after 1880), door-hinge and mortise-lock-strike evidence indicates that each doorway contained a single door, with the two end doors opening into the sanctuary, and the middle door opening into the foyer (fig. 32). The moldings on the foyer side of the doorways postdate 1880. In 1855, the moldings were probably identical to the extant 1855 doorway moldings on the sanctuary side of the doorways (fig. 33, bottom).

Windows

The west-wall window in the foyer apparently was closed up in 1855. The rest of the windows here were enlarged. The result was four two-story windows in the north elevation, and one six-over-six, double-hung sash window in the east elevation. Paint analysis of these windows indicates that the window sills in the north and east windows were reused when the windows were lengthened (P085, P088), and that the jamb of the east window was constructed with wood reused from 1806 (P082). Similarly, the wood used circa 1855 to fill in the lower corner of W-211, which extended below the east gallery stairway, was ca.-1806 material that has never been overpainted (P089). The same is probably true of the infill of the lower corner of W-208.

Louvered interior window blinds are seen at all north- and east-elevation windows in the ca.-1860 photograph of the building (fig. 5). These probably were installed in 1855. No evidence of blind hardware was found on the 1855 window jambs. Nevertheless, the blinds seen in figure 5 are the same length as the 1855 window openings, and several individual blinds recovered during the 1975 archeological investigations (A509) here have 1855 paint layers (P163).³²

Heating and Lighting Systems

A heat register was located in the floor of the foyer in 1855. The framing for this register opening can be seen in the ceiling of the entry, below. The opening was later covered over with modern floorboards.

One gaslight wall fixture illuminated the foyer in 1855. This fixture was located between W-209 and W-210. Evidence for it consists of the impression of its gas line, left in the 1855 plaster coat that was applied to the wall after the gas line was installed (P153, M042). As in the entry, the 1855 gaslight wall fixture disappeared before the 1937 HABS interior photographs were taken; there is no record of its appearance.

Finishes

The wall finish in the foyer in 1855 appears to have been wallpaper. Although this paper was subsequently removed, wallpaper fibers were observed to be the first finish in sample P109, from the south partition wall. These paper fibers were identified to be cotton, as opposed to

³² Bower and Ritchie, p. 7.

mechanical wood pulp, which further verifies that the paper dates to 1855. After 1855, mechanical wood pulp came into wide use as a less-expensive alternative to rag paper.³³ While no sample of the wallpaper pattern in the foyer has survived, it may have been similar to the wallpaper sample found on the partition wall in the sanctuary.

Wallpaper might seem to be an unusual wall finish in a church. However, it would have been considered entirely appropriate in 1855 Boston:

By the middle of the 19th century . . . churches were specified as suitable places for wallpapering by J.F. Bumstead & Company of Boston. The firm mailed out a circular in 1853 that described the way a church interior might be decorated with its products: "A church can be papered in a becoming style, at an inconsiderable expense. The walls of marble blocks; or paneled with columns intervening; and the ceiling in plain or watered figure, with moldings and center pieces; - all of a very chaste and church-like character."³⁴

The foyer woodwork, including doorway moldings, windows, baseboards, and stairways, was painted with white zinc paint.

Sanctuary and Gallery

Not only the main story of the sanctuary, but also the gallery, were altered substantially in 1855.

Plan

As stated previously, a serpentine partition was built across the north end of the 1806 sanctuary to form a separate foyer (fig. 32). New pews were installed on both the main story and in the gallery; the main-story pews were curved semicircularly. An apse apparently was constructed in the middle of the south wall at this time. Exterior evidence for this feature has already been discussed. Interior evidence for its existence in 1855 consists of semicircular lines scribed on the sanctuary floor at that time for the alignment of the 1855 pews; the center point of the semicircle falls within the apse. The early apse is seen in the 1937 HABS photographs (figs. 12-13, 16). It was completely rebuilt in 1975.

³³ Harold J. Plenderleith and A.E.A. Werner, *The Conservation of Antiquities And Works of Art* (London: Oxford University Press, 1976), pp. 55-56.

³⁴ Catherine Lynn, *Wallpaper in America: From the Seventeenth Century to World War I* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., Inc., 1980), p. 362.

Floor

The wide plank subfloor and finish floor from 1806 was retained in 1855. This is known because that floor exists today, having been protected by a later tongue-and-groove floor. As indicated above, the floor was scribed in 1855 to help align the pews installed then.

Walls

The walls in the sanctuary were replastered in 1855, as was done in the entry and foyer. The extant 1806 plaster was chipped to provide good adhesion for the new plaster.

The original, 1806 vertical-board wainscot was retained on the east and west walls, but a new, plain baseboard was installed there. The physical evidence indicates that the original, 1806 wainscot on the south wall also was retained, on either side of the new apse (fig. 34). Evidence for this retention, cited below, was found when the National Park Service temporarily removed sections of post-1855, tongue-and-groove wainscot on the south wall.

- A wooden furring strip was found incorporated into, and flush with, the 1806 brick wall. The 1806 wainscot would have been nailed to this strip, as on the east and west walls. (The post-1855 wainscot was attached to horizontal furring strips nailed to the brick wall.)
- Early (1806-1855) but not later paint (P214) was found on the extreme south end of the west-wall wainscot. This end was exposed while the 1806 south-wall wainscot was in place, but was covered over by the later wainscot, which projected farther from the south wall (probably due to its surface-mounted furring strips).
- Fragments of the earlier wainscot, having the 1806 and 1855 paint-layer sequences (P215), were found reused in a floor patch on the north side of the sanctuary.

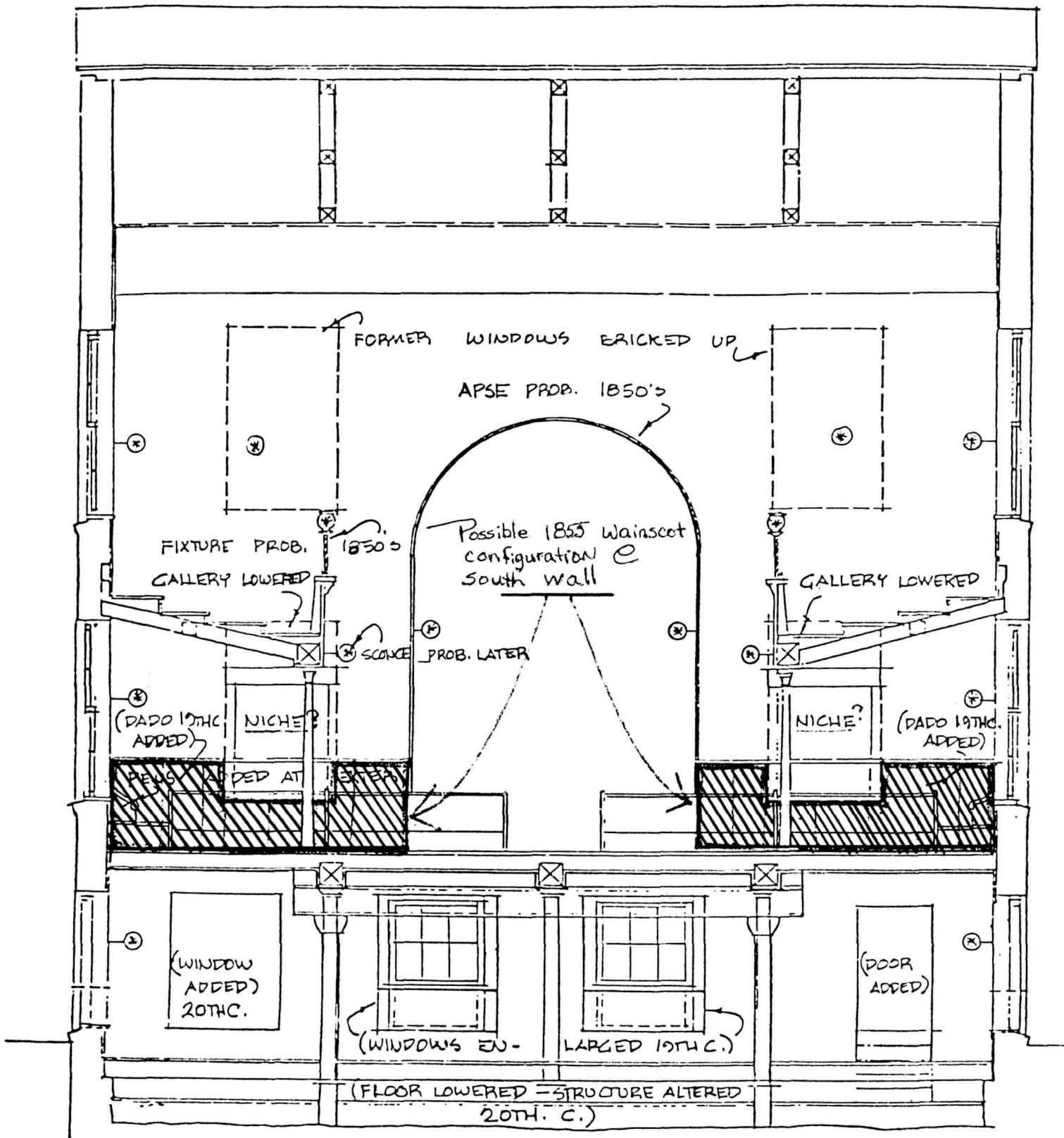
The reason why the south-wall wainscot was replaced with different but very similar wainscot years after the 1855 remodeling is unclear. The most likely explanation will be discussed shortly in the section, "Windows."

Ceiling

The arched ceiling of 1806 apparently was not replastered in 1855: as mentioned earlier, fragments of this ceiling remained in 1982 (M051). The trap door in the northwest corner was retained, as indicated by the HABS photographs (fig. 17). The HABS photographs (figs. 12, 16) also show the apse with a barrel-vaulted ceiling that may have dated to 1855. However, the early apse was replaced in 1975, and all interior architectural fabric was lost.

Doorways

The three doorways in the north partition wall have been discussed previously in connection with the foyer. A fourth doorway may have been located in the west wall of the apse. Although this conjectured doorway had been removed by the time the 1937 HABS photographs were taken (fig. 12), the south exterior wall of the building shows evidence of a possible exterior stairway and protective roof.



SECTION A-A'

CONJECTURAL RESTORATION c.1850's

AFRICAN MEETINGHOUSE

TO C. 1900

⊙ GAS FIXTURE OUTLETS

0 5 10

FCD SPNEA 1975

Figure 34. Conjectural Elevation, South Wall of Sanctuary (circa 1850-1900).

Windows

All of the window openings in the east and west walls of the sanctuary were lengthened by about a foot in 1855. These were finished with wooden jambs, lintels, and sills that appear to have been fashioned of wood reused from the 1806 period (P111, P124-125, P127, P168). For some reason, the splay of the jamb boards installed in 1855 was less than that of the 1806 jamb boards. Thus, the interior window openings were a little narrower than in 1806, and small strips of plaster and wainscot infill (fig. 33, top) were needed on both sides of each window.

Concerning the south wall, the apse may have replaced a large arched window in the center of this wall.³⁵ The four rectangular windows were bricked up on the outside. Of the four, the upper two were infilled completely. The two second-story windows were treated more complexly. A large wooden beam was installed bisecting each of them. This apparently was done to permit the rebuilding of the gallery, which will be discussed shortly. The portion of window opening above the beam was bricked in completely. The portion of window opening below the beam was left open, to serve as a niche or cupboard. There is no evidence that these niches were plastered.³⁶ The 1806 wainscot, which fitted around the lower ends of the second-story window openings, was retained. Later, the niches were closed up. Rather than patch the 1806 wainscot, it appears that this wainscot was removed completely from the south wall, and replaced with tongue-and-groove wainscot. Unfortunately, the niches were filled in with concrete blocks and portland cement in 1975, obliterating possible evidence of their history.

As mentioned in connection with the foyer, the windows of the east and west elevations were probably hung with louvered interior blinds at this time.

Main-Story Pews

The pews on the main level of the sanctuary in 1855 were curved. Scribe lines for the approximate placement of these pews may still be seen on the sanctuary floorboards (see Chapter IV, "Existing Conditions: Second Story"). This evidence was uncovered when the post-1880 floorboards here were recently removed. Twelve lines, radiating from a common center located in the apse area, were inscribed on the floor with a sharp instrument. These lines were no doubt used as guides both in the construction and the installation of the new pews. The exact locations of the 10 rows of pews as installed are defined on the floorboards by:

- the overlap of paint onto the floor at the pew ends and center partitions when the pews were repainted after 1855;
- the locations of post-1855 carpet tacks, which outline the pew ends and center partitions; and

³⁵ Detwiller, "African Meeting House," between pp. 10-11 and between pp. 24-25.

³⁶ Detwiller to Barbara E. Pearson, 1/15/85.

- the locations of 16 pairs of holes in the top floorboards for the legs of 16 iron mid-pew seat supports. One can only guess at the reason for countersinking some legs and not others. Perhaps the floor was not level in 1855, and this was an attempt to level out the new seating.

The old 1806 box pews may have been disassembled and reused during the renovations in 1855, explaining the early paint found on 1855 features.

Pulpit

No evidence could be found of the configuration of the pulpit after the renovations of 1855. Documentation suggests that a new pulpit was installed at this time, with only portions of the old pulpit retained as relics.³⁷ See Appendix E for more information.

Gallery

The gallery was rebuilt in 1855. Although parts of it were either disassembled or shifted in 1975, its appearance in 1855 can be deduced from the extant physical evidence.

The long east and west carrying beams—salvaged from the 1736 West Church and reused in 1806—were retained and reused in 1855, judging by various marks upon them. It would seem that they were shifted somewhat from their 1806 locations, because after the 1855 work, their south ends intersected the south sanctuary wall where the two 1806 second-story window openings had been located. As described previously, these window openings in 1855 were infilled and outfitted with a bearing beam. Detwiller saw these beams and the carrying beams in 1975, before the former were removed and the latter were shifted once again. He concluded that the window beams had been introduced in 1855 to support the south ends of the carrying beams.³⁸ The north ends of the carrying beams ran through the foyer partition wall to the north exterior wall of the meetinghouse. Unfortunately, conclusive evidence of the point of intersection was lost during 1975 repairs to the brickwork here.

The location of the carrying beams in 1855 is further established by the marks left by the two cast-iron columns introduced to support the beams in 1855. (The two pair of wooden, 1806 columns were removed and replaced by a single pair of stronger, metal columns.) The cast-iron columns left marks on the undersides of the carrying beams, and infill patches in the 1806/1855 floor recall the location of the columns' bases. The columns apparently did not sit squarely on the east and west sanctuary-floor girts. Rather, the column for the east carrying beam rested on a support (still extant) scabbed onto the east side of the east girt, and the column for the west carrying beam rested on the far west edge of the west basement girt (figs. 35-36).

³⁷ Garrison, "Decade Meeting."

³⁸ Detwiller, "African Meeting House," p. 25.

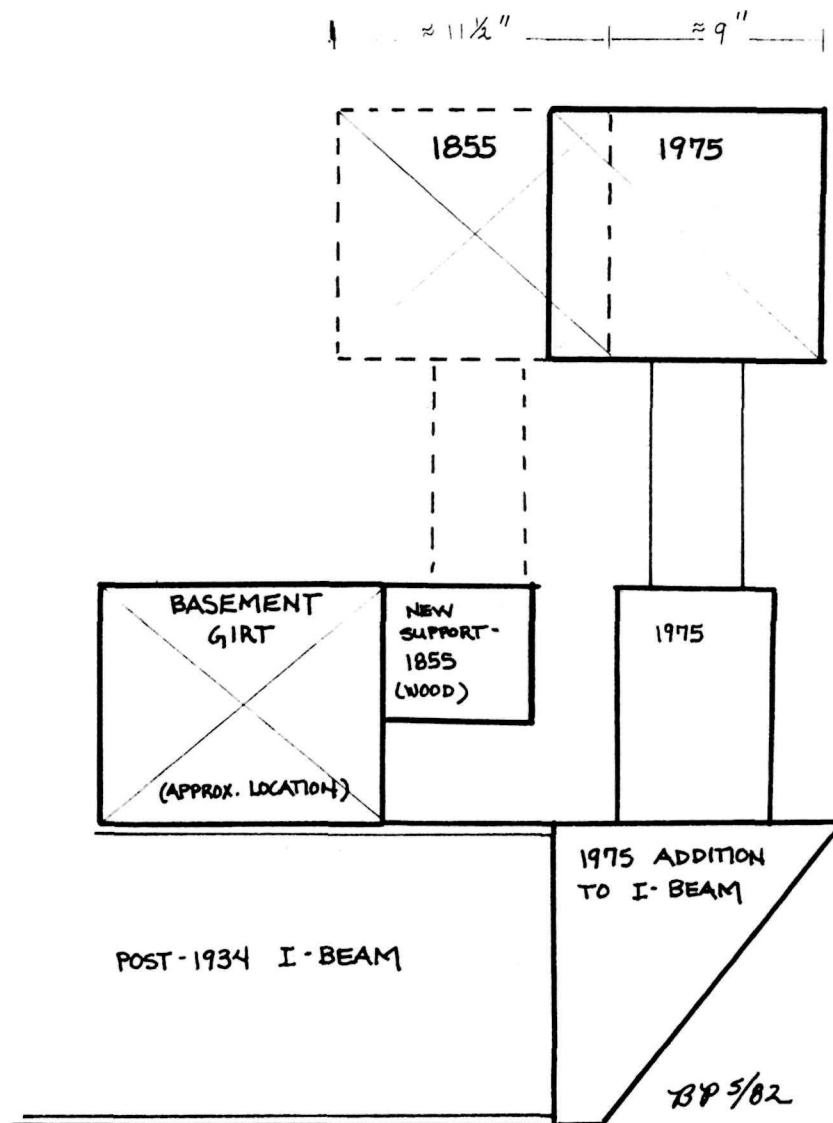


Figure 35. Locations of East Gallery Carrying Beam at North Wall in 1855 and 1975.

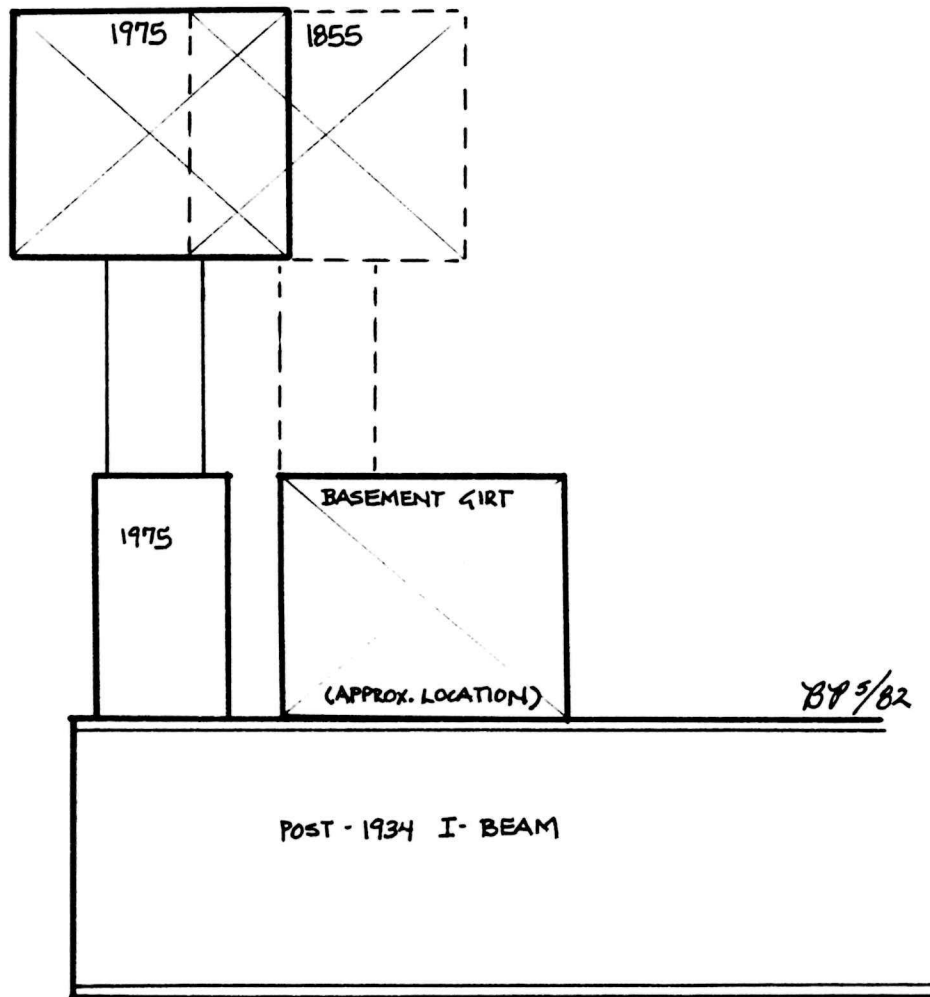


Figure 36. Locations of West Gallery Carrying Beam at North Wall in 1855 and 1975.

The final clue as to the 1855 location of the gallery carrying beams, and the bridging beam between them, is the length of the 1855 gallery floor joists, which were removed to storage in 1975. These have outer ends that were notched to sit on a brick ledge constructed at the lintel level of the second-story windows. (Their inner ends, as in 1806, rested on the carrying beams.) The outer-end notches were cut in a manner that reflect the angle of the joists as they descended to the carrying beams. By plotting the length of the joists and their former slope, one can deduce the approximate locations of the carrying beams.

Some of the floor joists used for the north-wall section of gallery exhibit outer ends with double notches, while others have only the single notch. It is thought that this indicates the use on the north wall of a wooden ledger strip, to supplement the brick ledge. The ledge would have been needed to carry the floor joists across the lengthened windows here. The single-notched joists would have intersected the north wall within the window openings, and so would have rested only on the ledger strip. The double-notched joists would have intersected the north wall brickwork, and so would have rested on both the ledger strip and the brick ledge.

Heating and Lighting Systems

A hot-air heating system that served only the foyer and sanctuary seems to have been installed in the meetinghouse in 1855. Such a system would have been needed at that time, because the sanctuary's 1806 stovepipe holes—leading to the flues in the south wall—were covered over by the gallery as rebuilt in 1855. Ample evidence remains of the floor registers employed by this system. These were closed up when the current finish floor was installed in the foyer and sanctuary, but their framing can still be seen in the ceilings of the entry and basement. Confirmation of the register locations may be obtained when the later finish floor is removed from the foyer and sanctuary.

Lighting of the sanctuary in 1855 appears to have been accomplished with gas lamps. An early-style fixture with candlestick-like base (fig. 37) was found during archeological excavations in 1975. Detwiller determined that this fixture was probably one of two that sat on top of the gallery's solid balustrade in 1855 (fig. 32). In addition, Detwiller cites evidence for gaslight fixtures on the front of the balustrade that may have superseded the candlestick-like lamps at an early date.³⁹ However, it is more likely that they coexisted with the "candlestick" fixtures, and served to light the main level of the sanctuary below. This is based on the fact that the main level of the sanctuary must have been lighted by some means, and there is no evidence elsewhere for other early gaslight fixtures.

Evidence of these fixtures may be seen in the 1937 HABS photographs of the sanctuary (figs. 13-14). Also, extant holes in the sides of the east and west gallery beams probably accommodated the gas-supply pipes for these fixtures. Unfortunately, it is not possible to verify the period of the fixtures on the front of the gallery balustrade, since all associated woodwork and paint was removed in 1975. If these fixtures postdated 1855, they were probably installed at the same time as the post-1880 gaslight fixtures on the east and west walls.

³⁹ See footnote 38.



Figure 37. Early Gaslight Fixture Found During 1975 Archeological Work.

Finishes

The walls of the sanctuary and gallery were wallpapered in 1855 to resemble blocks of marble (fig. 38). Portions of this paper remain in situ on the north partition wall, behind a pew added sometime shortly after 1855 (figs. 39-40). The ceiling may also have been papered, for either cosmetic or purely decorative reasons. See Appendix B for more information about these treatments.

Most of the woodwork in the sanctuary was painted with a zinc white paint in 1855. This included the exterior of the gallery balustrade (P207), but excluded the pews. The cast-iron columns supporting the gallery carrying beams were painted with a white lead paint, which apparently reacted with the metal over time and turned yellowish (P165).

The 1855 pews in the sanctuary and gallery were painted yellow (P104, P217), except for the trim around their ends and along their backs; this received a dark, resinous finish, perhaps varnish or shellac (P103). The rest of the woodwork in the gallery, including the interior of the gallery balustrade (P216), also was painted yellow.

The 1806/1855 wide-board floor was left unfinished in 1855, although it may have been protected by a loose (not nailed down) carpet, floorcloth, or other covering. This thought is based upon the following evidence, which was preserved under the modern floor laid over the historic one after 1880.

- No evidence remains of the floorboards ever having been painted or varnished.
- There are no lines of holes from floorcloth/carpet tacks at the perimeters of the ca.-1855 heat-register openings in the floor.
- Fragments of floor covering were preserved under iron cut tacks (A030) found both on board patches infilling ca.-1855 floor-register openings, and at various other locations on the floor (i.e., at pew ends, pew partitions, and at the room perimeter). All fragments appear to be from the same carpet type. Thus, the floor tacks and their associated carpet must postdate 1855.
- During the three repaintings of the curvilinear pews following 1855 (light pink, light pink, and orange), the paint was dripped—and overlapped to a limited extent—onto the adjacent floorboards. This suggests that no floor covering existed at this time, or that any floor covering that did exist was taken up at pew-painting time. After the 1855 heat registers were closed up, and a carpet tacked down on the floor, this paint overlap did not occur. A fragment of 1855 pew used to help close up one register has the same paint sequence evidence by the overlap.

The gaslight fixtures on the gallery balustrade had a gold-leaf finish (P162).



Figure 38. Sanctuary, 1855 Wallpaper.

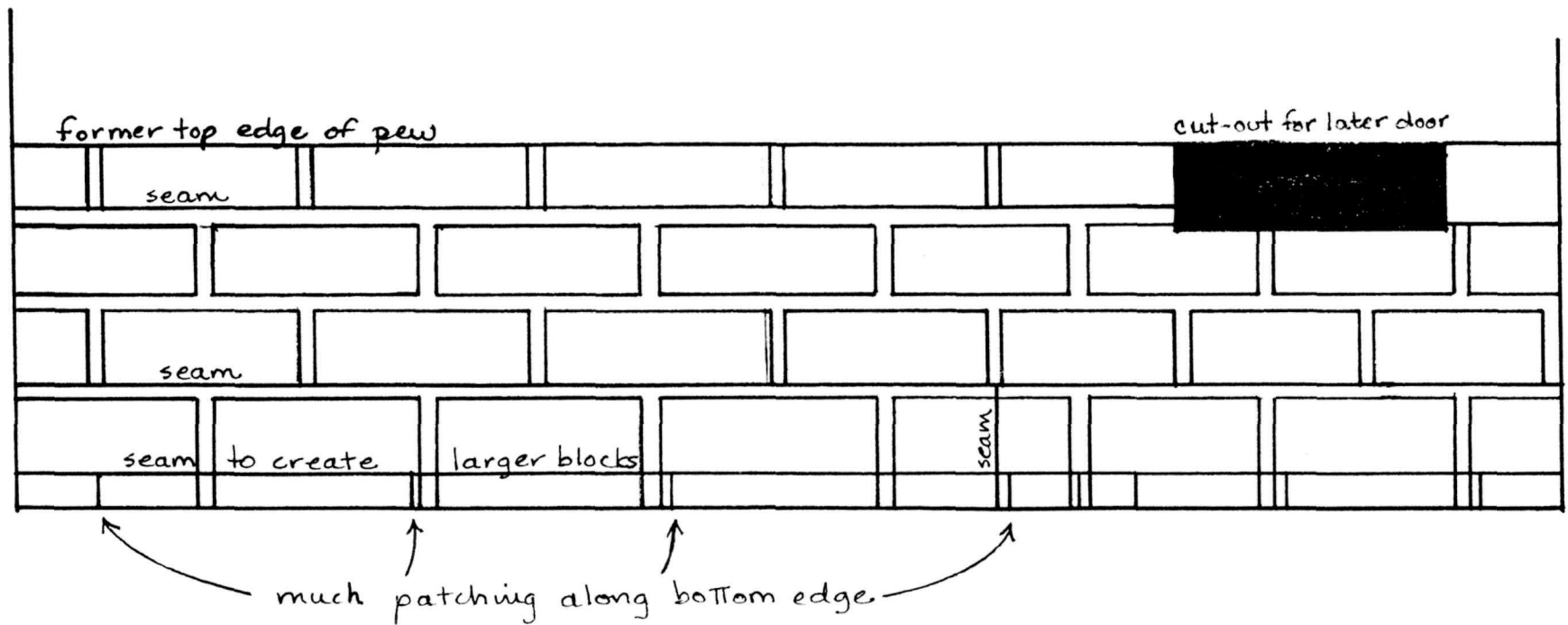


Figure 39. Sanctuary, 1855 Wallpaper on North Partition, East of Center Doorway.

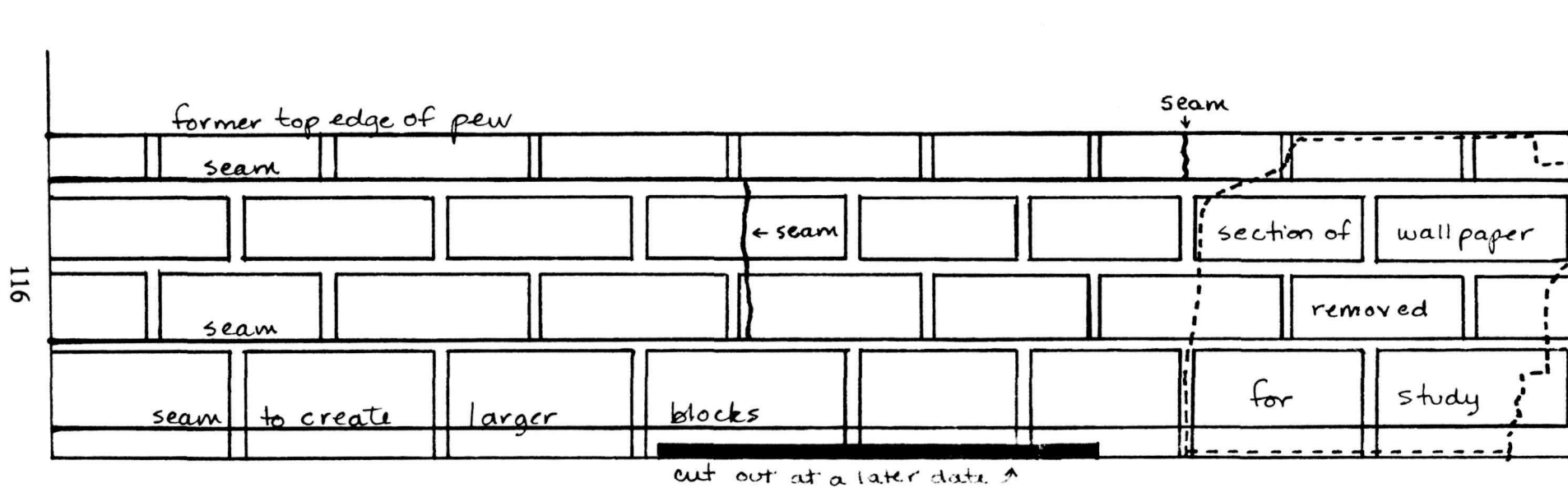


Figure 40. Sanctuary, 1855 Wallpaper on North Partition, West of Center Doorway.

POST-1855 ALTERATIONS

Several identifiable changes were made to the African Meeting House after the remodeling of 1855, but before the black Baptist congregation sold the building in 1898. These are as follows.

Exterior Work

- The brick north and east elevations were painted (based on paint analysis and figure 6).
- The 1855 hole in the north elevation, west corner, was closed. (Compare figures 5 and 6; note P204.) This hole may have been the cold-air intake for the 1855 furnace located in the basement. Its closure may represent a change in the heating system.
- A new shade was installed on the gaslight fixture on the north elevation. (Compare figures 5 and 6).

Interior Work

- A pew (P134-136) was installed against the north partition wall of the sanctuary, covering over a section of 1855 wallpaper. Iron cut nails were used to attach the pew back to the wall.
- The 1855 wallpaper was removed, except behind the north-wall sanctuary pew, and the plaster walls were painted with oil-based paint (deduced from paint analysis).

POST-1880 ALTERATIONS

General Information

Major alterations were made to the meetinghouse sometime after 1880, but before 1908 when electricity was installed. These changes have been roughly dated as being “after 1880” because wire nails and steel cut nails were used (fig. 41). These nail types did not come into general use in the United States until after 1880, and perhaps as late as 1890.⁴⁰ Paint-layer sequences also helped to identify alterations made at this time. Mortar sand from this period was identified to be characteristically poorly stored and to contain large pebbles (see figure 20).

Whether or not these changes were made when the meetinghouse was still in the possession of the black Baptist congregation could not be determined unequivocally. Between 1880 and 1897, the last year that the Baptists used the building, the only major increase in the expenses of St. Paul’s Church occurred in 1890. In that year, records show that the church’s “Home Expenses” increased by \$1,305 from the previous year.⁴¹ Although the church had only 189 members at that time, the congregation was probably stable during this period, since Peter Smith had been minister of the church for the previous eight years (fig. 3).

It is also possible that the “post-1880” improvements were not made to the meetinghouse until after it was sold in 1898. In fact, Samuel Tarplin, who purchased the building in 1898, agreed in his mortgage deed to “expend upon and improve said buildings to the extent and value of not less than two thousand dollars.”⁴² Work also may have been done in 1904 by Simon Dobkin, a carpenter, who owned the meetinghouse only four months before selling it to the Jewish Congregation Libavitz.

“Post-1880” work involved upgrading and expanding the gas lighting system, reinforcing the foundation walls, and renovating both the basement and the second story. These changes are detailed below.

⁴⁰ W.F.M. Goss, *Bench Work in Wood* (Boston: Ginn & Co., 1887 and 1890), pp. 157-158.

⁴¹ Minutes of the Boston South Baptist Association, 1868-1898.

⁴² Registry, Book 2566:305.

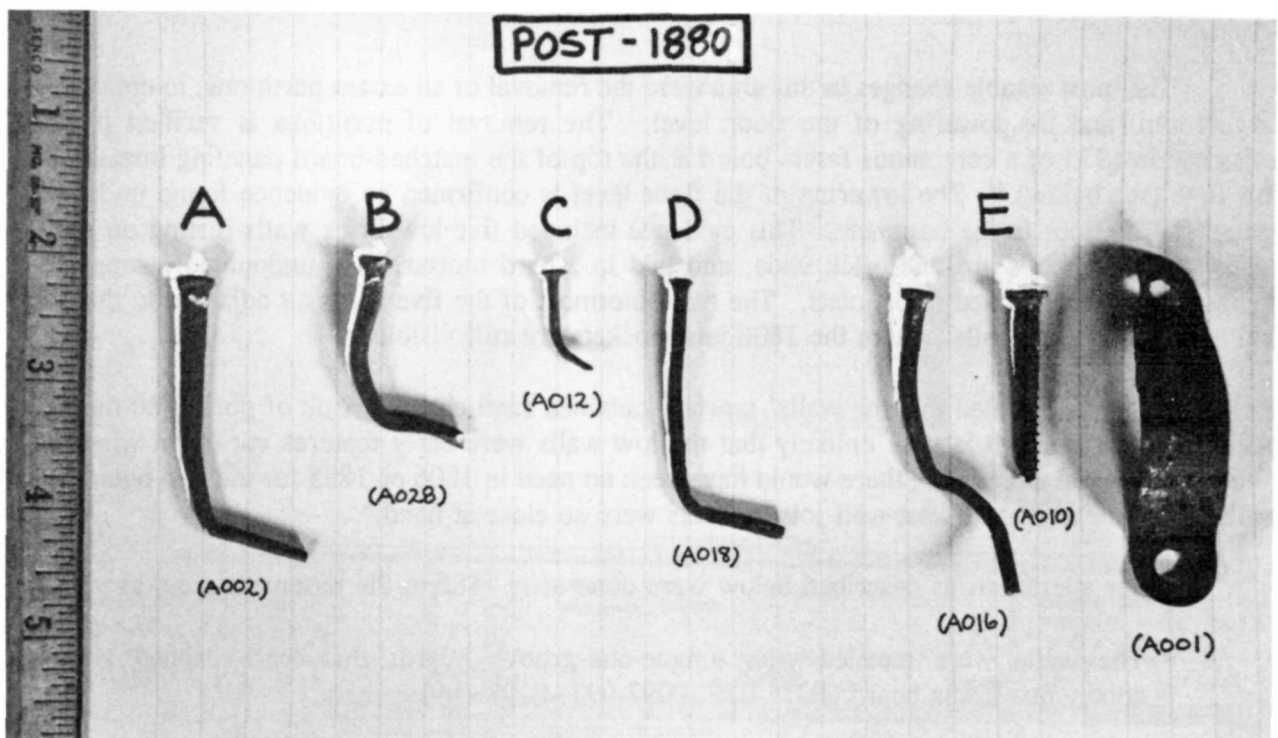


Figure 41. Representative Samples of Post-1880 Nails and Hardware Found at the African Meeting House.

Interior Work

Entry

The 1855 gaslight fixture on the north wall was removed, and the resultant hole was patched (P170, M048); a new gaslight ceiling fixture was probably installed on the middle girt.⁴³ The floor may have been lowered. A new partition wall may have been installed between the entry and the basement.

Basement/First Story

The most notable changes in this area were the removal of all extant partitions, to create one large room, and the lowering of the floor level. The removal of partitions is verified by the existence in 1975 of a continuous fascia board at the top of the matched-board paneling installed at this time (see below).⁴⁴ The lowering of the floor level is confirmed by evidence found under the recent (1975) floor in the basement. This evidence included five low brick walls resting on a dirt surface. These walls are one brick wide, and laid in a hard mortar; they undoubtedly supported beams that in turn carried floor joists. The two outermost of the five walls sit adjacent to the east and west foundation walls, where the 1806 joist pockets are still visible.

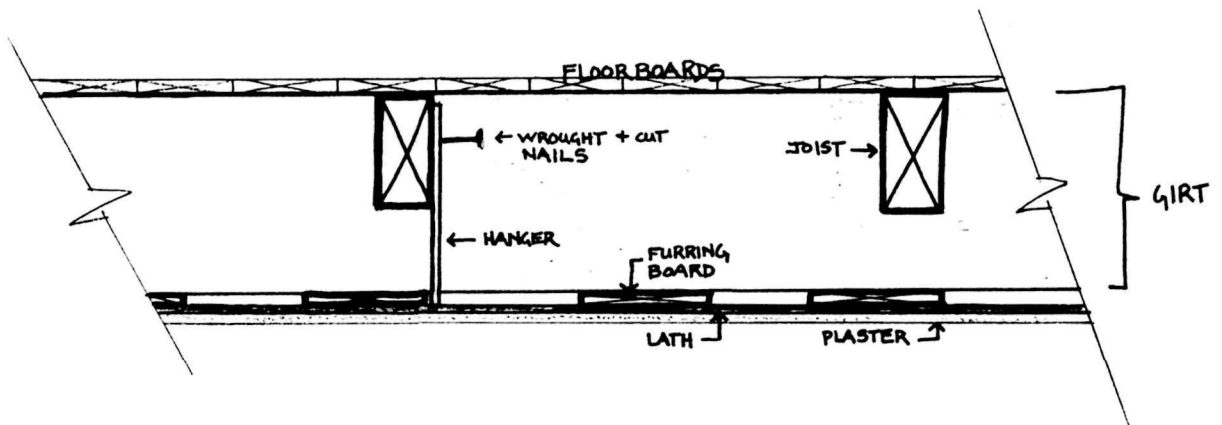
Analysis revealed that the walls' mortar contained sand characteristic of post-1880 mortar, being poorly sorted. It is very unlikely that the low walls were early features cut down when the floor was lowered after 1880; there would have been no need in 1806 or 1855 for the two outermost walls, since the east- and west-wall joist pockets were so close at hand.

Other alterations as described below were done after 1880 to the basement area, as well.

- The walls were paneled with tongue-and-groove boards that were capped with a continuous fascia board (P075-076, P092-097, P198-199).
- The wall bench was added (P078).
- The ceiling was raised (see figure 42; P081, M029).

⁴³ Detwiller, "African Meeting House," between pp. 18-19, 26. Although Detwiller's diagram is entitled, "First Floor Plan, Conjectural Restoration - c. 1850's to c. 1900," it shows gaslight ceiling fixtures in the basement area that he dates to post-1880 on p. 26. One of these fixtures is shown as being located on the middle girt in the entry.

⁴⁴ Detwiller, "African Meeting House," p. 26.



1806 Ceiling

Post-1880 Ceiling

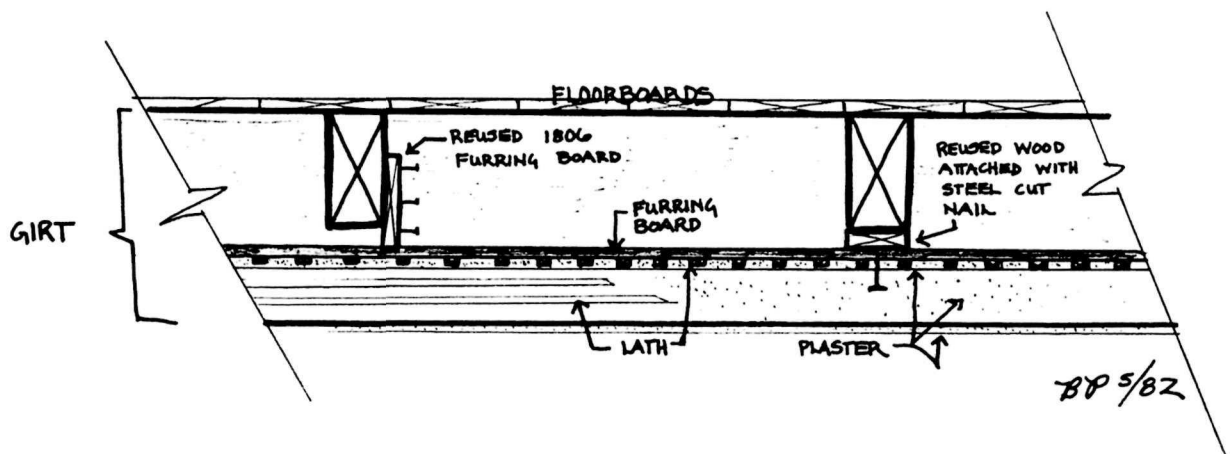


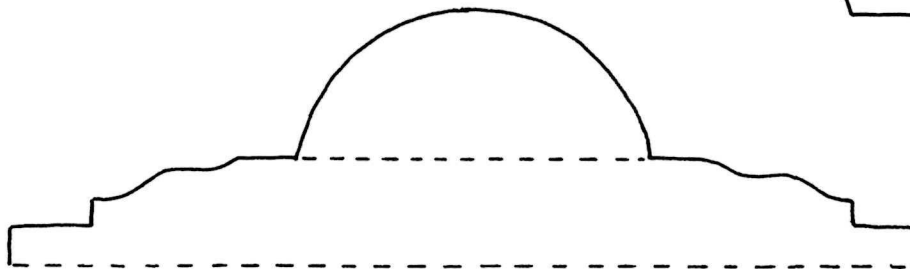
Figure 42. Comparison of Conjectural 1806 and Post-1880 Basement Ceilings.



WAINSCOT TOP MOLDING,
SOUTH WALL SANCTUARY



W-102 SILL,
BASEMENT



DOORWAY MOLDING, SOUTH
PARTITION WALL, FOYER

BP5/82

Figure 43. Examples of Post-1880 Molding Profiles
Found at the African Meeting House.

- Doorway D102 was converted to a window (P209-211).
- Some windows were altered: some jamb and sill boards were replaced (P052, 054; figure 43, middle); two-over-two sashes were installed (P051, P059, P062, P067, P069); W-101 was reduced in size (P024, M057); W-112 received a new frame and sashes (M008).
- The wooden post—presumably dating to 1806 and retained in 1855—that supported the cut in the middle sanctuary-floor girt was removed; a wooden beam was presumably introduced to compensate, spanning the two 1855 columns, which were plastered (P143, M040).
- Gas lighting was installed (A001).
- Toilets were possibly installed at the north end (a sewer system was extant by 1909, because repairs were recorded as being made then).

Foyer

Post-1880 alterations to the foyer involved the widening and shortening of the partition-wall doorways (fig. 43, bottom), and the installation of double doors in these openings (P156, P173).

Sanctuary and Gallery

- The south-wall niches were closed with framing and plaster; the 1806/1855 wainscot on this wall was removed, and was replaced with new wainscot (fig. 43, top; P122-123).
- Gaslight wall fixtures were installed between the windows on the east and west walls (P171, M044). This is based on plaster patch analysis.
- Gas fixtures atop the gallery balustrade, and louvered window blinds, were removed and discarded in the backyard (P162-163). (Blinds used as forms for concrete foundation reinforcement.) Examples of both discovered during archeological excavations.⁴⁵
- Doorways in the partition between the foyer and the sanctuary were widened and shortened (P156, P173), and the plaster wall was patched (P119, M049).
- A small, rectangular opening—apparently associated with gas lighting—was created in the partition wall (P138).
- Pews were added along exterior gallery walls (P202), followed shortly by the addition of pews along exterior sanctuary walls (P172).

⁴⁵ Bower and Ritchie, p. 7.

A new heating system—steam or hot-water—also appears to have been installed at this time. No elements of this system remain, except for holes in the second-story floorboards for the radiator pipes. However, it is clear that the ca.-1855 hot-air floor registers were closed up during this remodeling, and that the patches were covered over by wall-to-wall carpeting. Evidence for this includes the wire nails and paint layering on the reused pieces of wood used to close up the registers (P215). Other clues are the floor tacks (A030), and carpet fragments preserved under these tacks, found on the sanctuary floor. (No tacks were retrieved from the gallery floor, which had been disassembled in 1975.) Analysis of the carpet fragments indicated that the fibers in one direction were undyed cotton, and in the other direction were a dyed hair, perhaps wool. Individual strands of the dyed hair displayed the colors red, green, black, or natural/beige.

ALTERATIONS 1904-1972

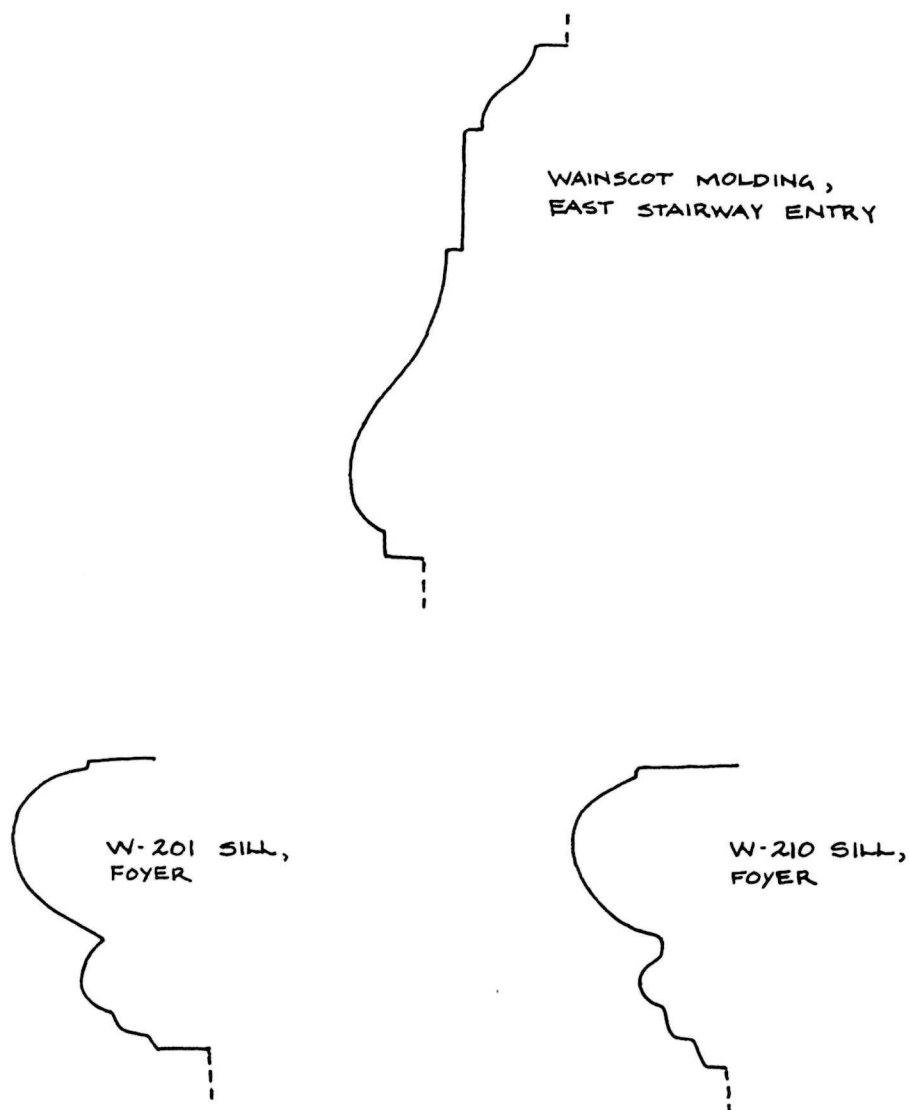
Circa 1912

The Congregation Libavitz purchased the African Meeting House in 1904, and remained in ownership until 1972. Both major renovations and routine maintenance occurred during this period. The earliest minute book of the Congregation Libavitz reveals that:

- in 1907, the furnace was fueled with coal;
- electric lighting was installed in 1908, but did not completely replace the gas lighting system; additional electrical work was done in 1911;
- the sewage system required repair in 1909, and therefore had been installed sometime before that date;
- extensive alterations and repairs were made in 1912 (no details given); and
- a platform for the cantor and reading of the Torah was constructed in 1913.

Although no written description exists of the work done in 1912, it is possible to identify material from this period by comparing paint samples associated with the electrical fixtures installed about this time with undated elements. Using this method, building fabric installed about 1912 was identified to be:

- present sanctuary-stairway and foyer wainscot (fig. 44, P013);
- possibly east- and west-wall window sashes, second and third stories (P084, P114);
- new tongue-and-groove floorboards, foyer and sanctuary;
- wall-mounted radiators, sanctuary (P115); and
- padding for pews (P135).



BP 5/02

Figure 44. Examples of Circa-1912 Molding Profiles Found at the African Meeting House.

Other work that may have been done in 1912 is shown in the 1934 HABS drawings and 1937 photographs. One of the most apparent of these alterations was the repositioning of the front, exterior doorway frames to be flush with the exterior brick walls. This was done after circa 1875 (see figure 6) and before 1934 (see figure 7). This would have left portions of the interior brick jambs and lintels exposed. These areas were finished with paneled woodwork, which can be seen in the color slides taken by SPNEA of the interior in 1975. These panels apparently were removed during the 1975 stabilization work, and some were stored in the basement. These contain wire nails, except for a few cut nails used to attach the paneling directly to the brickwork. Paint sample P212 from one panel molding indicates the panel postdates circa 1855 and was not reused from another location when the entry was remodeled.

Still other work that may have been done in 1912 includes:

- the replacement of the relocated front doorway frames' transoms and double doors with new material;
- the subdivision of the basement into rooms;
- the installation of stained glass in the north, two-story windows; and
- the removal of the exterior gaslight fixtures, and installation of an electric light fixture.

After 1934

Sometime after 1934, an I-beam was installed to replace an earlier beam spanning the two columns in the basement. This is known because the dimensions of this extant I-beam (15 inches high by 11 1/2 inches wide) are different than those of the earlier beam (12-1/2 inches high by 22 inches wide), shown in this location on the 1934 HABS drawings. There is no listing of a building permit for this work in the Boston Building Department files.

The Congregation Libavitz record books for the years 1947 to 1964 indicate that most of the work done on the building after 1946 involved routine maintenance and repair. These entries are quoted in detail in the historical-documentation section of this report. An oil-burning furnace appears to have been installed in the basement in 1948. New plumbing fixtures were installed in 1962. Of these fixtures, three were found in the basement in 1982, having been disconnected and stored here in 1975. All are of white porcelain, and bear manufacturer's imprints. These are a urinal ("Eljer Sep. 19 1961"), a toilet ("Gerber U.S.A. Dec. 28 1961"), and a sink ("American Radiator & Standard Sanitary 11-15-61").

New exterior doors were hung in 1963. A building permit was issued in 1966 for replacing rotted flooring, probably in the basement area.

STABILIZATION IN 1975

Stabilization of the African Meeting House was undertaken in 1975 after the roof fire of 1973. Alterations made in 1975 included the following activities.

Exterior Work

- The tops of the brick walls were rebuilt; the chimney flues within south wall were discovered, filled with grout, and covered with roofing material.⁴⁶
- The old roof trusses were removed and stored; new steel roof trusses and a new slate roof were installed; a gutter with downspout was hung on the north elevation only.
- A new south-end apse was constructed, using old support columns, and stuccoed; a fire door with fire escape was installed in the west wall of the apse.
- The frames of the front (north) doorways were returned to their approximate 1855 locations (recessed from the plane of the exterior wall); new two-panel doors and six-light transoms were installed.
- A new exterior gaslight fixture was installed on the north elevation, but it was incorrect in style and location.

Interior Work

Entry

- New plasterboard partitions and a basement doorway were installed.
- Ceiling plaster was removed.
- A new floor was installed.

⁴⁶ Byron Rushing, Director of the Museum of Afro American History, to Barbara E. Pearson, 8/16/84.

- The stairways were stabilized.
- Gas and electric light fixtures were removed.

Basement/First Story

- Partition walls were removed.
- Ceiling plaster was removed.
- A steel I-beam, supported by two new metal columns, was installed toward the north end.
- A new, unfinished plywood floor was installed on the 1966 joists.
- Metal lintels were installed at W-106 and W-107, with new brickwork above.
- W-105, D-103, and W-111 were infilled with brick.
- The stove, the furnace, gas and electric light fixtures, and bathroom fixtures were removed.

Foyer

- The doors were removed from the doorways in the south partition.
- Stained-glass sashes were removed from the two-story windows in the north wall; historically appropriate new sashes were installed.
- The gallery stairways were stabilized.
- Radiators and electric light fixtures were removed.

Sanctuary and Gallery

- The ceiling of the sanctuary was removed and not replaced.
- A new apse and platform were built at the south end.
- The south-wall window niches were filled with concrete blocks.
- The gallery, except for the stairways and the carrying beams, was disassembled and stored in basement.

- The pews from the gallery were removed and stored in the basement.
- The gallery carrying beams were shifted and supported with steel columns; the 1855 columns also were relocated; the gallery bridging beam was replaced with new material.
- Light fixtures and radiators were removed.

IV. EXISTING CONDITIONS

The following combination of photographs and schematic site drawings depicts the existing conditions and extant physical evidence at the African Meeting House in 1982.

EXTERIOR ELEMENTS

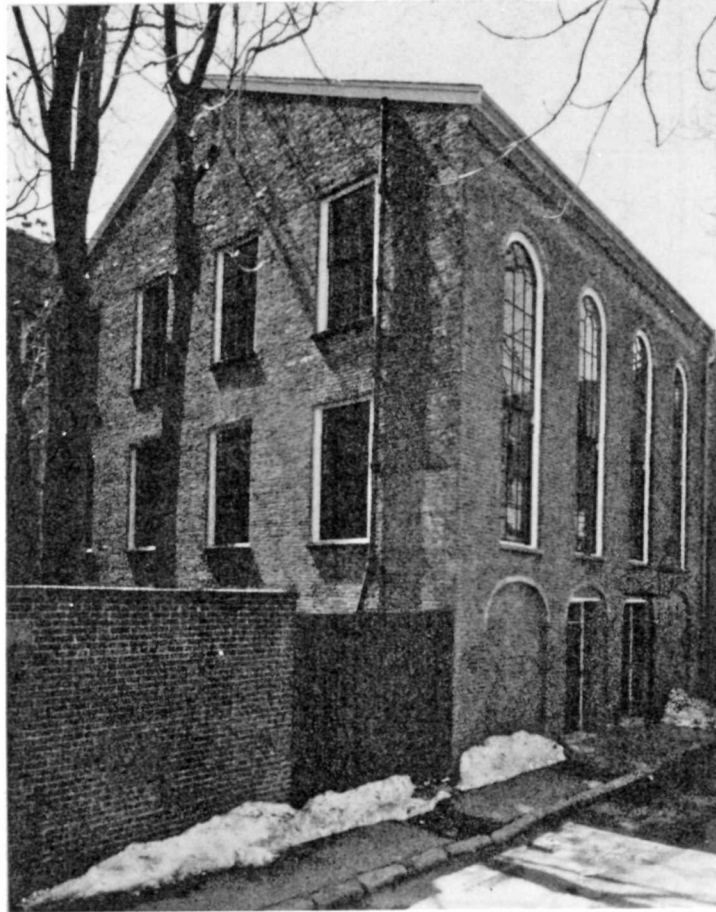
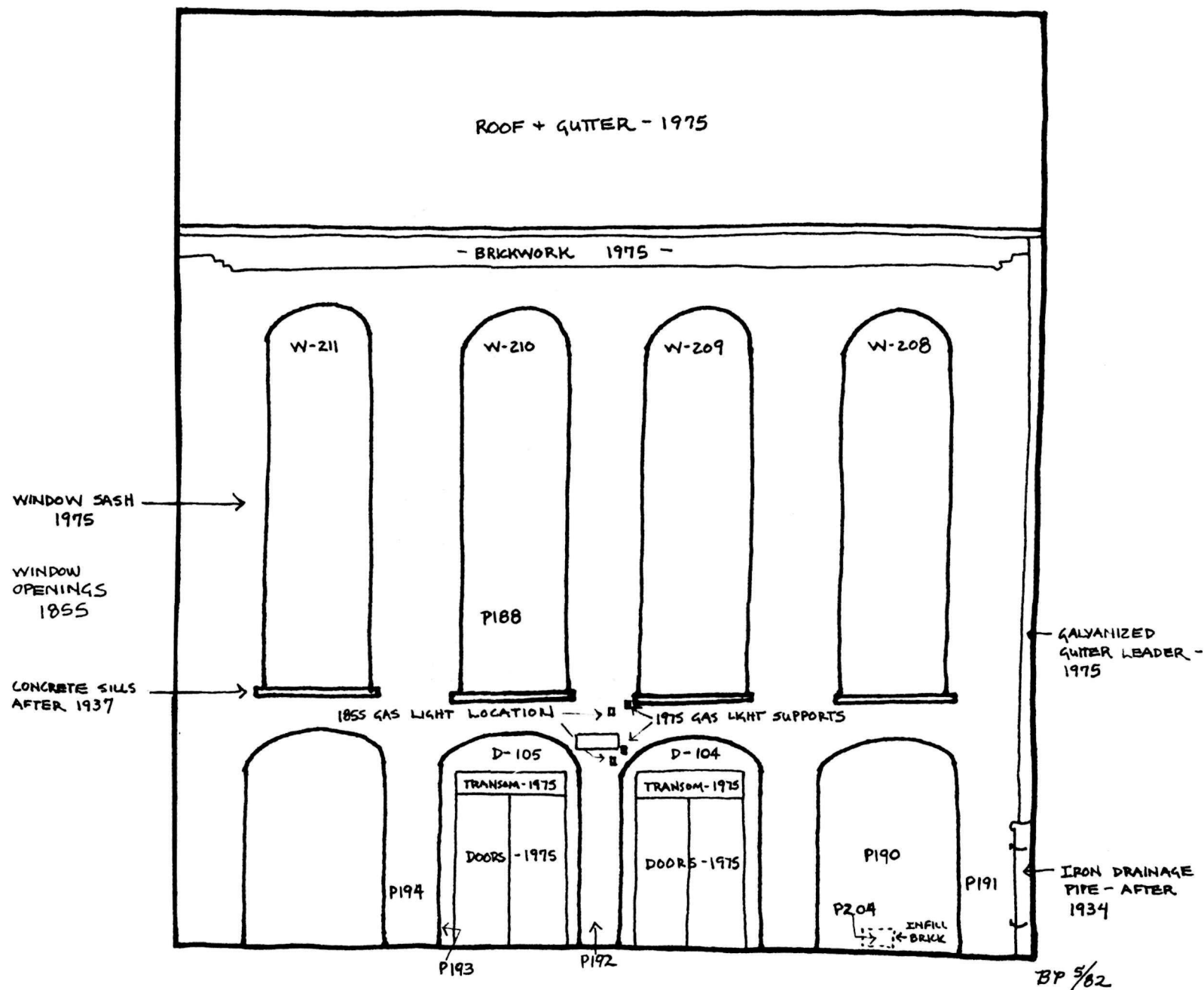


Figure 45. Exterior View, Northeast Corner.

Figure 46. North Elevation.



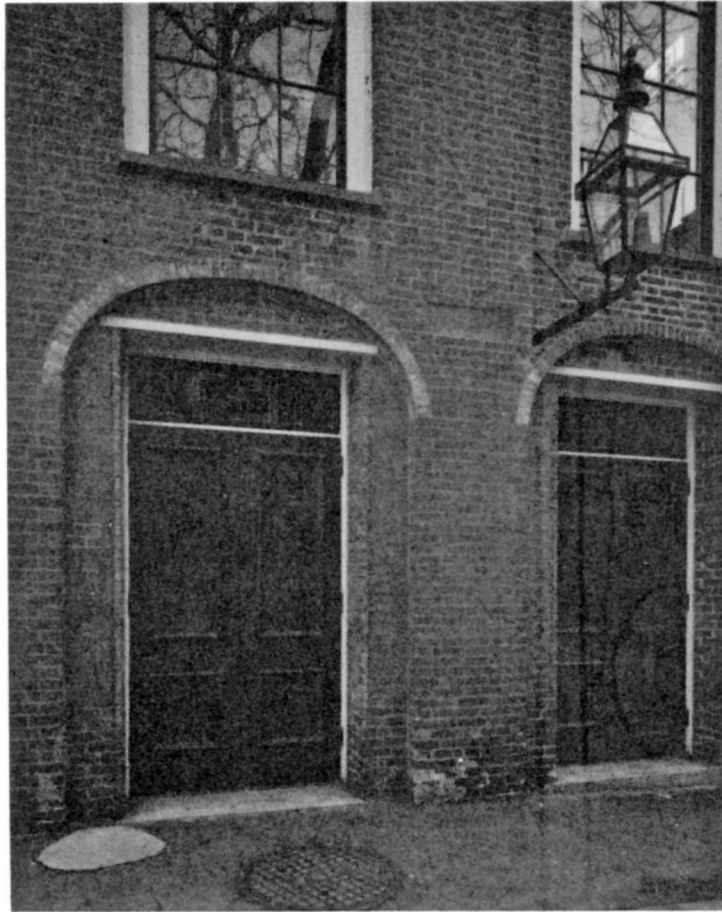
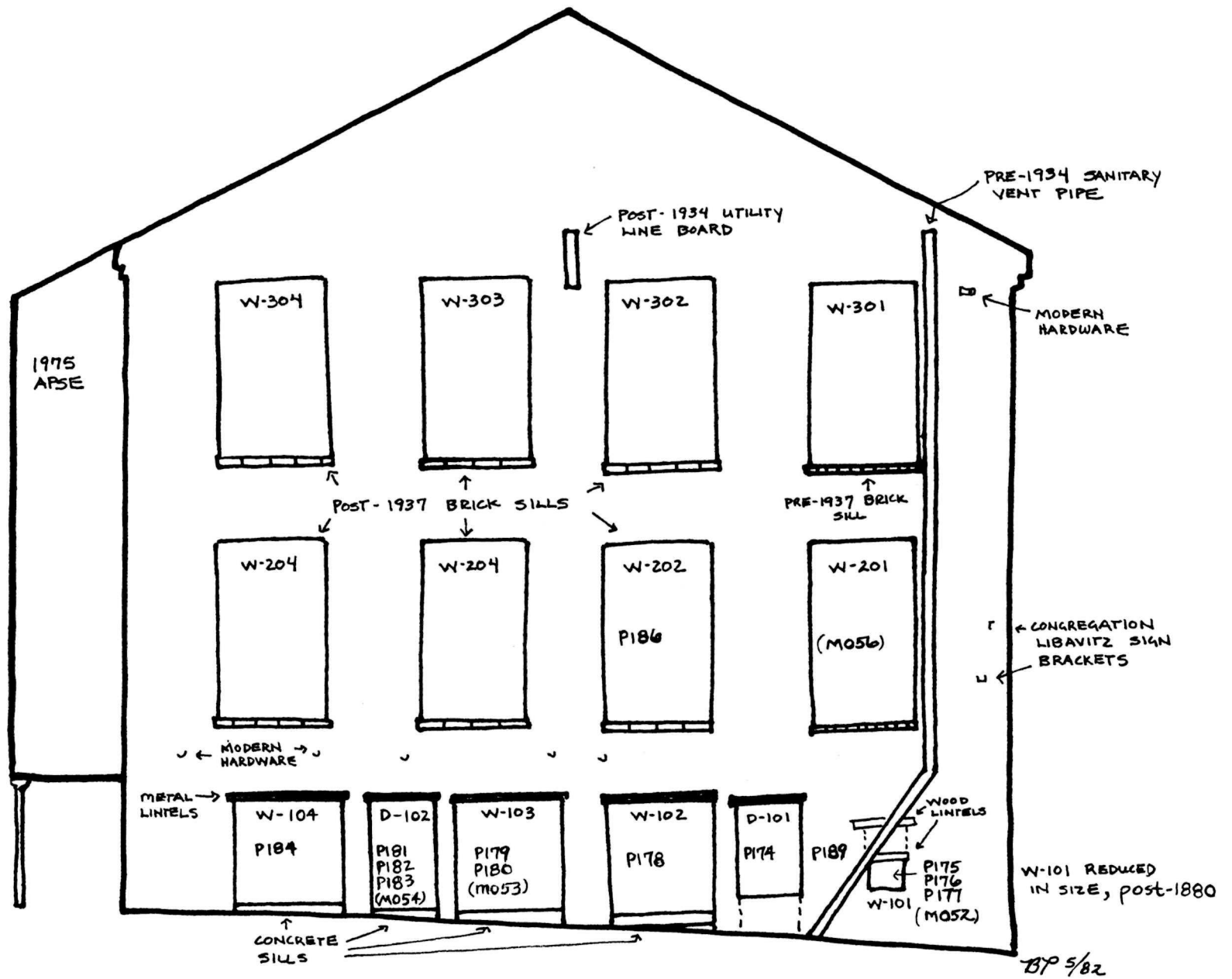


Figure 47. North Elevation, Exterior Doorways.



Figure 48. East Elevation.

Figure 49. East Elevation.



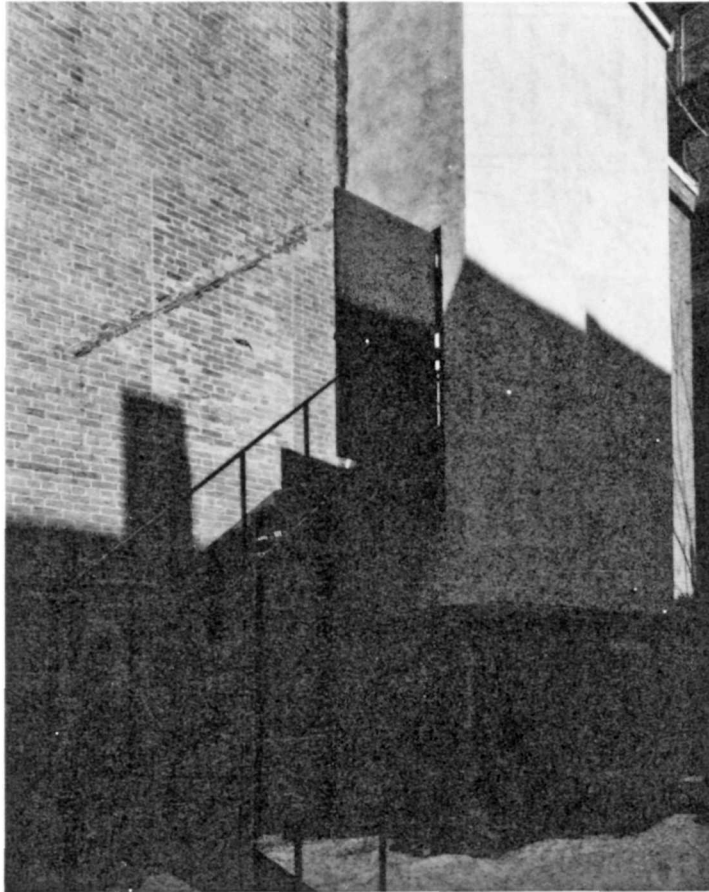


Figure 50. South Elevation.

Figure 51. South Elevation.

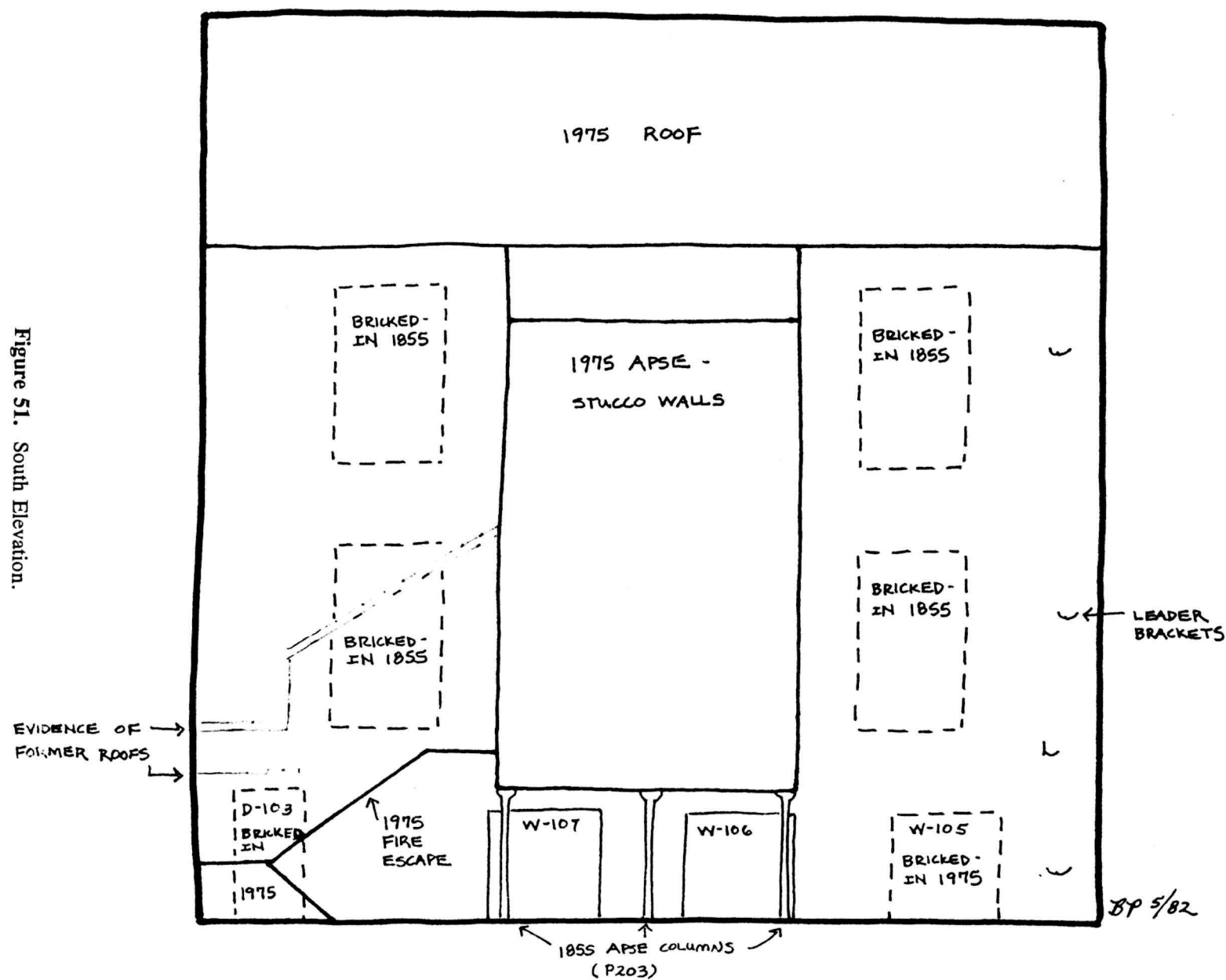
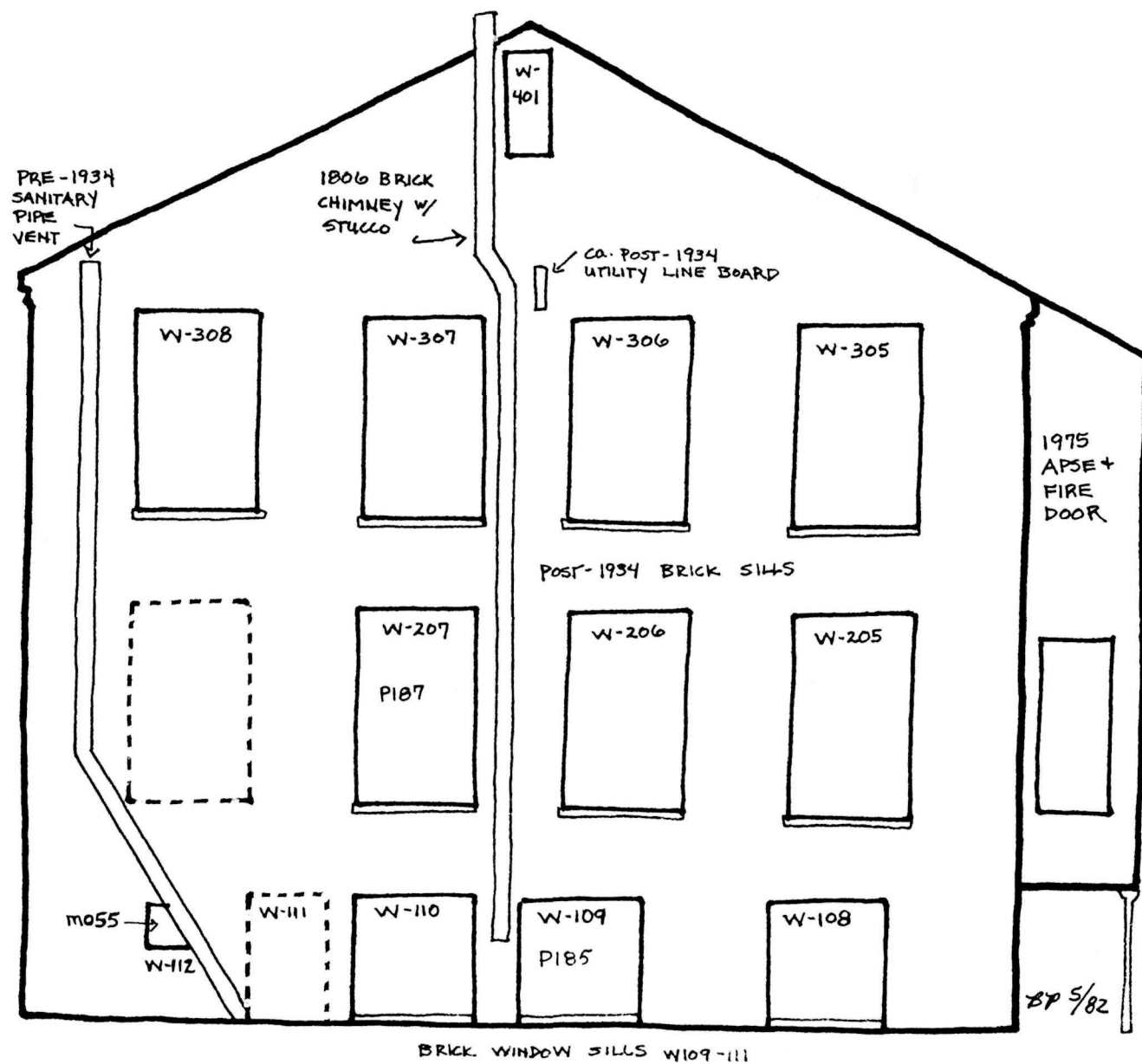


Figure 52. West Elevation.



INTERIOR ELEMENTS:
BASEMENT/FIRST STORY

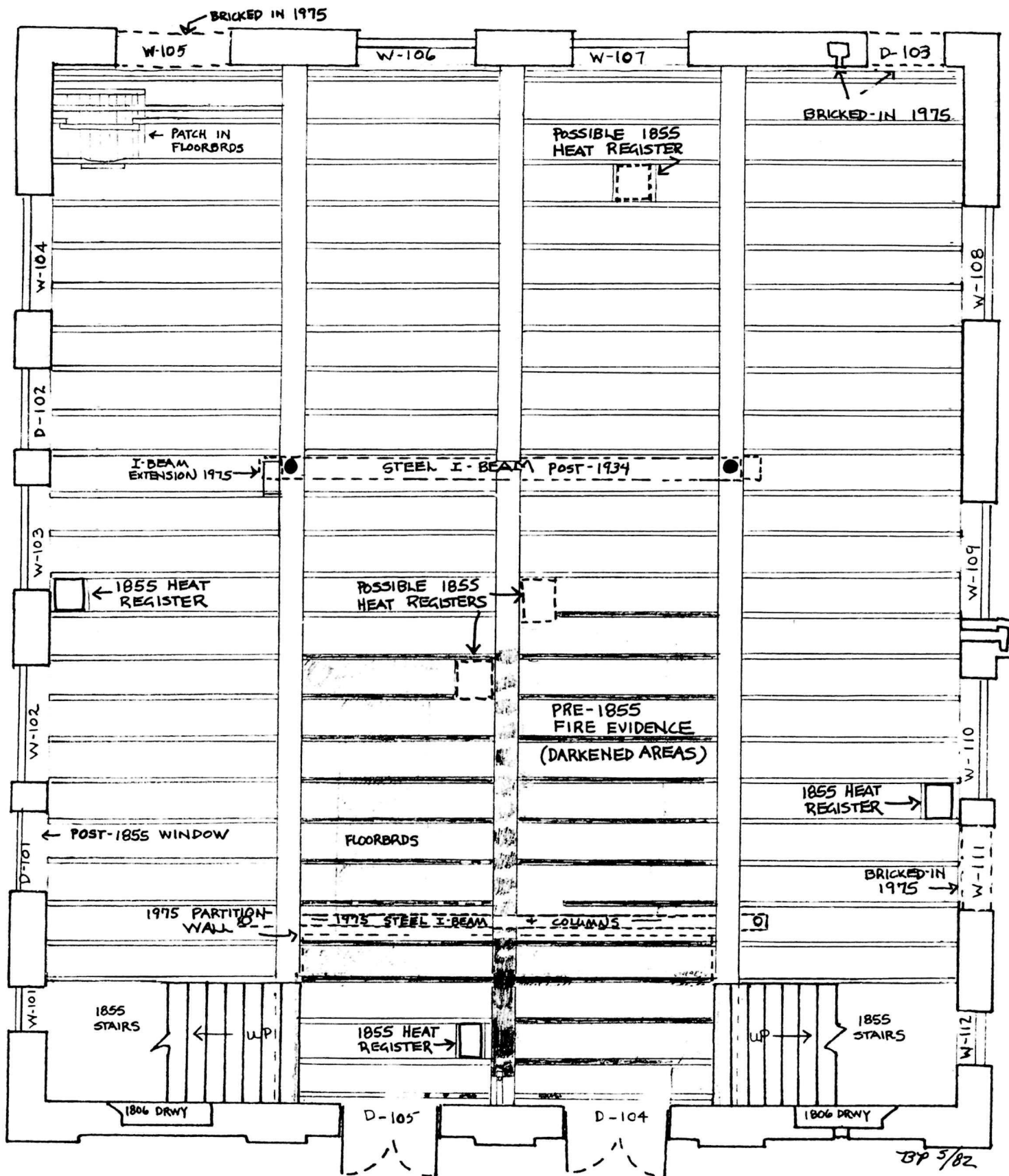


Figure 53. First-Floor (Reflected Ceiling) Plan.



Figure 54. Entry, Looking West.

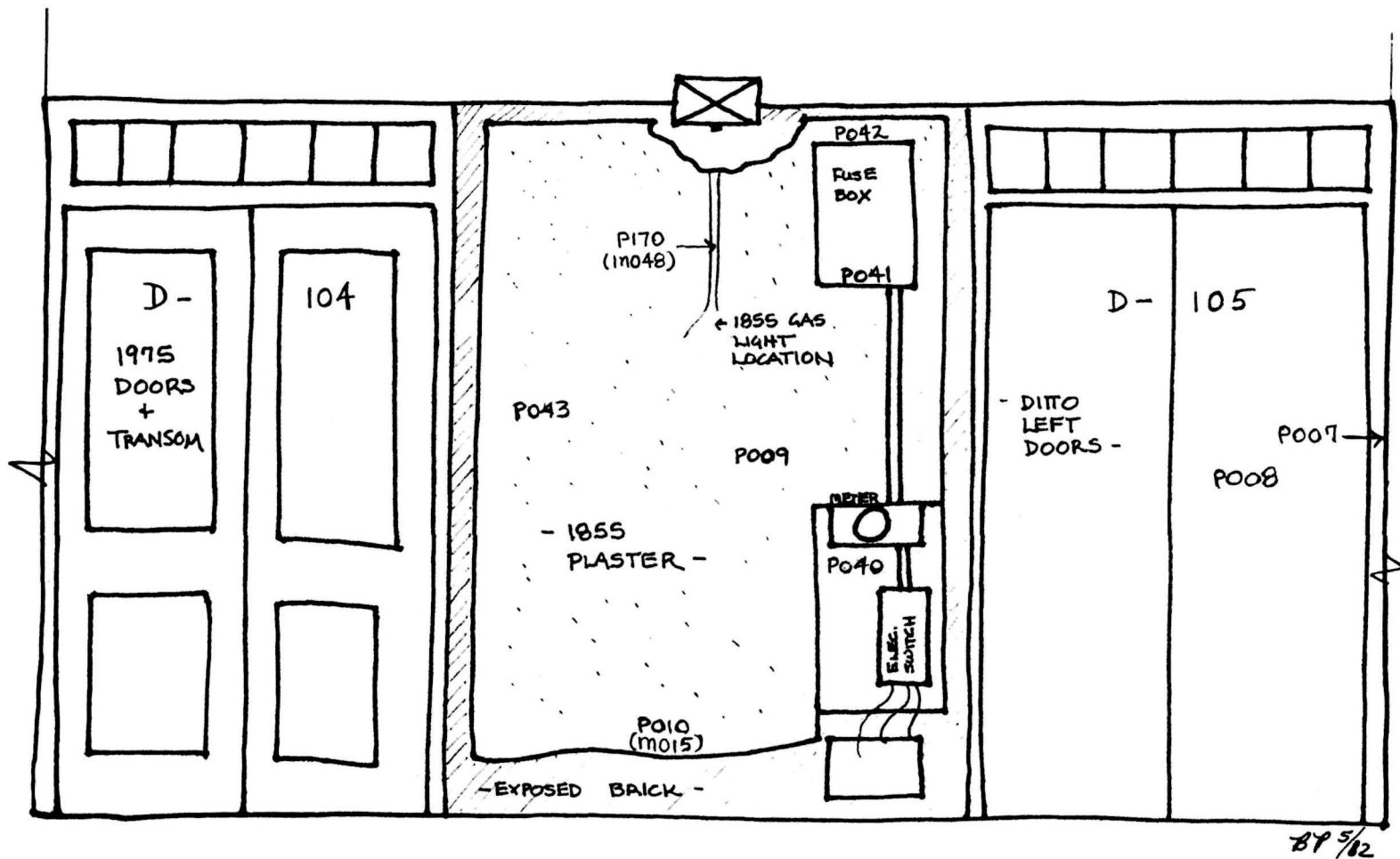


Figure 55. Entry, North Wall.

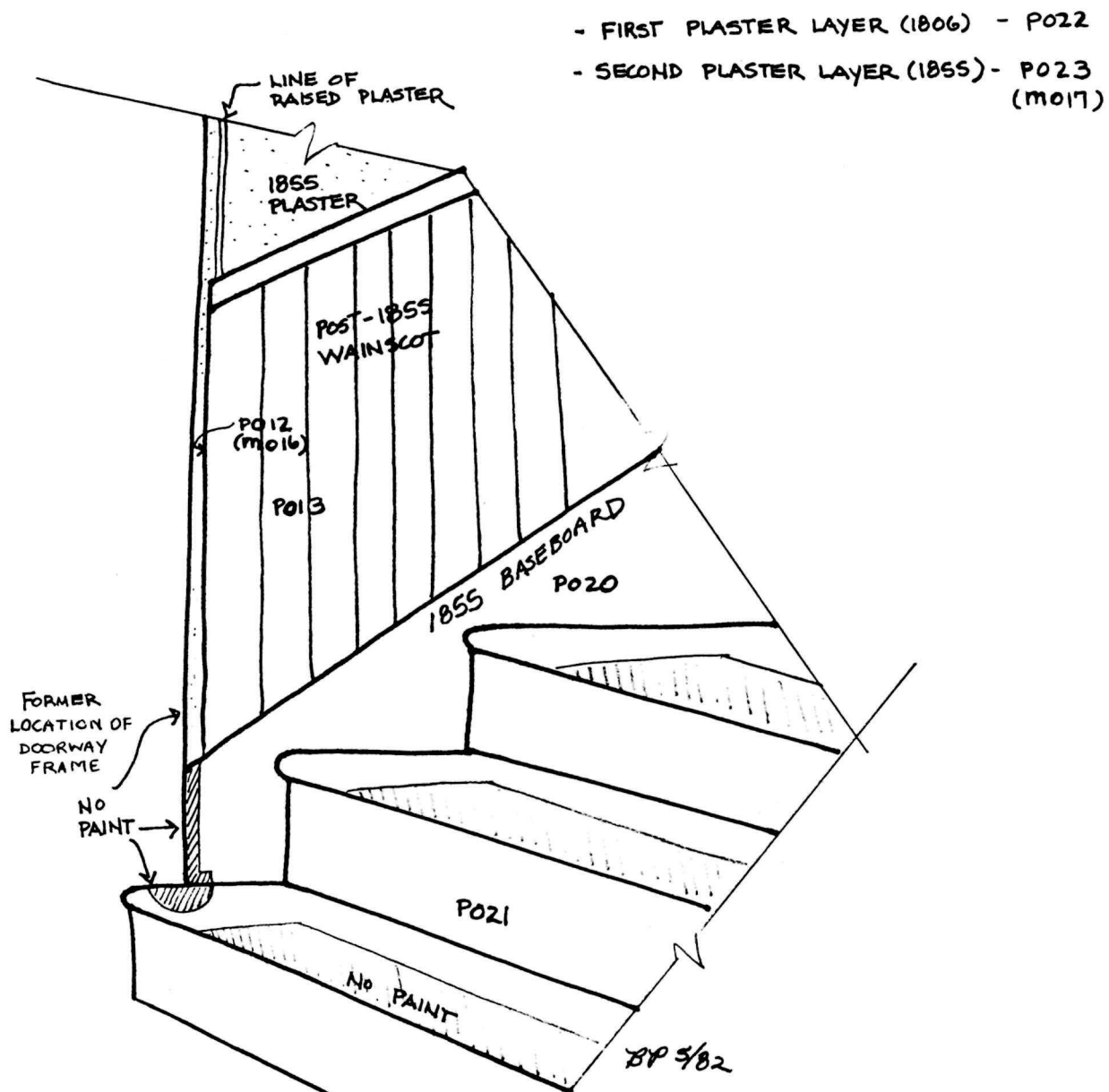


Figure 56. Entry, Evidence of 1855 Sanctuary-Stair Doorway.



Figure 57. East Sanctuary Stair.

Figure 58. Basement, West Side of North Wall.

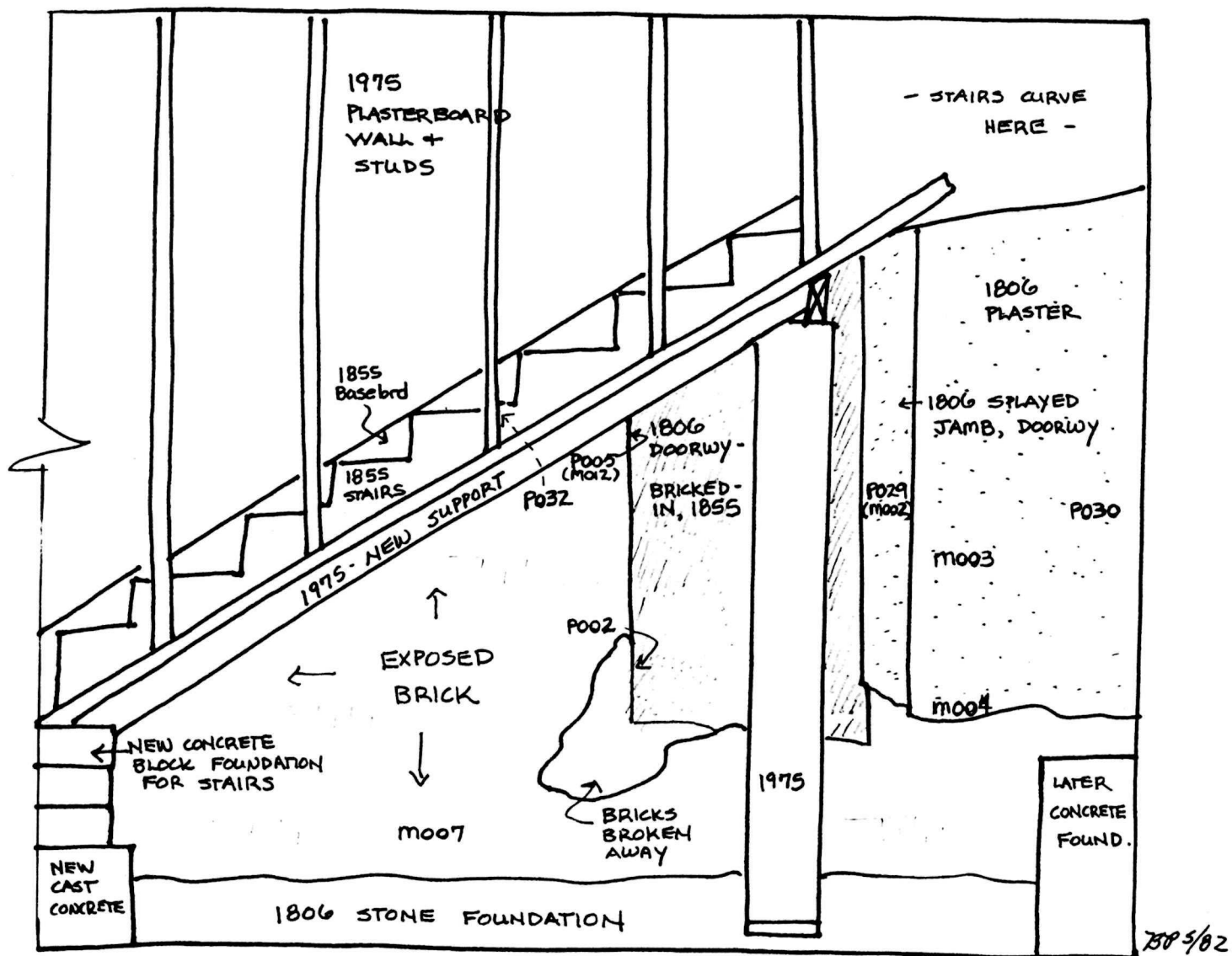
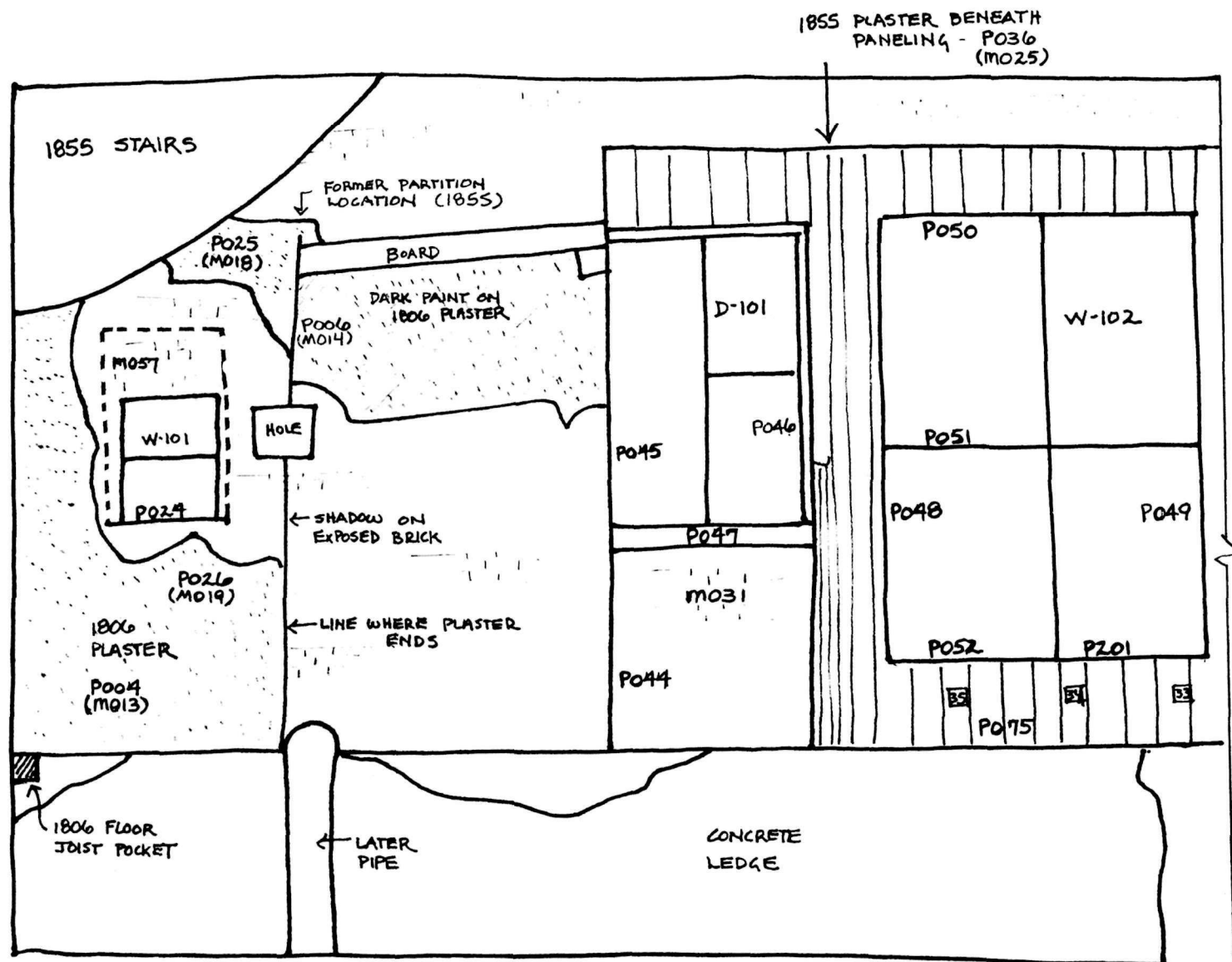


Figure 59. Basement, East Side of North Wall.



BP 5/82

Figure 60. Basement, North End of East Wall.

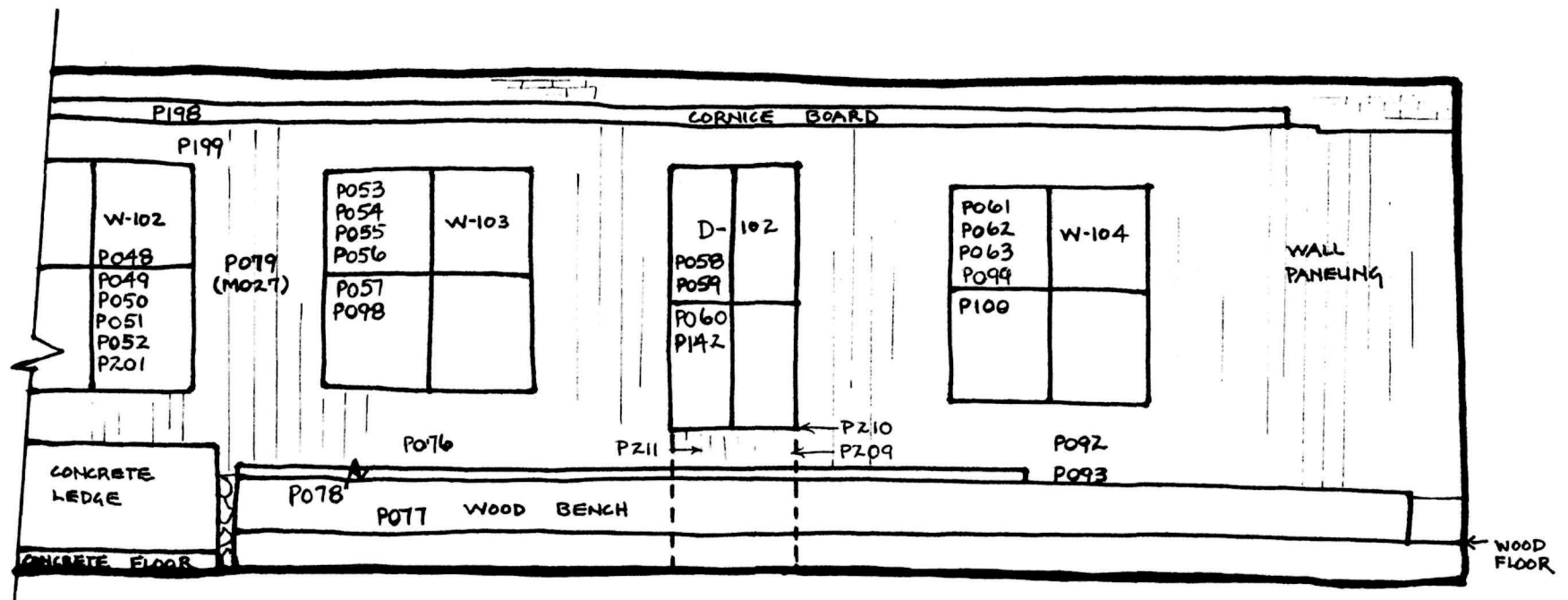


Figure 61. Basement, South End of East Wall.

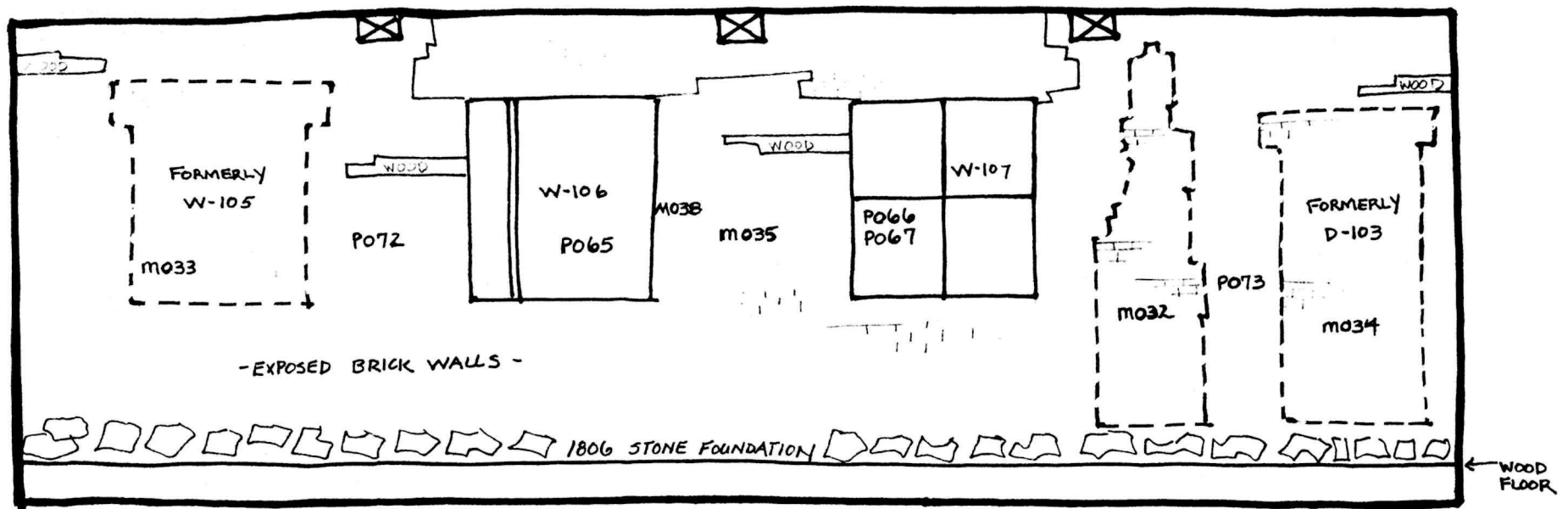


Figure 62. Basement, South Wall.

BP 5/02

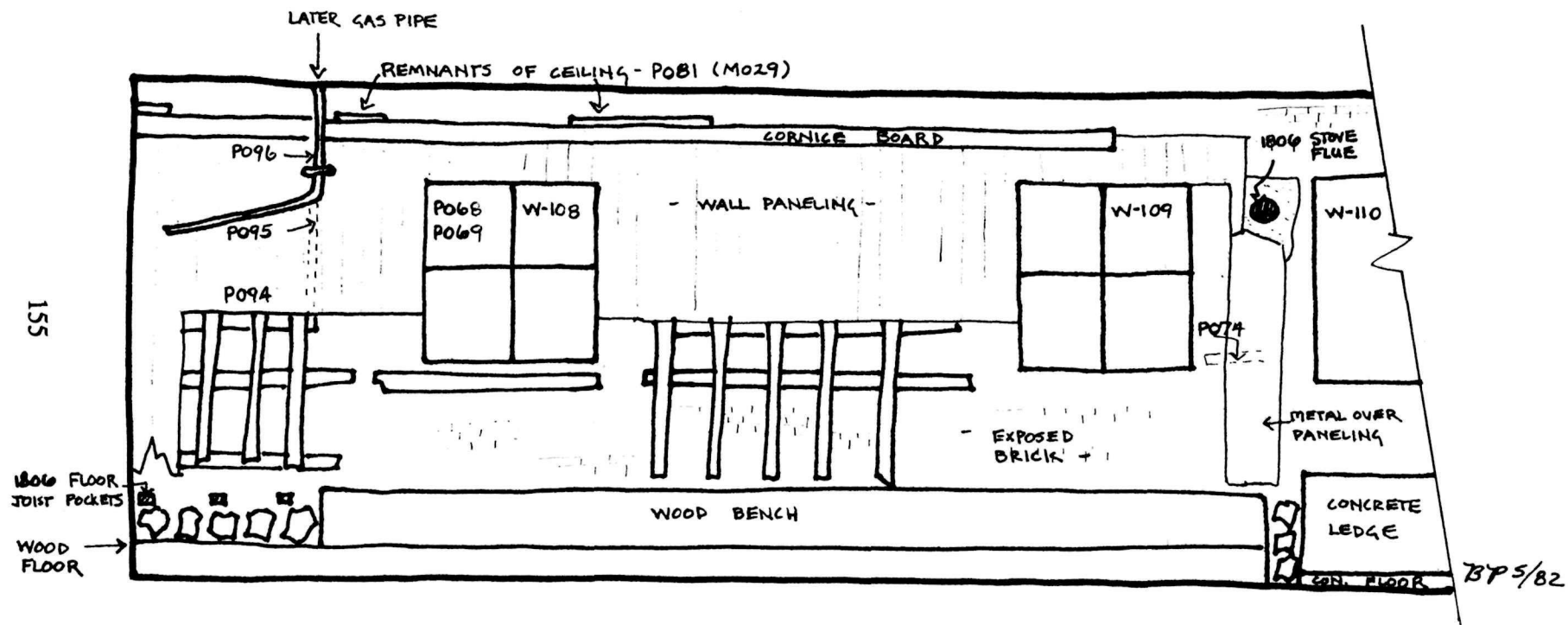


Figure 63. Basement, South End of West Wall.

INTERIOR ELEMENTS:

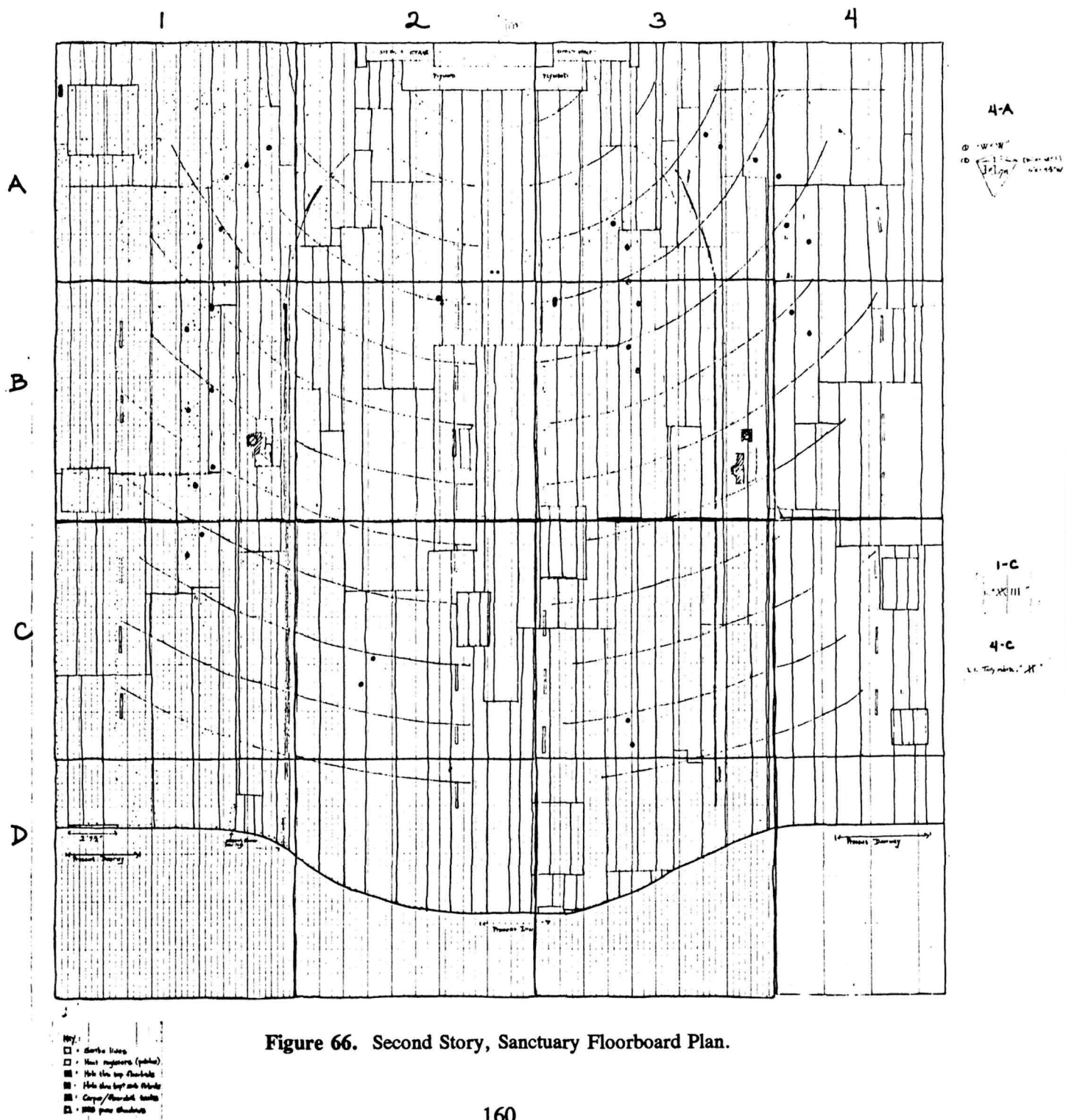
SECOND STORY

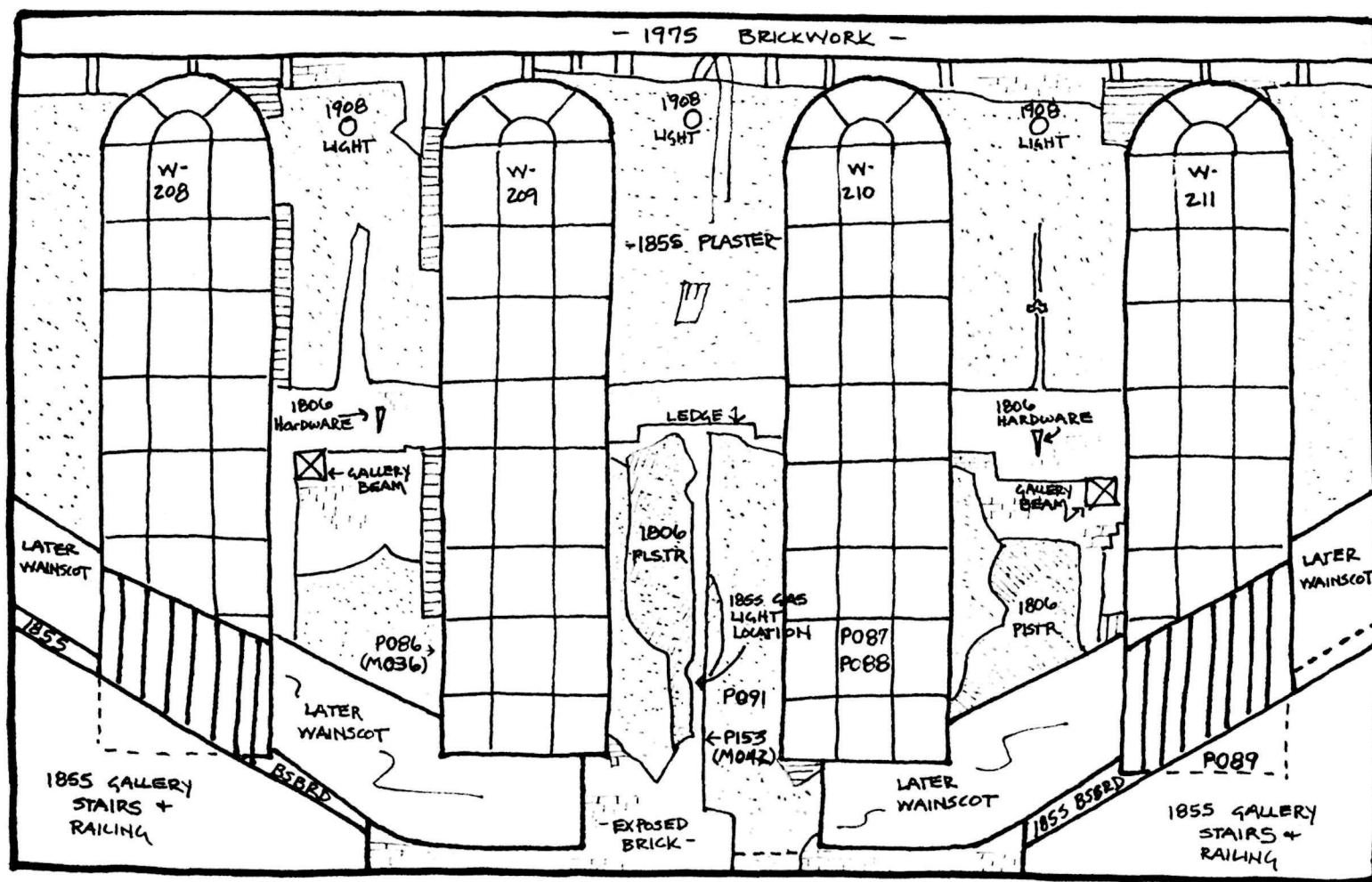
SANCTUARY FLOOR PLAN

SANCTUARY FLOOR PLAN

PLANK EVIDENCE ON WIDE BOARDS, BENEATH LATER (POST-1880 + PRE-1937) T&G FLOORBOARDS, RECORDED 10/1984. B. PEARSON

SCALE: $\frac{1}{2}" = 1'$

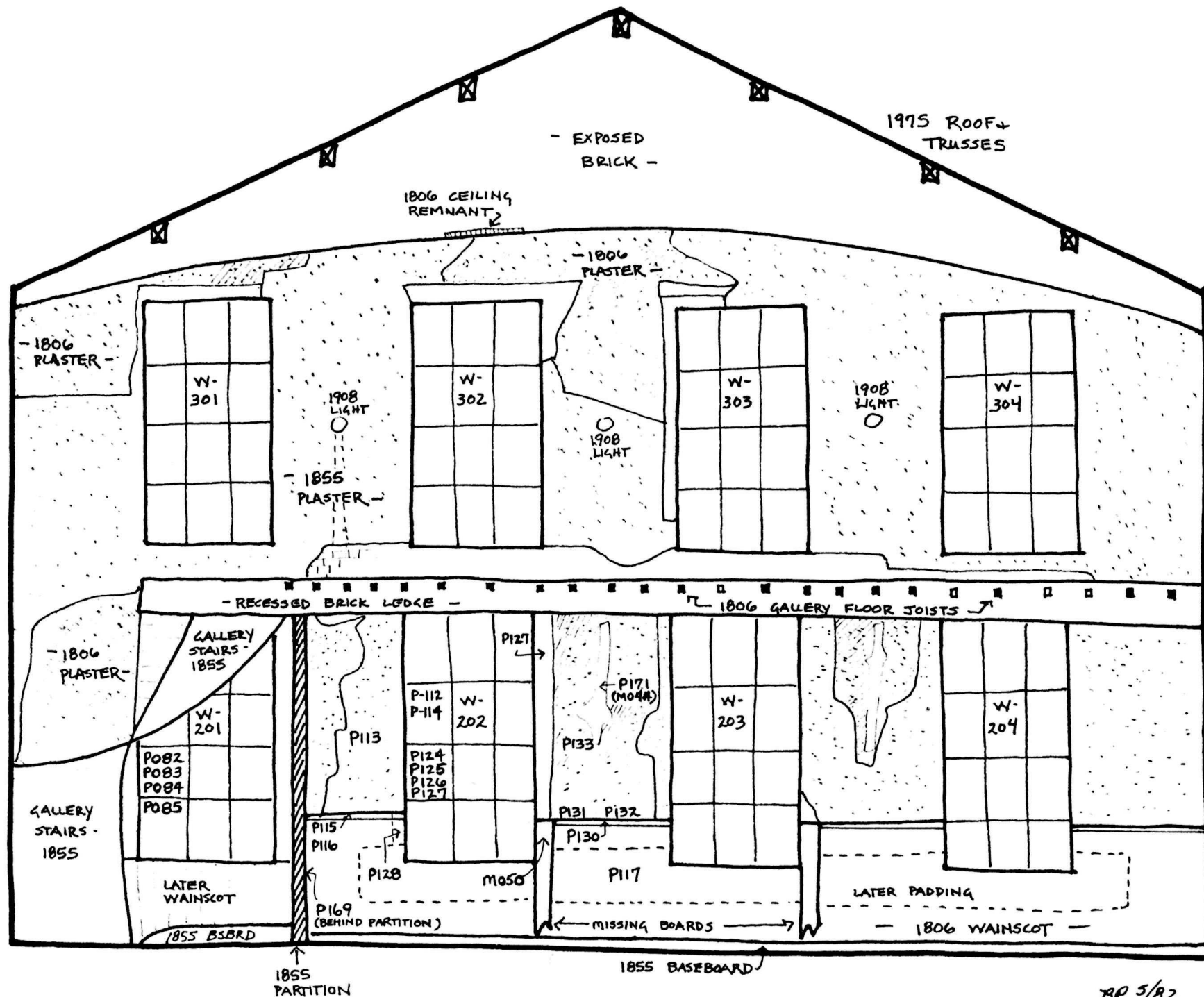




BP 7/82

Figure 67. Second Story, North Wall.

Figure 68. Second Story, East Wall.



BP 5/82

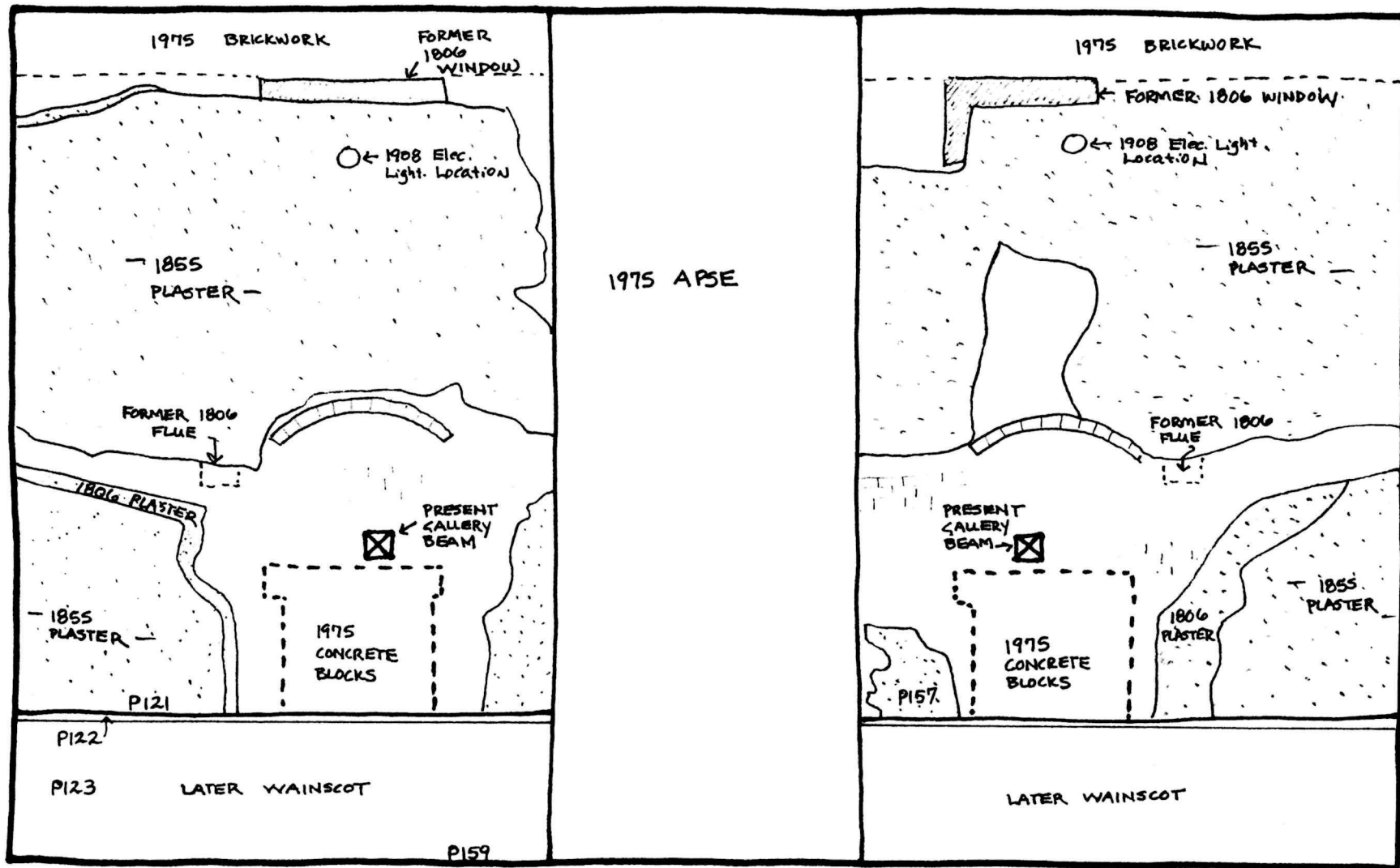
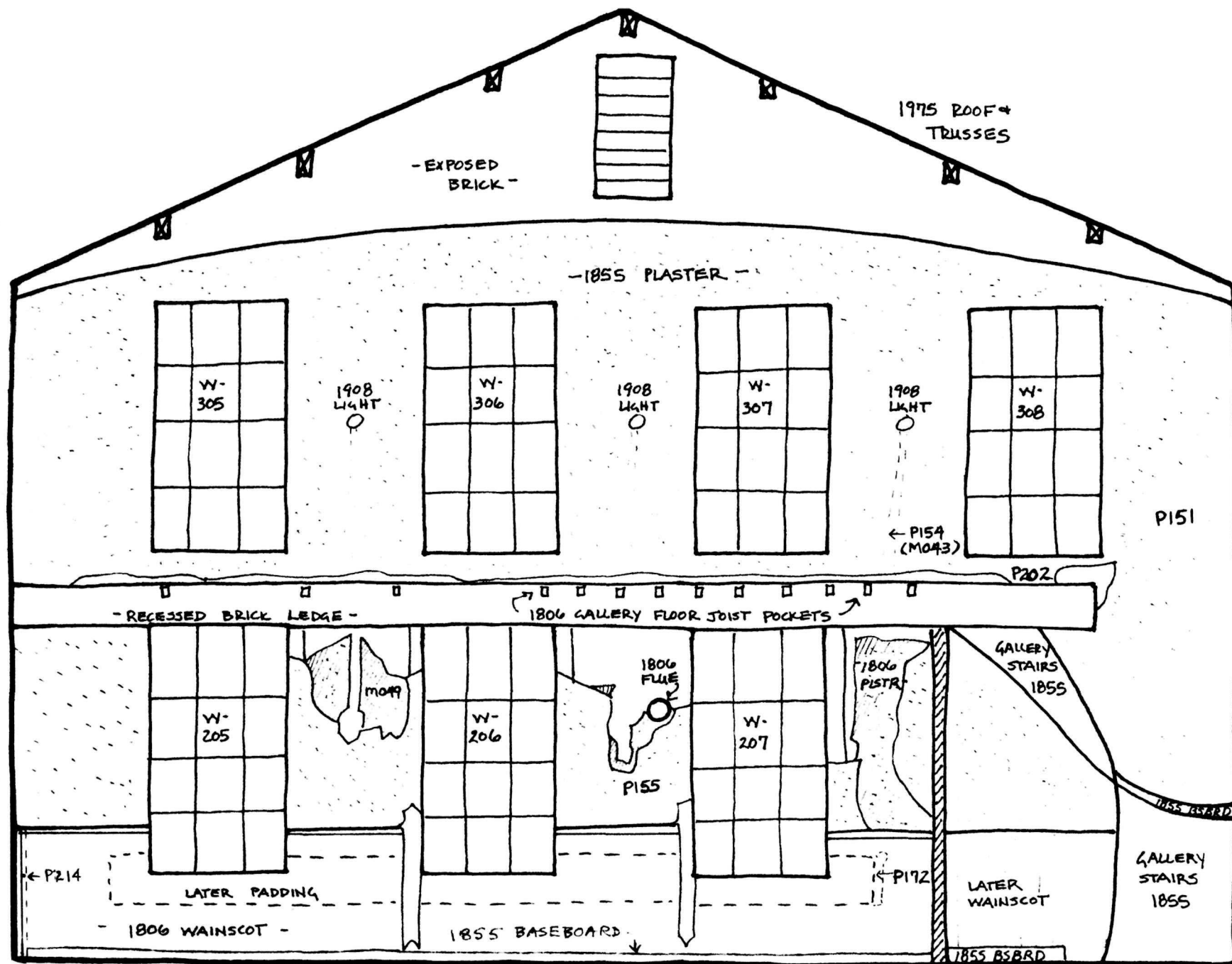


Figure 69. Second Story, South Wall.

BP 5/82

Figure 70. Second Story, West Wall.



strip covered by later south-wall wainscot

strip with no paint: covered by original south-wall wainscot until circa 1870's



Figure 71. Foyer, Looking Toward West Gallery Stair.

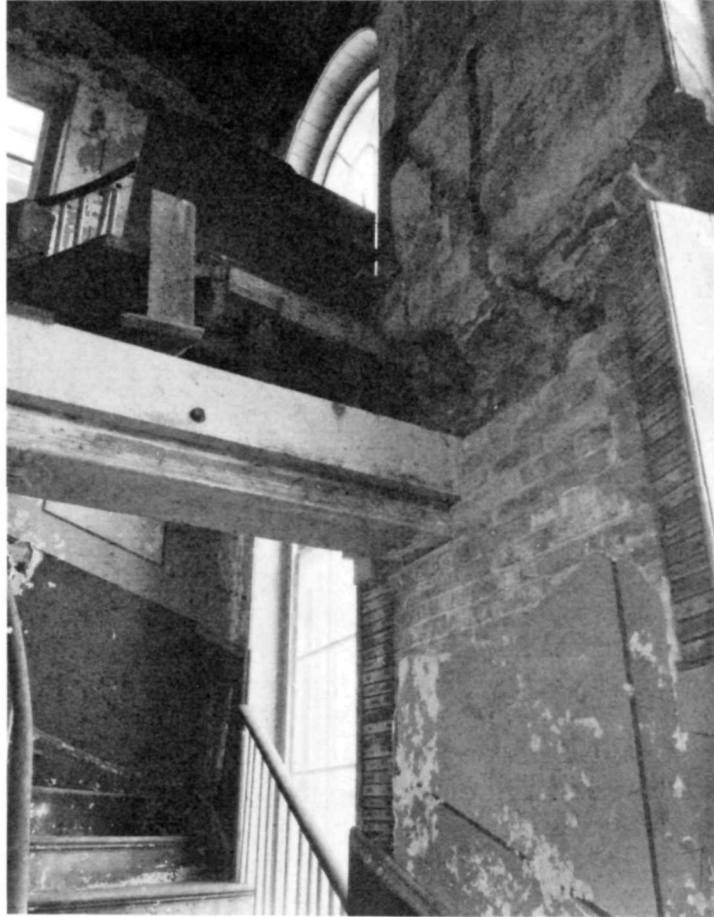


Figure 72. Foyer, North Wall and West Gallery Carrying Beam.

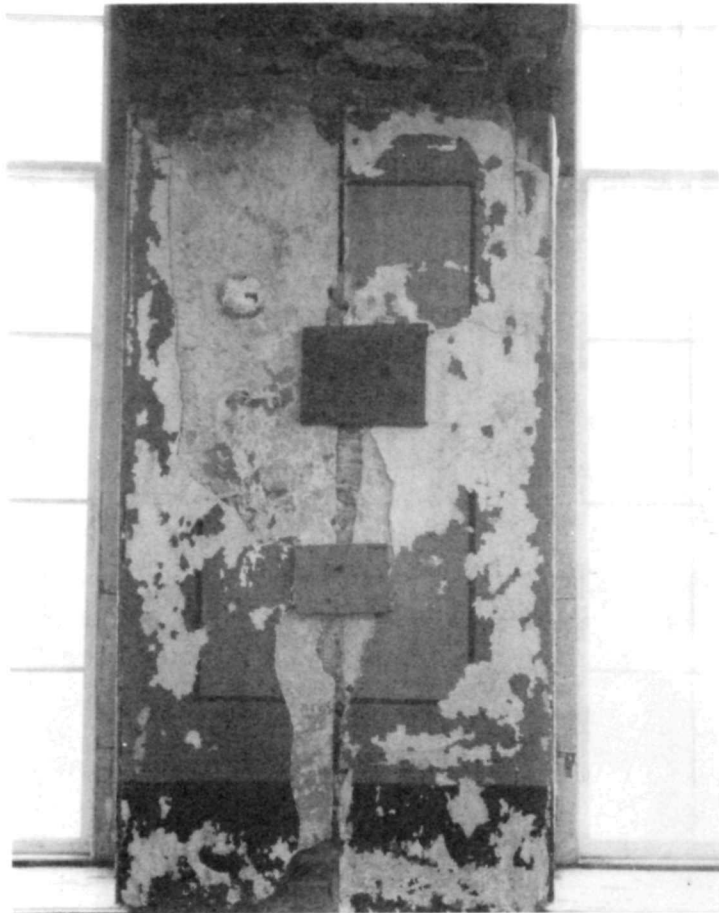


Figure 73. Foyer, North Wall Between Windows 209 and 210.



Figure 74. Foyer, Looking Toward East Gallery Stair.

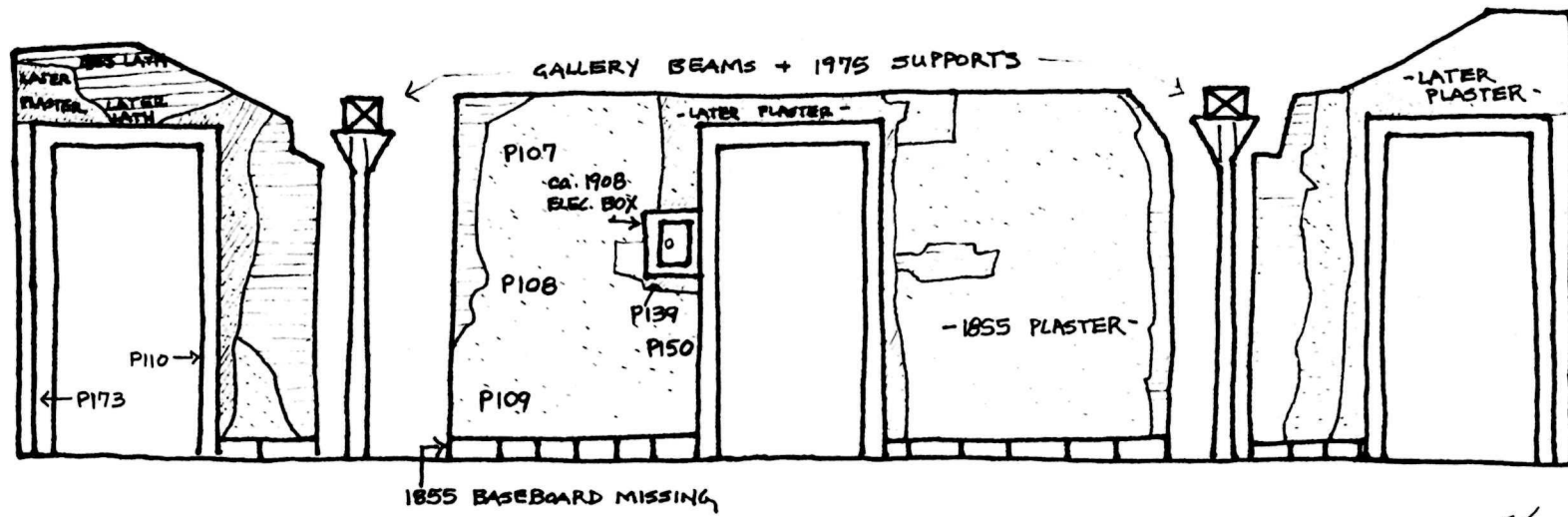
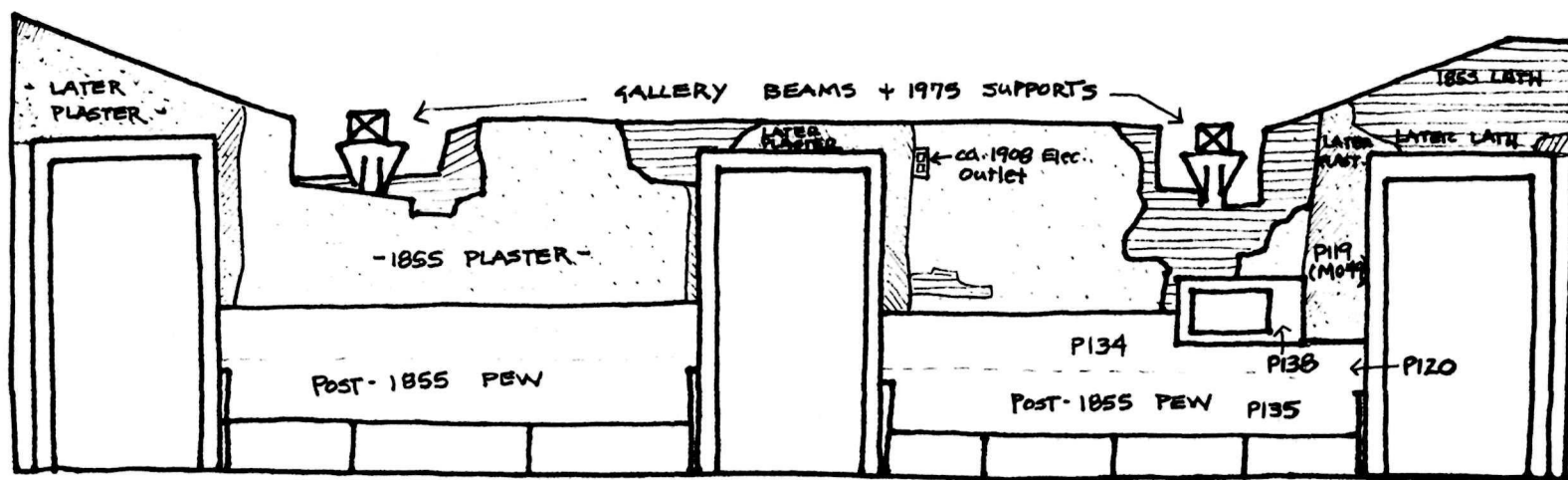


Figure 75. Foyer, South Partition.



BP 5/82

Figure 76. Sanctuary, North Partition.

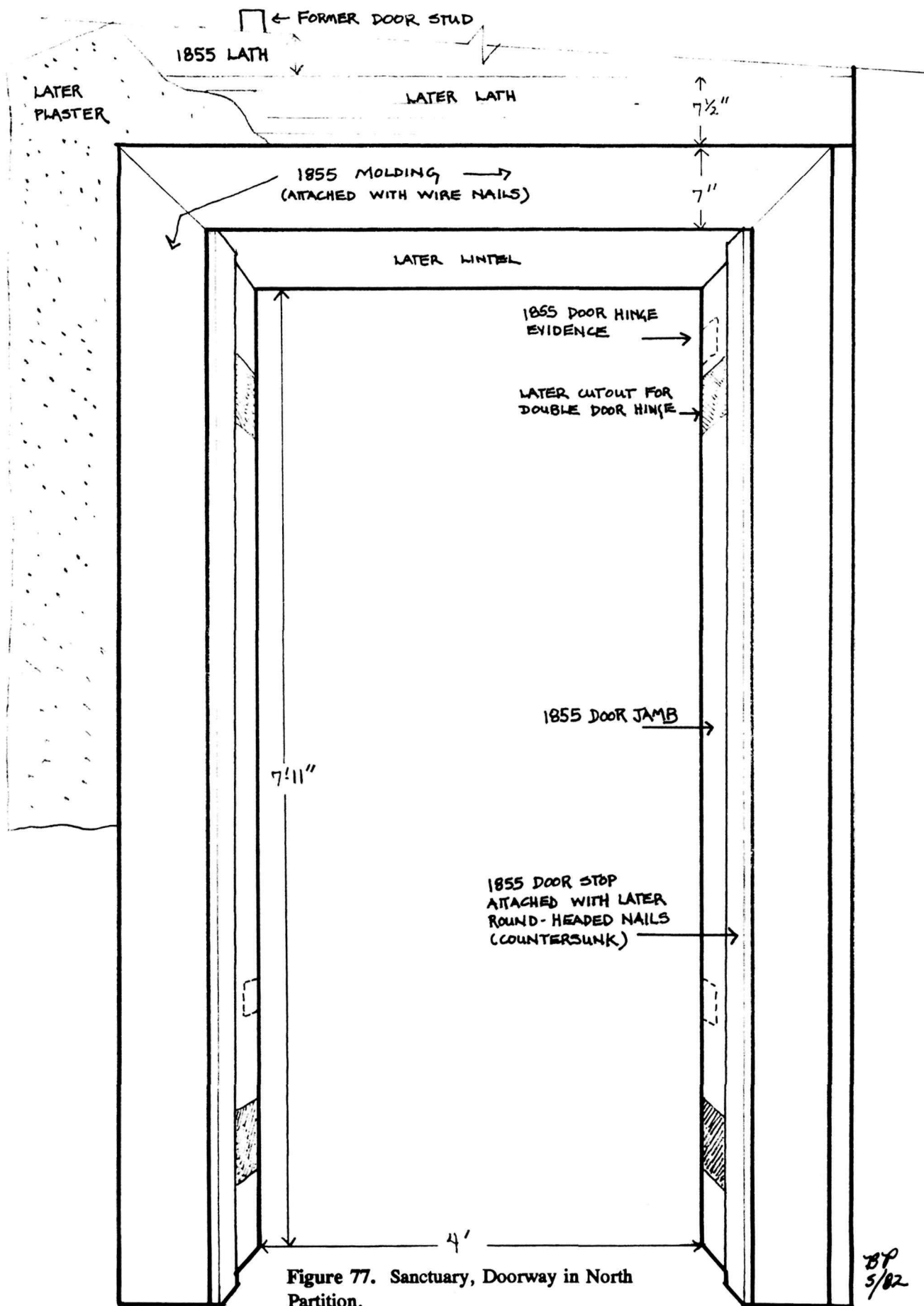


Figure 77. Sanctuary, Doorway in North Partition.

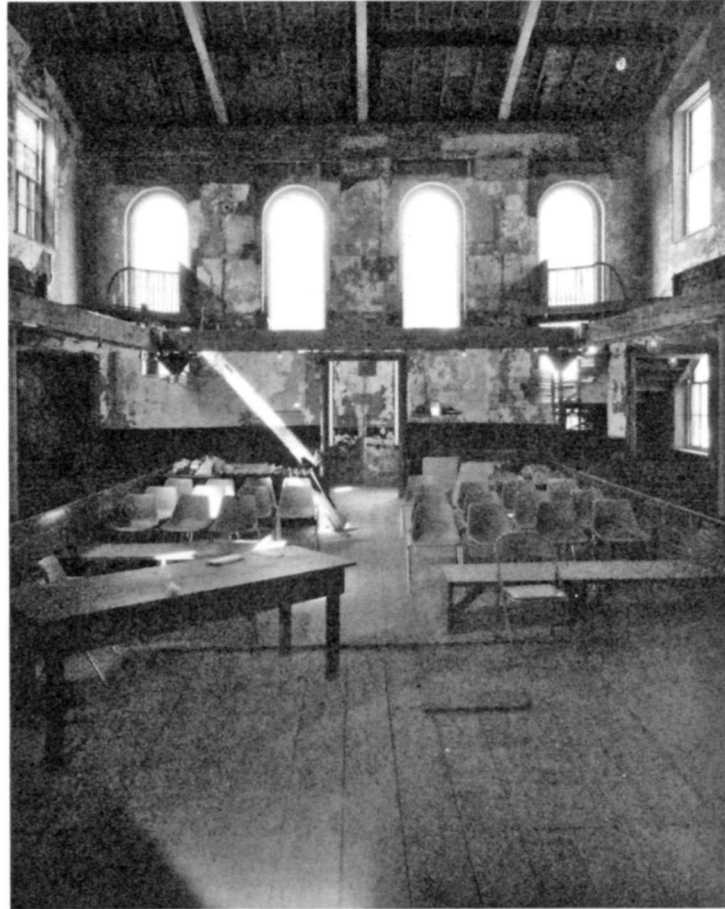


Figure 78. Sanctuary, Looking North.

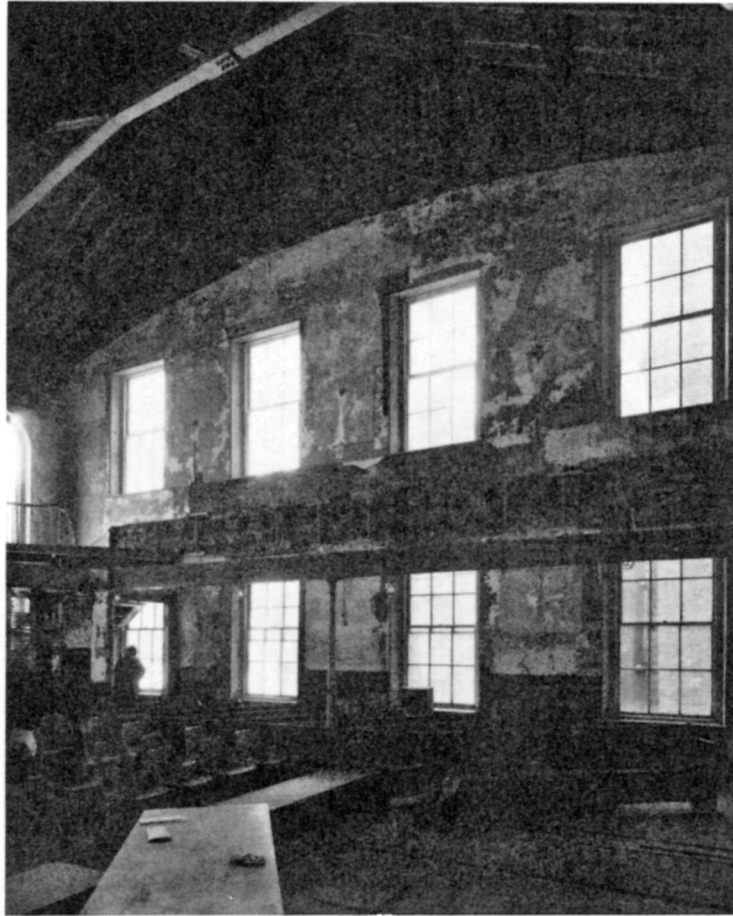


Figure 79. Sanctuary, Looking East.



Figure 80. Sanctuary, 1806 Gallery Joist Pockets in East Wall.

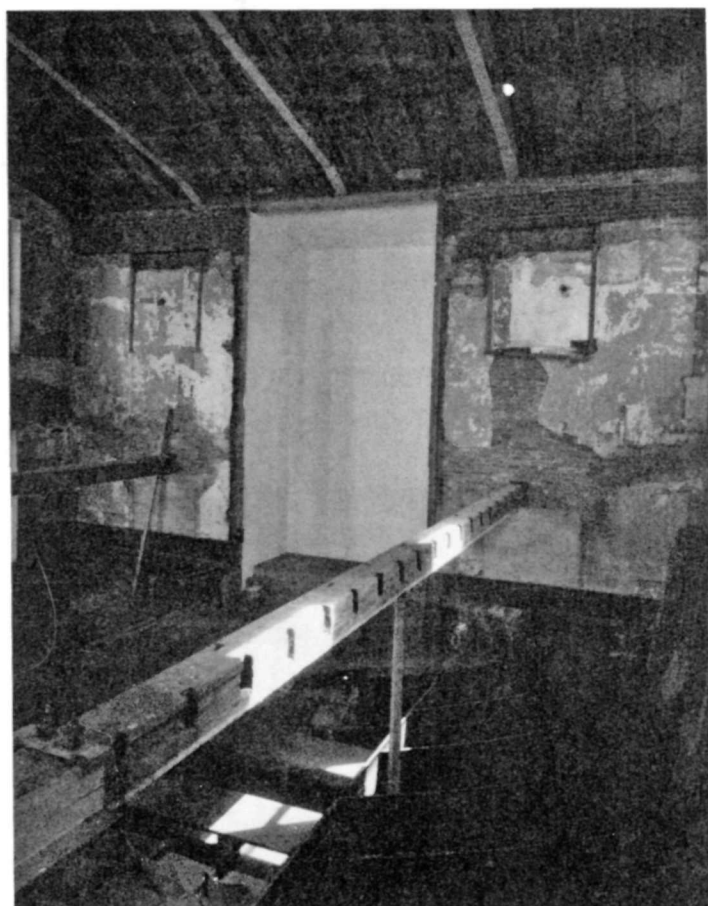


Figure 81. Sanctuary, Looking South from Gallery Level.

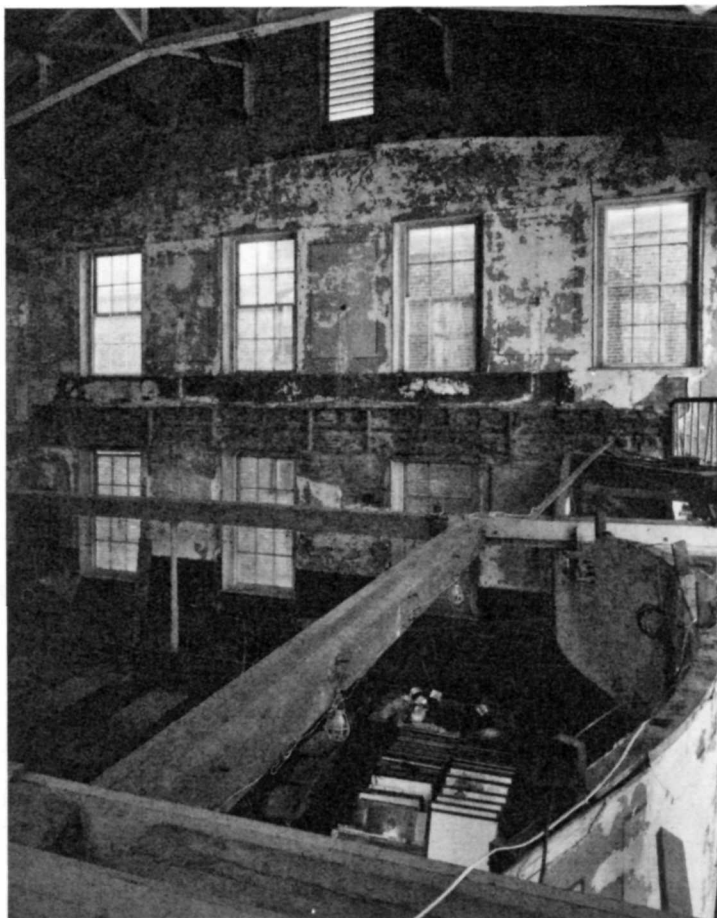


Figure 82. Sanctuary, Looking West.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR RESTORATION

PROPOSED TREATMENT

The “historic period” specified for the African Meeting House is 1855. This date was chosen because: (a) it was within the period of occupancy of the black Baptist congregation; (b) it reflects a major remodeling that transformed the original 1806 meetinghouse into the basic form extant today; and (c) a great deal of documentary and physical evidence remains about the appearance of the meetinghouse at that time.

It is recommended that the exterior of the building, the entry, the foyer, the sanctuary, and the gallery all be restored to their appearance in 1855. “Restoration” here means saving as much historic fabric as possible, removing materials that postdate the historic period, and reconstructing missing historic building elements for which there is adequate physical evidence. Modern building systems such as electricity, heating, and fire and intrusion alarms should be installed, but so as to be as inconspicuous as possible.

It is further recommended that the basement of the African Meeting House be rehabilitated for adaptive use. Little is known about the appearance of this area in 1855. However, the few elements that are known to date to 1855 should be preserved during the rehabilitation work.

EXTERIOR RECOMMENDATIONS

Walls

- Remove paint from window lintels and brick doorway jambs of north elevation; use as mild a removing solution as possible.
- Unbrick vent hole in former front doorway, west end of north elevation (see figure 5); hole may be covered over on the interior.
- Repair spalling brickwork; repoint all brickwork as needed with a mortar mix of five parts lime to six parts sand, with the sand matching sand samples on file at the NAHPC; preserve evidence of former roof lines on south elevation (see figure 51).
- Move gas fixture on north elevation to 1855 location on same wall (see figure 46 and patches in the brick wall); replace extant hood with one similar to that seen in figure 5, and install a simulated vertical gas-supply pipe descending from the fixture to the street.
- Cover apse walls with wooden shingles matching those seen in the post-fire photographs (figs. 26-27); preserve supporting columns in place.
- Remove sewer pipes from east and west elevations.
- Remove extraneous modern hardware from all elevations, including sign brackets, utility-line board, and telephone-line hardware on east elevation.

Roof

- Retain existing gutter and downspout on north elevation; install similar gutter on south elevation, with downspout at east end.

Doorways

- North elevation (fig. 46): extant double doors, with two recessed and molded panels per leaf (see figure 47), are acceptable; change six-light transoms to five-light transoms.
- East elevation (fig. 49): reconvert D-101 and D-102 from windows to doorways; style of doors may be based upon style of north-elevation doors (see figure 47).
- South elevation (fig. 51): reopen D-103; style of door may be based upon style of north-elevation doors (see figure 47).

Windows

Basement/First Story

- Unbrick W-101 (see figure 49), W-105 (see figure 51), and W-111 (see figure 52).
- Remove metal lintels, east elevation; appearance should match basement windows on west elevation.
- Remove concrete and brick sills; replace with wooden sills.
- Remove two-over-two sashes.
- Repair window frames as needed.
- Install six-over-six sashes.

Second and Third Stories

- Remove brick sills, east and west elevations; replace with wooden sills.
- Repair window frames as needed.

Finishes

- Apply alkyd semigloss paint to woodwork: sashes should be black; doors, the existing green; all other woodwork, including doorway and window casings, window sills, and cornice, white (see Appendix A for more information).
- Do not paint brick walls.

Site Elements

Fence

- Reconstruct board fence and gate as seen in figure 5.

Sidewalk

- Restore/reconstruct brick sidewalk on Smith Court, preserving granite curb; sidewalk should be lower than at present (see figure 5).

INTERIOR RECOMMENDATIONS

Entry

Floor

- Install floorboards similar to those found beneath the modern floor in the sanctuary.

Walls

- Preserve north-wall plaster between doorways; install baseboard similar to skirt boards of sanctuary stairways.
- Install wooden paneling on sections of north wall between exterior doorways and stairways.
- Remove temporary south partition wall; construct new, plastered partition wall, having two double doorways, adjacent to stairways (see figure 28).
- Remove wainscot and handrails from stairway walls; retain skirt boards.
- Reinstall wooden doorway frames removed from sanctuary-stairway entrances, 1975 (see figure 31).

Ceiling

- Install plaster ceiling flush with joists; leave opening for foyer-floor heat register (see "Heating and Lighting Systems").
- Apply lath and plaster to middle girt.
- Plaster stairway ceilings (soffits of gallery stairways).

Doorways

- Install one, single door in each of the two doorways to sanctuary stairways (see figure 28); doors should have two recessed, molded panels each, similar to leaves of exterior doors.
- Install two doors in each of the two doorways in partition wall (see figure 28); doors should have two recessed, molded panels each, similar to leaves of exterior doors.

Stairways

- Preserve and stabilize.

Heating and Lighting Systems

- The entry itself was not heated in 1855. It is thought that at that time, a hot-air duct from the basement furnace ran along the ceiling of the entry to serve a floor register in the foyer. As stated previously, an opening should be left in the entry ceiling, to reflect where this duct would have passed through the ceiling. (A reproduction hot-air duct need not be installed.)
- Install a light fixture on the north plaster wall between the exterior doorways. This should be a reproduction gaslight fixture appropriate in style to the 1855 period. This fixture light may be electrified.

An excellent source for appropriate-style wall fixtures for the African Meeting House is the 1856 Starr, Fellows & Co. catalog, a copy of which is in the library of Old Sturbridge Village in Massachusetts. (It was reproduced in part in *Gaslighting in America*.) On two pages of this catalog, fixtures Nos. 40, 734, 317, 700, 724, and 112 are said to “make very fine Church Fixtures.” Although this is one year later than the proposed 1855 restoration date, it is close enough. It should be noted that all of these fixtures have two lights each.

Finishes

- Apply real or simulated white calcimine to plaster walls and ceilings in the entry and stairways.

- Woodwork (not including the floor) should be finished with white semigloss alkyd paint (see Appendix A for more information). In the 1855 stairways, the extant historic paint layer can be uncovered using a straight-edge tool to shear off later paint. This may be considered as an alternative to repainting.
- The historic floor finish in the entry is unknown. Therefore, no permanent finish should be applied to the new floorboards. Temporary, reversible finishes such as wax can be used to protect the boards.

Basement/First Story

Since the basement will be adaptively used, only those historic building elements that should be preserved are described here. The existing conditions of the basement should be documented photographically in detail before any work is begun. Photographs were not taken for this report, due to insufficient natural lighting and the absence of electricity. Materials now stored in the basement (such as pieces of the gallery and pews) may be temporarily moved to another building. The Building Conservation Branch (formerly the North Atlantic Historic Preservation Center) should be notified after the later wall paneling has been removed, so that architectural evidence may be properly recorded.

- Floor: preserve joist pockets in brickwork, east and west walls.
- Walls: preserve all plaster walls.
- Ceiling: preserve nails extant in sides of ceiling joists.
- Columns: remove plaster and preserve metal columns.
- Doorways: preserve original, 1806 brick doorway jambs under stairways.
- Windows (see figure 53): preserve jamb boards, lintels, sills, and casings (except sills of D-101, D-102, and W-103, and all woodwork of W-101 and W-112). Window sashes should be replaced (see "Exterior Recommendations").
- Heating system: preserve patches in ceiling for sanctuary-floor heat registers; preserve flue opening, west wall.
- Finishes: preserve calcimine paint on plaster walls.

Foyer

Floor

- Remove modern tongue-and-groove floorboards.

Walls

- Remove wainscot from north, east, and west walls.
- Preserve/repair plaster walls.
- Stabilize partition wall.
- Install north- and south-wall baseboard, where missing; north baseboard to match extant baseboard on east and west walls, south baseboard to match stairways' skirtboard.

Ceiling

- Apply plaster to soffit of gallery following latter's reinstallation.
- If historic floor is found beneath modern floor, restore it. If only subflooring remains in place, install new floorboards to match original floorboards in sanctuary; leave opening for floor heat register (see "Heating and Lighting Systems").

Partition Doorways

- Remove doorways' architraves.
- Rebuild doorways to be approximately 7 inches higher and 7 inches narrower (see figure 77); replaster partition wall.
- Install new architraves made to match those on sanctuary side of doorways.
- Hang three single doors (see figure 32); doors to have two recessed, molded panels similar to the extant leaves of the double front doors in the entry; door hardware to include mortise locks with knobs.

Windows

- Preserve window casings, jamb boards, sills, and lintels.
- Install louvered window blinds made to match those found during the archeological excavation of 1975.

Stairways

- Replace missing balusters with new balusters that resemble extant balusters as closely as possible.

Heating and Lighting Systems

- After modern floorboards are removed, reopen hole for 1855 floor heat register; cover hole with grate of appropriate style.
- Install gaslight fixture of appropriate mid-19th-century style on north wall, centered between windows; fixture may be antique or reproduction, and electrified.

Finishes

- 1855 woodwork paint was oil-based white zinc. This original paint layer may be uncovered in situ on the stairways and doorway frames by scraping the woodwork with a straight-edge tool. (Later paint layers shear off using this method, due to the poor bond between the 1855 paint and successive paint layers.) The 1855 paint layer is ropy, with brush marks clearly defined. Alternatively, the woodwork may be repainted with a white semigloss alkyd paint (see Appendix A for more information).
- The stairways' handrails and newels were stained and varnished, and may require only cleaning and retouching.
- The plaster walls were wallpapered in 1855. There is no remaining evidence of the appearance of the foyer paper. However, there is a section of 1855 wallpaper remaining in the sanctuary. The foyer should be wallpapered with a wallpaper reproduced from this design.

Sanctuary

Apse

- The layout of the apse in 1855 is not known. Records of the Jewish congregation strongly suggest that the raised platform and stairway were installed in 1913, and therefore are not historic. However, since the platform will be a useful feature for public meetings, it is recommended that the platform be retained and finished in such a way that it will not be misconstrued as a historic feature (e.g., painted a neutral white color).

Floor

- Repair original floorboards (see figure 66).

Walls

- Preserve historic wainscot and baseboard, east and west walls; repair where necessary.
- Preserve/repair extant plaster walls.
- Remove all posthistoric pews abutting walls; remove and preserve wallpaper behind pew back, north wall (figs. 39-40).

Ceiling

- Reinstall arched plaster ceiling.
- Reconstruct trap door in northwest corner, as seen in figure 17.
- Rebuild the ceiling of the 1975 apse, such that it displays the barrel-arch form seen in figure 16.

Partition Doorways

- Doorways should be made higher and narrower (see recommendations for foyer).
- Preserve sections of doorway architrave moldings dating from 1855; splice in reproduction moldings where necessary.

Windows

- Preserve all window casings, jamb boards, sills, and lintels.
- Install louvered window blinds made to match those found during the archeological excavation of 1975.

Pews

- Preserve historic pews; exact locations of 1855 pews may be determined from scribe lines on the original floorboards (see figure 66).
- Remove later padding and tacks from pews; repair.

Pulpit

- Neither the appearance nor the exact location of the pulpit in 1855 is known. Therefore, it is recommended that until such time as more information is obtained, a pulpit not be reconstructed.

Heating and Lighting Systems

- Exact locations of the floor heat registers were revealed when the modern tongue-and-groove floorboards were removed. These registers should be covered with iron grates in a style appropriate to the mid-19th century.
- No evidence of 1855 gaslight fixtures could be found on the plaster walls in the sanctuary. Any additional evidence of gas lighting found during restoration work on the building should be recorded and documented.

Finishes

- Paper plaster walls with wallpaper reproduced to match samples preserved on north wall, behind later pew back (fig. 38).
- Paint ceiling with real or simulated white calcimine. Although wallpaper fibers from a ceiling sample near the north wall suggest that the ceiling was papered, we do not know if this was a full ceiling paper or only a border paper. Also, we do not know the pattern of this ceiling paper. Therefore, a neutral white scheme is recommended until such time as further documentation or other information becomes available.
- Paint apse interior with real or simulated white calcimine. As with the ceiling, we do not know how the apse was finished in 1855. It was completely rebuilt in 1975. Therefore, a neutral scheme is recommended.
- Paint most woodwork with white, semigloss, alkyd paint, including doorways and doors, windows, wainscot, front of gallery balustrade, and gallery carrying beams (see Appendix A).
- Paint pews with yellow, semigloss, alkyd paint, except for the trim edging their arms and backs; apply a dark, resinous finish such as varnish to this trim (see Appendix A).
- Paint gallery support columns white (see Appendix A.)
- Leave floor unfinished; protect with reversible coating such as wax.

Gallery

The gallery was completely disassembled (except for its stairways and carrying beams) and stored in the basement of the African Meeting House in 1975. At the time the gallery was removed, individual pieces were numbered on the back with yellow crayon. Unfortunately, inquiries made to the supervising architect of that work, and to the Museum of Afro American History, have not located a "reassembly sheet" that explains the numbers. Therefore, the gallery will have to be reassembled based on: (a) the 1934 HABS drawings; (b) the 1937 HABS photographs; and (c) documentary photographs taken of the entire gallery before disassembly in 1975 and now in the possession of the Museum of Afro American History. Prior to reassembly, the component parts will need to be removed from the basement and sorted. This may be accomplished by temporarily moving the gallery elements to a storage building at the Charlestown Navy Yard, Boston National Historical Park. Removal of this material would also enable work to commence in the basement area.

A new method of support for the gallery joists at the east and west walls will need to be worked out. In 1855, the joists rested on a small brick ledge level with the tops of the second-story east and west windows. Where the ledge ran above the windows, a ledger board carried the ends of the gallery joists. These boards in many cases were found to be sagging and structurally unsound.

The gallery columns and carrying beams were relocated for structural purposes in 1975 (figs. 35-36), and the bridging beam between them was removed. The columns and beams will need to be moved back to their 1855 locations. If the old bridging beam cannot be located, a new beam will have to be installed.

Lighting of the sanctuary and gallery in 1855 appears to have been accomplished by two gas lamps that sat atop the gallery balustrade. One of these lamps was recovered during the 1975 archeological excavation (fig. 37), and could be used as a model for reproduction lamps.

The walls of the gallery should be wallpapered with the same reproduction paper used on the sanctuary walls. All of the gallery woodwork—except for the front of the gallery balustrade, which faces the sanctuary—should be painted with a yellow semigloss alkyd paint. This finish should be applied to the back side (interior) of the gallery balustrade, the balustrade supports, and the pews, except for their arm and back trim. (See Appendix A for more information.) The floor should remain unfinished, but be protected with a reversible finish such as wax. The gas lamps atop the gallery balustrade should be finished with gold leaf.

VI. APPENDICES

APPENDIX A.
Finishes Analysis

METHODOLOGY

A total of 217 paint samples was taken from exterior and interior painted surfaces of the African Meeting House. Removal was accomplished using an X-acto knife, and samples were placed in individually labeled coin envelopes. Log numbers were assigned to paint samples (BOAF P001, P002, etc.), and sample locations were recorded on site drawings (see Chapter IV of this report). Written descriptions of paint sample locations are included in this appendix.

Samples were mounted in wax-filled petri dishes at the Building Conservation Branch (formerly the North Atlantic Historic Preservation Center), and examined with a Bausch & Lomb stereozoom microscope. Paint layer sequences (chromochronologies) were recorded, and spot chemical tests done. Chemicals used include sodium sulfide to identify lead paint, and hydrochloric acid and water to identify calcimine (water-based) paint. Dating of paint layers was accomplished by removing samples from datable features, such as the present sanctuary and gallery stairs, known to have been installed in 1855. Historic layers were color-matched to commercially available Benjamin Moore (BM) paints.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDED FINISHES (1855)

Exterior

doorway casings	white	alkyd semigloss paint (BM OW-6)
window casings and sills		
apse support columns		
gable-end roof trim		
sash	black	alkyd semigloss paint
doors	medium green	alkyd semigloss paint

Entry

plaster walls & ceiling	white	real or simulated calcimine
woodwork & stairs	white	alkyd semigloss paint (BM OW-6)

Basement/First Floor

NA (adaptive-use area)

Foyer

plaster walls	wallpaper	reproduction (see Appendix B)
plaster ceiling	white	real or simulated calcimine
gallery-stair handrails & newels	stain & varnish	clean & preserve; retouch
other woodwork	white	alkyd semigloss paint (BM OW-6)

Sanctuary

plaster walls	wallpaper	reproduction (see Appendix B)
plaster ceiling & apse	white	real or simulated calcimine
woodwork; gallery beams, columns, balustrade (front)	white	alkyd semigloss paint (BM 0W-6)
pews, except for arm and back trim	yellow	alkyd semigloss paint (BM CB-56)
pews' arm and back trim	clear	varnish

Gallery

woodwork; gallery balustrade (back)	yellow	alkyd semigloss paint (BM CB-56)
pews, except for arm and back trim	yellow	alkyd semigloss paint (BM CB-56)
pews' arm and back trim	clear	varnish

KEY TO SYMBOLS USED IN CHROMOCHRONOLOGY CHARTS

B	blue	l.	light
BE	beige	d.	dark
BK	black		reacts strongly to sodium sulfide
BN	brown		reacts to sodium sulfide
C	cream	(k)	calcimine
DP	decorative painting	(z)	zinc
CL	clear	---	varnish
GL	glaze	-	traces only
GN	green	[]	intrusion
GY	gray		superscript means multiple layers of same color
M	mustard		
MT	metallic		
O	orange		
P	pink		
R	red		
ST	stain		
W	white		
Y	yellow		

EXTERIOR SAMPLES

Locations of Samples

- P174 D-101, brick jamb
- P175 W-101, former wood lintel
- P176 W-101, present wood lintel
- P177 W-101, jamb stucco (M052)
- P178 W-102, brick jamb
- P179 W-103, storm casing
- P180 W-103, jamb stucco (M053)
- P181 D-102, metal lintel
- P182 D-102, jamb stucco (M054)
- P183 D-102, casing
- P184 W-104, casing
- P185 W-109, casing
- P186 W-202, casing
- P187 W-207, casing
- P188 W-210, casing
- P189 E facade, to right of D-101
- P190 N facade, brickwork infill of former W doorway
- P191 N facade, W corner
- P192 N facade, between D-104 and D-105
- P193 D-105, brick jamb
- P194 D-105, red-painted outline
- P195 D-105, painted brick lintel
- P203 Present S apse columns
- P204 N facade, brick patch in former W doorway
- P206 W-210, stucco on lower jamb (M056)

EXTERIOR WALLS

Date	E. Facade (con't.)		North Facade						
	189	206	190	191	192	193	194	195	204
ca. 1870	M•		M		M°	M	M		M
			GY		GY•	GY	GY	GY	
	W• M°	W M							
ca. 1904	W		W	W	W		W	W	
	Y°	Y	Y°	Y	Y°		Y	GY	Y
	R	R	R	R	R		R	R	R
ca. 1934							Y	1.GY	
							P	W	
							R		
							R	W	
							R		

EXTERIOR WALLS

Date	East Facade							
	174	175*	176*	177	178	180	181	182
ca. 1870	M°				M°			M°
						[GY]		[GY]°
	W• M•				W• M•			W• M°
ca. 1904	W				W			W
	Y•	Y	Y	Y	Y•	GY	Y•	Y°
	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
ca. 1934							Y•	
							W•	
							P•	
							BK	

* poor sample

EXTERIOR WINDOWS								APSE
Date	W-103	D-102	W-104	W-109	W-202	W-207	W-210	Columns
	179	183	184	185	186	187	188	203
1806		Y• W• W•						
1855	W•	W• GY-B•	W•	W•		W•		W•
Ca. 1870	W --- GY-P•	M° GY-P•	W P BE-P	W	--- GY	W	--- GY-P	W•
	M•	M°	M•	M	M•	M•	M•	Y•
Ca. 1904	W• W• [R] GY•	W Y° [R]	W Y• [R] W-Y•		W° GY• [R] GY•	GY•	W• Y-GY•	GY•
Ca.		W• P• W	W• W C	W• P W C	W• C° W	C W	W• C° W C	W• W• W W B

INTERIOR SAMPLES

Entry

Location of Samples

- P007 D-105, casing
- P008 D-105, door
- P009 N wall, plaster between D-104 and D-105
- P010 N lower wall, plaster between D-104 and D-105 (M015)
- *P011 E stairway, N wall, former doorway location
- P012 E stairway, N wall beneath later wainscot (M016)
- P013 E stairway, wainscot
- P014 E stairway, paneling between 1st and 2nd floors
- P015 E stairway, 2nd-floor handrail
- P016 E stairway, 2nd-floor newel
- P017 E stairway, 2nd-floor railing baluster
- P018 E stairway, wood reused in steps
- P019 E stairway skirtboard, interior wall
- P020 E stairway skirtboard, exterior wall
- P021 E stairway, riser
- P022 E stairway, first plaster layer, N wall
- P023 E stairway, second plaster layer, N wall
- *P032 E stairway, underside of steps
- P033 E stairway, underside of 9th riser
- P034 W stairway, underside of 10th riser
- P035 W stairway, underside near P034
- P040 N wall, electric meter backboard
- P041 N wall, fuse box backboard
- P042 N wall, plaster above fuse box
- P043 N wall, plaster at about 5-ft. level
- P170 N wall, gas-pipe patch in plaster
- P196 Underside of ceiling joist near W girt
- P197 Iron hook in ceiling joist
- P208 Doorway frame formerly leading to stairway
- P212 N wall, paneling next to exterior doorways

*sample had no paint layers

Date	ENTRY					
	Walls					
	009	010	012	013	022	023
1806					W(k) W(k) W(k) B(k) P(k)	
1855	W(k) Y(k) P-0(k) P(k) C	Y(k) P(k)				P(k) C
Post 1880	W• Y C 1.GN° M	GY M	W Y° P° O°			W Y P• P• O°
Ca. 1912	W Y-C• W ⁴ W Y-C• W W W --- C	R	P Y-M M ³ •	ST --- M BN		P Y• M ⁴ • M• M M W C• C•
1975						W C

ENTRY								
Date	Walls (con't.)						Ceiling	
	040	041	042	043	170	212	196	197
1806							W(k) Y(k) ² Y(k) W(k) Y(k)	
1855			W(k) ² Y(k) P(k) C	W(k) Y(k) P-O(k) P(k) C				C MT
Post 1880			W• Y GN° B-GN• M°	W• Y C 1.GN M	--- C 1.GN M	W GN• GY• B-GN• M•		W C 1.GY MT
Ca. 1912	W Y• W ⁴ W Y-C° W W C M C --- C C	W Y• W ⁴ Y° W W C M C C C	W W W C C	Y-C• W ⁴ W Y-C• W W W --- C		C-P C ⁴ • C° C C M Y Y Y	W W B	
1975	C C	C C				W		

Date	ENTRY							
	Stairs							
	014	015	016	017	018	019	020	021
1806								
					M• GY•			
1855	W(z) W(z) W° W°	ST ---	ST ---	W(z) W		W(z) P P P-O°	W(z) P P P-O°	W(z) W W W•
Post 1880	W° 1.GN• C• W°			1.GN• W•		R R-P R	R R-P R	R• R R
Ca. 1912	W° W° W• W• W° ---			W W W• W° W°		R R R R-O ---	R R R R-O ---	R R R R-BN R-BN R-BN R
		R-BN	R-BN	W W° W		R-BN R-O BN	R-BN R-O BN	R-BN R-O BN
1975	W W	R-BN	R-BN	W				

ENTRY						
Date	Stairs (con't.)			Doorways		
	033	034	035	007	008	208
1806	W• --- W• C• W• W•	C° GY°	 GY°			
1855						W(z) W• P-C•
Post 1880						Y-GN• Y-GN• B-GN• M
Ca. 1912						C-P W• C W° W• W• W• 1.Y• W° W W 1.Y BE Y Y
1975				W W	W GN	

Basement/First Floor

Locations of Samples

- *P001 W plaster wall, beneath stair (M010)
- P002 N wall, former E 1806 doorway, lower part of W jamb
- P003 W plaster wall, beneath stair (M011)
- P004 E plaster wall, beneath stair (M013)
- P005 N wall, former E 1806 doorway, upper part of W jamb (M012)
- P006 E plaster wall, beneath stair, left of D-101 (M014)
- P024 W-101, casing
- P025 E plaster wall, N corner beneath stair (M018)
- P026 E plaster wall, below W-101 (M019)
- *P027 W plaster wall, to left of W-112 (M020)
- *P028 W plaster wall, above W-112 (M021)
- *P029 N wall, former E 1806 doorway, E jamb
- P030 N plaster wall, beneath E stair, E of former doorway
- P031 W plaster wall, above W-112
- P036 E plaster wall, between D-101 and W-102 (M025)
- *P037 Underside of 2nd-floor floorboards
- *P038 Underside of 2nd-floor floorboards
- P039 E plaster wall, flush against D-101 wood jamb (M037)
- P044 D-101, wood jamb below window sill
- P045 D-101, wood jamb above window sill
- P046 D-101, window sash
- P047 D-101, window sill
- P048 W-102, casing
- P049 W-102, wood jamb
- P050 W-102, wood lintel
- P051 W-102, sash
- P052 W-102, wood sill
- *P053 W-103, brick jamb (M026)
- P054 W-103, wood jamb
- *P055 W-103, wood frame above present lintel
- P056 W-103, sash
- P057 W-103, wood sill
- P058 D-102, wood jamb
- P059 D-102, sash
- P060 D-102, wood sill
- P061 W-104, wood jamb
- P062 W-104, sash
- P063 W-104, wood sill
- P064 W-104, wood sill
- P065 W-106, casing
- P066 W-107, casing

P067 W-107, sash
 P068 W-108, wood jamb
 P069 W-108, sash
 P070 W-110, wood jamb
 P071 W-110, casing
 *P072 S brick wall, to left of W-106
 *P073 S brick wall, between W-107 and D-103
 *P074 W wall, horizontal board covered by T & G paneling
 P075 E wall, T & G paneling below W-102
 P076 E wall, T & G paneling below W-103
 P077 E wall, bench base board
 P078 E wall, bench seat
 P079 E plaster wall, between W-102 and W-103 (M027)
 P080 W plaster wall, above and below stove flue (M028)
 P081 Ceiling plaster against W wall (M029)
 P092 E wall, T & G paneling above bench
 P093 E wall, T & G paneling formerly covered by bench back
 P094 W wall, T & G paneling to left of W-108
 P095 W wall, T & G paneling formerly covered by gas pipe
 P096 W wall, gas pipe
 P097 W wall, T & G paneling to right of W-110
 P098 W-103, muntin
 P099 W-104, casing
 P100 W-104, muntin
 P101 W-110, wood sill
 *P106 W-103, frame behind wood jamb
 P140 D-101, left jamb adjacent to plaster wall
 P141 Reused board nailed to ceiling joist
 P142 D-102, casing
 P143 Plaster on E iron column (M040)
 P144 Plaster on W iron column
 P198 E wall, cornice board
 P199 E wall, T & G paneling directly below P198
 P200 W wall, metal wall siding at flue
 P201 W-102, apron molding
 P209 D-102, paneling of right jamb below window-sill level
 P210 D-102, right frame member, behind window sill
 P211 D-102, T & G paneling beneath window sill

* sample had no paint layers

BASEMENT															
Date	Plaster Walls													Ceiling	
	002	003	004	005	006	025	026	030	031	036	039	079	080	081	141
1806	W W Y W B P	W W Y B-W	 Y	W W Y W B P				-B							
1855					W W W Y O-R W W-B B	-Y	-Y		O W W	W W Y O-P W W-B B	-Y -P	W W Y O-P W W-B B	-W	W W W W• --- Y• --- Y	
Post 1880	(all wall paint is calcimine)													all calcimine	W W C W Y Y W Y W W W

BASEMENT

Date	PANELED WALLS										
	075	076	092	093	094	095	096	097	198	199	200
1806											
1855	P• C° C° W GL	P• C° C° W° W• W W•	P• C° C° W W• W•	P	P° C° C° W W• W•	P		P• C° C° W° W• W W• W°	C• W W W• W 1.P•	P° C• C° W W• 1.P•	
Post 1880		W W° W W W W W W	W W W W W W		W W W W W W W		W W W W	C• C• M• GY-P° O O W C	C• C• M• GY-P O W C	C C C C C W-GY W C	

BASEMENT DOORS

Date	D-101					D-102						
	044	045	046	047	140	058	059	060	142	209	210	211
1806					Y W°	W• Y• W-GY°			W• Y• W-GY•	GW GW GW	W Y GY	
1855	W(z)	W(z)			W(z) [k] W° [k] W	W(z)					W• W	
Post 1880	1.P C-W C-W W	1.P W° W° W W				P-Y• C° C° W° C W W• W W• W W° W W4				Y• R Y•	P-Y• C-P C-Y W	C W W• W W• W W° W W W4
		W-GY• M• M• P-GY W W	W-C• W-C• W-C• M• Y C C 1.GN	W-GY• P•			W• C W• W W° W GP O	W• C W• W W° W W4 P O				

[illegible]

214

BASEMENT WINDOWS

Date	W-104						W-106	W-107	
	061	062	063	064	099	100	065	066	067
	Y-C ^o						W ^c	W [•]	
1855								W(z)	
							W	W(z)	
								W	
							W [•]	W [•]	
Post 1880	P [•]	O			P-Y [•]	O	P-Y [•]	P [•]	O
	C ^o	C ^o			C ^o	W	C ^o	C ^o	W ^c
	C ^o				C ^o	C [•]	C ^o	C ^o	C [•]
	W				W		W	W	
	W [•]				W [•]	W [•]	W [•]	W [•]	W [•]
	W				W		W	W	W-C
	W ^o	W ^o			W [•]	W ^o	W [•]	W [•]	W [•]
					W			W	W
	W [•]	W [•]			W [•]	W ^o	W ^o	W ^c	W
	W	W			W	W	W	W	W
	W					W	W	W	W
									W
	W				W		W	W	W
	W ⁴	W ⁴			W ⁴	W ⁴	W ⁴	W ⁴	W ⁴
GY-P				GY-P	GY-P	GY-P	GY-P	GY-P	
				0	0	0	0	0	0

	BASEMENT WINDOWS (con't.)					BENCH		COLUMNS	
Date	W-108		W-110						
	068	069	070	071	101	077	078	143	144
1806								W•	
1855			W(z)	W(z)	W(z)			W• Y MT-GD 1.GY P•	
Post			W•	W•	W•			[plaster]	
1880	P• W W W• W W• W W W W W ⁴ GY-P	O W-C W• W-C W W W W W W W W ⁴ GY-P O	P-Y• C C W W W• Y•	P• C C W W W Y•	P C C W W Y•		GY• P R Y P• M-Y• O-BR --- R R Y-C	1.GN• 1.Y• M B-GN R R R M-Y --- O-BR O-BR O-BR R --- R-BR R-BR Y Y-C	1.Y Y-O• B-GN• R R R Y O-BR O-BR R R --- R-BR ---

Foyer

Locations of Samples

P082 W-201, right wood jamb
P083 W-201, bead on left wood jamb
P084 W-201, sash
P085 W-201, sill
*P086 W-209, plaster enclosing splayed jamb (M036)
P087 W-210, left wood jamb
P088 W-210, sill
P089 W-211, panel used to fill in lower corner of window
P090 E wall, to left of W-201, 2nd plaster layer
P091 N wall, between W-209 and W-210, 2nd plaster layer
P107 S partition, upper section
P108 S partition, middle section
P109 S partition, lower section
P110 S partition, W jamb of E doorway
P139 S partition, adjacent to electrical box
P145 W gallery beam, near stair to gallery
P146 E gallery beam, near N wall
P147 W gallery beam, former location of electric light fixture
P148 W gallery beam, formerly covered by gallery woodwork
P149 N wall, below W-210, formerly covered by later wainscot
P150 S partition, adjacent to center doorway
P153 N wall, adjacent to 1855 gas-pipe location
P156 S partition, later double doorway
P173 S partition, doorway architrave (wire nails)

* sample had no paint layers

FOYER

Date	Walls									Gallery Beams			
	090	091	107	108	109	139	149	150	153	145	146	147	148
Pre 1806												W GN	
1806										W•	W W	W•	C•
										---	---	---	
										W• W•	W-GY	W•	W• W-GY
1855	W(k) P(k) C• W• Y•	WP C• W• Y•	C• W• Y•	P(k) C• W• Y•	WP C• W• Y•		C W Y	P(k) C• W• Y•	WP C• W• Y•	W(z) W(z) W(z) W	W(z) W(z) W(z) W	W(z) W(z) W(z) W	
Post 1880	P• P• CL-Y Y-M Y-M• Y-M•	P• P CL-Y Y-M Y-M• Y-M•	P• 1.0 1.P CL-Y M 1.0• M• M•	P• 1.0 1.P CL-Y M O-M• M• M• M•	P• 1.0 1.P CL-Y M O-M• M• M• M•		P P-O P M M M• M•	P• 1.0 1.P CL-Y O-M• M• M• M•	P• 1.0 1.P CL-Y 1.0• M• M• M•	P• P-O P Y Y•	P• P-O P CL-Y Y-M Y-M• Y-M•	P• P-O P P Y•	
Ca. 1912	Y-M• Y-M•	Y-M• Y-M•	M• M• 1.Y• 1.P• GN GN	M• M• BR• 1.P• BK GN	M• M• 1.BR d.R d.BR	Y• P• GN W GN		M• M• BR• 1.P• BK GN	M• M• 1.Y• 1.P• 1.GN GN	Y• Y-M 1.GN GN	Y-M 1.GN GN	Y•	

FOYER										
Date	Doorways			Windows						
	110	156	173	082	083	084	085	087	088	089
Pre 1806										
1806							R Y		Y• W-GY• W-GY•	Y GY
1855	W(z)			1.GY° W(z) W(z)	W(z) W(z)		W(z) W(z) W°	W(z) W W	W(z) W(z) W°	
	W• C			W C	W C		C-W• C-Y	C• W	W P• C-W• C-W• W°	
Post 1880	W° P• W° W• Y --- Y• --- Y• ---	C° °W&R W• Y --- Y• --- Y• ---	C C° W• Y --- Y• --- Y• ---	W P• W• CL W° W° W° W°	W• P• W• W• W° W° Y° W•		C-W• C-P• C-W• C-W• C-W° C-W° C-W• W° W° W	C• W• W C-W• C-W• C-W• W° W° W	W P• C-W• C-W• W° W° W• W•	
Ca. 1912	W ---	W ---	W ---	W• W• W• W° W W W W W	W° W W W W W W W W GY-GN		W• W° W° W° W• W W° W W C-Y	W° W W W W W W W W	W° W W° W W W W W W	

Sanctuary, Gallery, and Artifacts

Locations of Samples

P102	Pew side
P103	Pew arm
P104	Pew back
P105	Pew top molding, back
P111	W-202, wood jamb
P112	W-202, wood sill
P113	E wall, N of W-202, 2nd plaster layer
P114	W-202, sash
P115	Wainscot cap to N of W-202
P116	Wainscot to N of W-202
P117	Wainscot between W-202 and W-203, beneath later padding
P118	N partition, above pew
P119	N partition, patch
P120*	N partition, wallpaper
P221	S wall, E end, 2nd plaster layer
P122	S wall, E end, wainscot cap
P123	S wall, E end, wainscot
P124	W-202, wood sill behind wood jamb
P125	W-202, wood casing behind wood jamb
P126	W-202, left jamb bead, adjacent to plaster wall
P127	W-202, furring board for lath at splayed jamb
P128	W-202, wainscot filler board for jamb gap
P129	W-202, wood sill adjacent to wainscot
P130	E wall, wainscot cap adjacent to 1st plaster layer
P131	E wall, wainscot cap adjacent to 2nd plaster layer
P132	E wall, 1st plaster layer, adjacent to wainscot
P133	E wall, paint line on 1st plaster layer, 32" above wainscot
P134	N partition, pew back over wallpaper
P135	N partition, pew back over wallpaper beneath padding
P136	N partition, pew arm added over wallpaper
P137	Aisle wall of pews
P138	N partition, frame of small opening
P151	W wall, gallery near stairway
P152	Electric light fixture, formerly attached to gallery wall
P154	W wall, gallery plaster patch enclosing electrical conduit
P155	W wall, 2nd plaster layer, former radiator location
P157	S wall, W end, 2nd plaster layer
P158	W-207, loose painted plaster wall behind wood jamb
P159	S wall, wainscot below level of later floor
P160	E wall, baseboard above level of later floor
P161	E wall, baseboard below level of later floor

P162 Early gaslight fixture, archeological artifact #AMH-91
 P163 Window-blind fragments, archeological artifact #AMH-509
 P165 E iron column for gallery beam
 P166 Gallery beam, bottom side
 P167 Gallery beam, bottom side, formerly covered by woodwork
 P168 W-202, furring board for 2nd plaster layer
 P169 E wall, wainscot behind 1855 partition
 P171* E wall, plaster patch for post-1880 gas pipe
 P172 W wall, wainscot at former pew-arm location
 P202 W wall, former gallery pew location
 P205 Ceiling, near E wall
 P207 Gallery balustrade
 P213 Former locations of E and W gallery-beam columns at tie beam (two samples the same)
 P214 W wall, wainscot area formerly abutted by end of 1806 S-wall wainscot
 P215 Portion of 1806 S-wall wainscot, reused in a floor patch at N end of sanctuary
 P216 Gallery balustrade support
 P217 Gallery, separating rail between pews

* poor sample

SANCTUARY AND GALLERY

Date	Plaster Walls													Ceiling
	113	118	119	121	132	133	151	152	154	155	157	158	202	205
					W W GN Y W B P	W W B P						W W GN Y W B P		W Y W B P
1855	WP C W• Y•	WP C° W• Y•		WP C° W° ---			WP C• W• Y•				C-W(k) W-B(k) Y• Y		WP C W Y	WP W Y
Post 1880	P• P M M• M CL	P• P CL-Y M° M• M• M•	P• P CL-Y M-P M-Y•	P• P CL-Y M M•			P• P CL-Y M° M• M• M•				P• P CL-Y M M• M• M•	P P DP DP DP DP		P• Y• M•
Ca. 1912	Y C-P• W 1.GN GN	C• C• W 1.GN	C-Y• C-P• W 1.GN	Y• P• 1.GN 1.GN			M• P• C• W Y-C	C-P P-O Y-C	Y Y• P W-GN GN		Y P W-GY GN GN			1.P• Y P P-O

SANCTUARY WOODWORK, ETC.

Date	116	117	122	123	128	130	131	159	160	161	169	172	214	215	138
Pre 1806		P-O* B-GN*				---	R-O P-O								
1806	GY-W* --- Y* ---	GY-W* Y*			Y*	W W W Y	W* W*				GY-W* Y*	GY-W* Y*		B* Y*	1.Y*
	W* W(z)	GY-W* W(z)			W* W(z)	C W(z)	W* W(z)		W P-O	W P-O		W P	W(z) O	W(z) O	
1855	P° 1.P° W°	P 1.P*			P° P° W°		R-B P*					1.P 1.P W	1.P 1.P	1.P 1.P	
Post 1880	O*	O*	O°	O*	O*		O-R	O	O	O		O			---
	1.BN* 1.BN 1.BN	1.BN 1.BN 1.BN	BN	BN	BN		BN	BN-M	BN			BN-M			BN
							BN-O	BN-M	BN			BN-M			BN
Ca. 1912	R ---	R	R	R	R		R	R	R						R
	R ---		d.R		R		R-BN		R						R
	R d.BN		d.BN		R BN		R-O R-BN	R-BN	R d.BN-R						d.R d.BN

SANCTUARY AND GALLERY

Date	Windows									Blinds
	111	112	114	124	125	126	127	129	168	163
1806	GY-W*		C-W ^o	W ^o	W*				GY-W	
				Y ^o			Y ^o		Y	
				GY-W*			GY-W ^o		GY-W	
1855	W(z)	W(z)				W(z)		W(z)		C-W
	---					---				
	W-C*	W ^o				W-C ^c		W ^c		C-W
	C	W ^o				W*		W ^o		C
		C-W ^o						W ^o		C
Post 1880	P*	P*				P*		P*		
	C*	C*								
	W	W				W		W*		
		W								
	W*	W*				W		W		
	W	W*	W ^o			W*		W*		
		W	W			W		W*		
Ca. 1912	---					---				
	W	W	W			W		W		
	C	W	W			W		W		
	W	W	W			W		W		
	---					---				
	GN-GY	Y	W			W		Y		
	W									

SANCTUARY AND GALLERY

Date	Pews								
	102	103	104	105	134	135	136	137	217
1806	<p style="text-align: right;">W•</p> <p>Y</p> <p>GY-W•</p>								
1855	<p>W(z) W(z) W</p> <p>Y --- Y --- --- --- Y-C C-W Y</p> <p>C-P° C-P° 1.P° 1.P° W-P° W P•</p> <p>W-C• W-C° W-P° W-P° W-P° W• P°</p>								
Post 1880	<p>O• O° O• O° O• O• O•</p> <p>---</p> <p>BN BN BN BN° BN d.BN</p> <p>BN BN BN BN BN 1.BN°</p> <p>BN BN BN BN BN d.BN</p>								
Ca. 1912	<p>R R R R R R d.BN</p> <p>---</p> <p> R R R R R</p> <p>---</p> <p> --- --- --- ---</p> <p>d.BN d.BN d.BN d.BN R d.BN d.BN d.BN</p>								

SANCTUARY AND GALLERY

Date	Gallery Beams			Gallery Column	Gallery Balustrade		Gaslight Fixture
	166	167	213	165	207	216	162
Pre 1806		G-W°			W• Y• GN-B• C• Y•		
1806	C• GY-B• C-Y• --- C-GY•	W• GY-B• C• C-Y• GY-W•			C• GY-B• C• Y• GY-W• GY-W•		
1855	W(z) W-C° W•		W(z) W• W•	C-Y C W• 1.P• 1.P•	W(z) W• 1.P• W• W• 1.P•	W ² Y P• P° P°	gold leaf black 1.P W W
Post 1880	C-P• CL-Y Y• Y•		1.Y• CL-Y O• O•	P-O 1.BN R B•	O• C• C• Y• --- Y• ---	O• d.BN 1.BN	
Ca. 1912	W• GN		BE• GN	W• --- GN	W W P	d.BN d.BN	

APPENDIX B.
Wallpaper Analysis

DISCUSSION

There is clear evidence that the walls of the foyer and sanctuary (including gallery) were wallpapered in 1855. This wallpaper was subsequently removed, but fibers of it appear in many paint samples. In addition, large sections of the actual sanctuary wallpaper remain in situ on the north partition wall, on either side of the center doorway (Ills. 78- 79). These sections were covered over by the backs of pews installed against this wall shortly after 1855, which remained in place up to the present time.

The date of 1855 has been assigned to this wallpaper for several reasons. It is the first layer in paint samples from the 1855 partition dividing the foyer (P109) from the sanctuary (P120); no evidence of earlier finishes is seen. Second, the wallpaper's fibers are linen (cotton), signifying that the paper was rag-pulp (see Section B); the paper stock itself was machine-made. This is consistent with an 1855 date of origin. Finally, the design of the sanctuary wallpaper reflects ca.-1855 taste. (The design of the foyer wallpaper is unknown.) The design is one of marble blocks (Ill. 80), with each block measuring 17 15/16 inches long by 8 3/4 inches high. The blocks are delineated on their top and right sides with a white line, and on their bottom and left sides with a mustard-brown line, presumably to imitate light and shadow. The interiors of the blocks consist of the pale-pink ground, randomly veined in white. The "mortar joints" are light yellow.

The way in which the paper was printed and hung is also noteworthy. It was printed to be installed horizontally. Hanging began at the top of the wall, since the lower strips overlap the upper ones. Also, the blocks of the bottom row were made to look taller than those above, creating a type of "monumental base" effect. This was accomplished by cutting off the "mortar joints" along the edge of two strips and splicing them together.

After in-situ documentation was accomplished, a 3-foot-square sample of the sanctuary wallpaper was removed from the east end of the west section (see Illustration 79) and preserved at the NAHPC.

The ceiling of the sanctuary also may have been wallpapered in 1855: linen fibers were found in the sole paint sample from the 1806/1855 sanctuary ceiling (P205), although not at the lowest level. The reason for the doubt can be attributed to the location from which the sample came: close to the wall. (The original plaster ceiling was removed in 1975, so no samples were available from the center of the ceiling.) Therefore, it is possible that the fibers in P205 merely represent overlap from the adjacent wall's wallpaper.

If the ceiling was papered in 1855, there are at least two possibilities as to its configuration. The first is that wallpaper was applied to the entire ceiling, to cover cracks in the 1806 plaster and make replastering unnecessary. In the mid 19th century, "the fact that papering a ceiling hid unsightly cracks made it very popular."¹ Alternatively, the wallpaper may have been only a border

¹ Catherine Lynn, *Wallpaper in America: From the Seventeenth Century to World War I* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., Inc., 1980), pp. 232-233.

around the edge of the ceiling. "Borders printed for use on walls were also used as edgings for ceilings" in the 19th century.²

METHODOLOGY

Wallpaper found in the sanctuary of the African Meeting House on the north partition behind a pew added later was tested chemically to determine the paper composition. The possibilities included:

- mechanical wood pulp
- chemical wood pulp
- rag pulp

Very small pieces of wallpaper were removed and subjected to two tests. The Borrow's Groundwood Test is a simple procedure that identifies only ground/mechanical wood-pulp fibers. The Type "C" Stain Test is more involved, and identifies ground/mechanical wood-pulp fibers, chemical wood- pulp fibers, and rag-pulp fibers. A complete description of these testing procedures may be found in the *Atlas of Paper-Making Fibers* by F.D. Armitage.

The wallpaper from the sanctuary responded negatively to the Borrow's Groundwood Test. The Type "C" Stain Test identified the paper to be composed of rag-pulp fibers.

² Lynn, p. 234.

APPENDIX C.

Mortar Analysis

METHODOLOGY

A total of 56 mortar samples were removed from the exterior and interior of the African Meeting House in 1982. Mortar samples included plaster, brick mortar, and stucco. Log numbers were assigned to mortar samples (BOAF M001, M002, etc.), and sample locations were recorded on site drawings (see Chapter IV of this report). Written descriptions of mortar sample locations are included in this appendix.

For all samples, testing procedure at the Building Conservation Branch (formerly the North Atlantic Historic Preservation Center) involved isolating the sand component from the samples. This was accomplished by first crushing the sample with a mortar and pestle, and then swirling the pulverized sample in a 1:5 hydrochloric acid and water solution to dissolve the calcium carbonate and other soluble material. The solution was decanted off, and the sand washed with water and dried.

Four basic mortar-sand types were identified by taking samples from datable features:

- 1806: fine, gray
- 1855: coarser, white quartz and orange minerals
- post-1880: similar to 1855 but poorly sorted (includes large pebbles)
- 1975: fine, white

Following the initial sand separation test, 13 of the 56 mortar samples were tested further to determine sand and lime ratios and other factors. Of these 13 samples, 3 were tested from the 1806 category, 7 from the 1855 category, and 3 from the post-1880 category.

A description of sand types for all 56 mortar samples, and the results of the analytical testing of 13 of the 56 samples, are included in two tables in this appendix.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDED MORTAR MIXES (1855)

Brick Mortar

6 parts sand (sample on file at NAHPC)
5 parts lime

Plaster

5 parts sand (sample on file at NAHPC)
2 parts lime
hair and wood chips as binder

EXTERIOR SAMPLES

Location of Samples

M052 W-101, jamb stucco (P177)
M053 W-103, jamb stucco (P180)
M054 D-102, jamb stucco (P182)
M055 W-112, jamb stucco
M056 W-201, lower jamb stucco (P206)

INTERIOR SAMPLES

Entry

Location of Samples

- M015 N wall, between D-104 and D-105 (P010)
- M016 E stair, N wall, beneath wainscot (P012)
- M017 E stair, N wall, second plaster layer above wainscot (P023)
- M022 E stair, N wall, first plaster layer
- M023 W stair, W wall, mortar behind baseboard
- M024 W stair, W wall, plaster behind baseboard
- M048 N wall, gas-line patch between D-104 and D-105 (P170)
- M058 W stair, N wall, former 1806 joist pocket

Basement/First Floor

Location of Samples

- M001 N wall, former E doorway, brick-infill mortar
- M002 N wall, former E doorway, plaster on splayed jamb
- M003 N wall, immediately to right of M002
- M004 N wall, lower part, below M003
- M005 N wall, former W doorway, plaster on splayed door jamb
- M006 N wall, lower part, to left of M005
- M007 N wall, brick mortar to left of former E doorway
- M008 W-112, brick-infill mortar
- M009 W wall, plaster
- M010 W wall, beneath stair (P001)
- M011 W wall, plaster (P003)
- M012 N wall, former E doorway, plaster on straight jamb (P005)
- M013 E wall, beneath stair (P004)
- M014 E wall, beneath stair (P006)
- M018 E wall, below stair (P025)
- M019 E wall, below W-101 (P026)
- M020 W wall, to left of W-112 (P027)
- M021 W wall, above W-112 (P028)
- M025 E wall, between D-101 and W-102 (P036)

M026 W-103, stucco on right splayed jamb (P053)
M027 E wall, between W-102 and W-103 (P079)
M028 W wall, above and below stove flue (P080)
M029 Ceiling plaster, against W wall (P081)
M030 W wall, stove-flue stucco
M031 D-101, lower jamb stucco
M032 Infill brick mortar between W-107 and D-103
M033 W-105, brick-infill mortar
M034 D-103, brick-infill mortar
M035 S wall, brick mortar between W-106 and W-107
M037 E wall, flush against D-101 wood jamb (P039)
M038 W-106, mortar between brick jamb and window frame
M039 D-102, brick-jamb mortar
M040 Plaster on east column (P143)
M041 Ceiling plaster, bottom of middle girt
M046 D-101, brick-jamb mortar
M047 Plaster fragment on ceiling joist
M057 W-101, brick-infill mortar
M059 Easternmost low brick support wall, mortar

Foyer

Location of Samples

M036 W-209, plaster covering splayed jamb (P086)
M042 N wall, between W-209 and W-210, adjacent to former gas line (P153)

Sanctuary and Gallery

Location of Samples

M043 W wall at gallery level, plaster patch for electrical conduit (P154)
M044 E wall, plaster patch for gas pipe (P171)
M045 W wall, plaster patch for gas pipe
M049 N partition, plaster patch (P119)
M050 W-202, lower jamb, brick mortar
M051 Ceiling, near east wall (P205)

COMPOSITION OF SAMPLES

	1806 SAND			1855 SAND							POST-1880 SAND		
Sample Number	002	004	035	001	015	021	026	027	028	036	041	044	049
Sand Parts/Volume	40	34	45	45	54	44	43	54	43	52	46	52	45
Lime Parts/Volume	48	51	46	35	22	32	35	20	39	19	28	24	26
Sand: Lime Ratio	1:1.2	1:1.5	1:1	1.3:1	2.5:1	1.4:1	1.2:1	2.7:1	1.1:1	2.7:1	1.6:1	2.2:1	1.7:1
% Sand (by weight)	51	51	54	64	80	66	64	81	64	82	73	77	75
% Fines (by weight)	5	3	5	4	0	5	4	1	1	1	2	1	2
% CaOH ₂ (by weight)	44	46	41	32	20	29	32	18	35	17	25	22	23
Hair/Fiber	no	no	no	wood	wood & hair	wood & hair	wood	wood & hair	wood & hair	wood & hair	wood & hair	wood & hair	wood & hair
Iron Particles	no	yes	no	no	no	no	yes	no	yes	no	yes	yes	yes
Plaster(PL) or Mortar (M)	PL	PL	M	M	PL	M	M	PL	PL/M	PL	PL	PL	PL

APPENDIX D.
Nail and Hardware Analysis

METHODOLOGY

Twenty-seven samples of nails and some pieces of hardware were removed from the African Meeting House in 1982. These samples were assigned IROS numbers (BOAF A001, A002, etc.). Written descriptions of artifact locations are included in this appendix.

Artifacts taken from datable features were grouped into the following categories:

- 1806: wrought and early cut nails (some of the wrought nails may have been reused from the old West Church)
- 1855: iron cut nails
- post-1880 to present: steel cut and wire nails

LOCATIONS OF SAMPLES

Entry

- A020 Nails, E stair, formerly covered by plaster
- A021 Lath nails, W-211, lower infill panel
- A022 Lath nails, W-208, lower infill panel
- A025 Nail, side of joist #2, between W and middle girts
- A028 Nail for furring board, joists #4 and 5 from N wall
- A029 Furring-board nails, near N wall

Basement/First Floor

- A001 Gas pipe bracket and nail attached to ceiling joist
- A002 Furring-board nails, near A001
- A003 Early lath nails reused in ceiling
- A004 Early furring-board nails reused in ceiling
- A005 Furring-board nails in ceiling
- A006 Nail for ceiling strapping, attached to side of joist
- A007 Furring-board nails in ceiling
- A008 Nails in brick wall, to left of W-106
- A009 Nails in brick wall, to right of W-101
- A010 Screw attaching gas pipe bracket to wall paneling
- A011 Nail attaching wooden lintel to wooden jamb, D-102
- A012 Ceiling lath and nails above W-108
- A013 Ceiling lath and nails attached to bottom of center girt
- A014 Ceiling lath and nails attached to side of center girt
- A023 Nail, side of joist #8 from N wall, between W and middle girts
- A024 Nail, infill of former hot-air register, near S wall, between W and middle girts

Sanctuary

- A015 Gas-line hardware, between W-202 and W-203
- A016 Nail for gas-line bracket, between W-208 and W-209
- A017 Nail, wide plank flooring, near pulpit
- A018 Nail, later flooring, near E wall
- A019 Nail and lath, N partition
- A026 Spike from ceiling furring board
- A027 Ceiling lath and nail
- A030 Carpet tack on infill of ca.-1855 hot-air register

ANALYSIS OF SAMPLES

Sample Number	1806	1855	POST-1880	UNIDENTIFIED
A001			steel cut nail	
A002			steel cut nail	
A003	early cut nail			
A004	wrought nail			
A005			steel cut nail	
A006	wrought nail			
A007			steel cut nail	
A008			masonry cut nails	
A009				corroded
A010			screw	
A011		iron cut nail		
A012			steel cut nail	
A013			steel cut nail	
A014			steel cut nail	
A015				corroded
A016			steel cut nail	
A017	wrought nail			
A018			steel cut nail	
A019		iron cut nail		
A020		iron cut nail		
A021		iron cut nail		
A022		iron cut nail		
A023		iron cut nail		
A024		iron cut nail		
A025	early cut nail			
A026	wrought spike			
A027	early cut nail			
A028			steel cut nail	
A029		iron cut nail		
A030			cut tack (iron?)	

APPENDIX E.

Information on the African Meeting House Pulpits

Smithsonian Institution
ANACOSTIA NEIGHBORHOOD MUSEUM
1901 Fort Place, SE
Washington, DC 20020

January 13, 1987

Barbara:

I was able to find an 8x10 of each photograph. If you examine the small National Portrait Gallery photograph of Thomas Badger's painting of Paul, you will see that it looks like the Massachusetts Historical Society photograph.

Let us have your reaction to these images. We are considering the construction of a replica of one of these pulpits, but as you can see we do not have a full view of either of them.

Any advice you might offer will be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,
Ed Smith



Patterson, John Henry, 1844-1922
Businessman
J. Phillip Schmand, 1871-1942
Oil on canvas, 81.5 x 66.5 cm. (32 x 26¼ in.), 1920
NPG.70.71
Gift of the Patterson Memorial through
Mrs. Marvin Breckinridge Patterson



Patti, Adelina, 1843-1919
Singer
Charles DeForest Fredricks, 1823-1894
Photograph, albumen silver print, 8.6 x 5.4 cm. (3⅜ x 2⅛ in.), c. 1861
NPG.80.217



Patti, Adelina, 1843-1919
Singer
Charles Reutlinger, ?-?
Photograph, albumen silver print, 8.7 x 5.6 cm. (3½ x 2¼ in.), c. 1870
NPG.80.187



Paul, Thomas, 1773-1831
Clergyman
Thomas Badger, 1792-1868
Oil on panel, 20.5 x 16 cm. (8 x 6⅜ in.), not dated
NPG.70.45



Peabody, George, 1795-1869
Financier, philanthropist
Dominique C. Fabronius, active 1850-1888, after photograph
Albert Trochsler lithography company, active 1859-1863
Lithograph, 19 x 19.5 cm. (7⅝ x 7¾ in.), 1869
NPG.81.61
Gift of Dr. Frank Stanton



Peabody, George, 1795-1869
Financier, philanthropist
George Peter Alexander Healy, 1813-1894
Oil on canvas, 158 x 101.5 cm. (62¼ x 40 in.), c. 1854
NPG.68.26



Peabody, George, 1795-1869
Financier, philanthropist
Unidentified photographer
Photograph, albumen silver print, 8.8 x 5.7 cm. (3⅞ x 2¼ in.), c. 1863
NPG.79.54



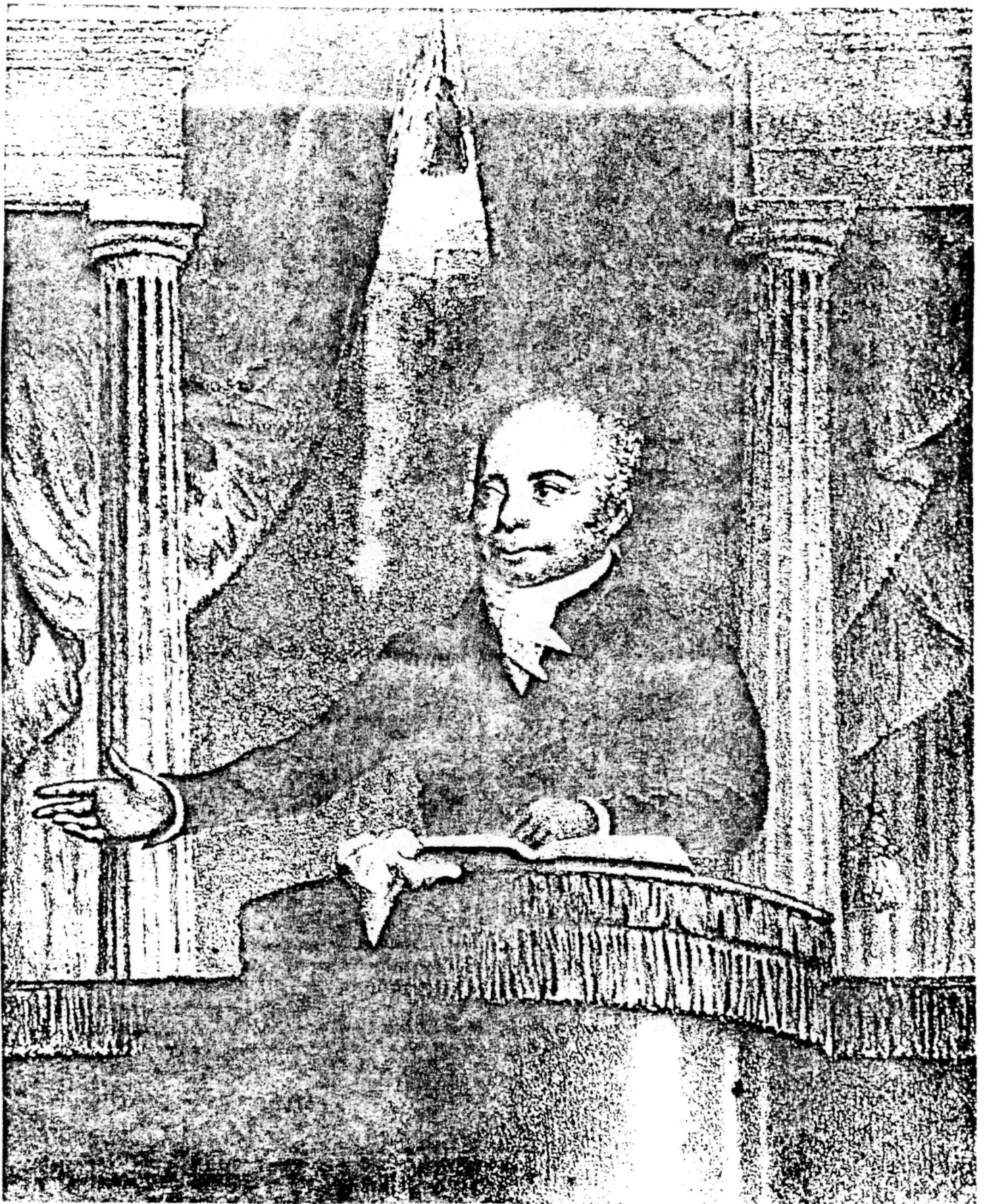
Peale, Charles Willson, 1741-1827
Artist
Charles Balthazar Julien Févret de Saint-Mémin, 1770-1852
Copper plate, 6.6 x 6.6 cm. (2⅝ x 2⅝ in.), 1806
NPG.72.62



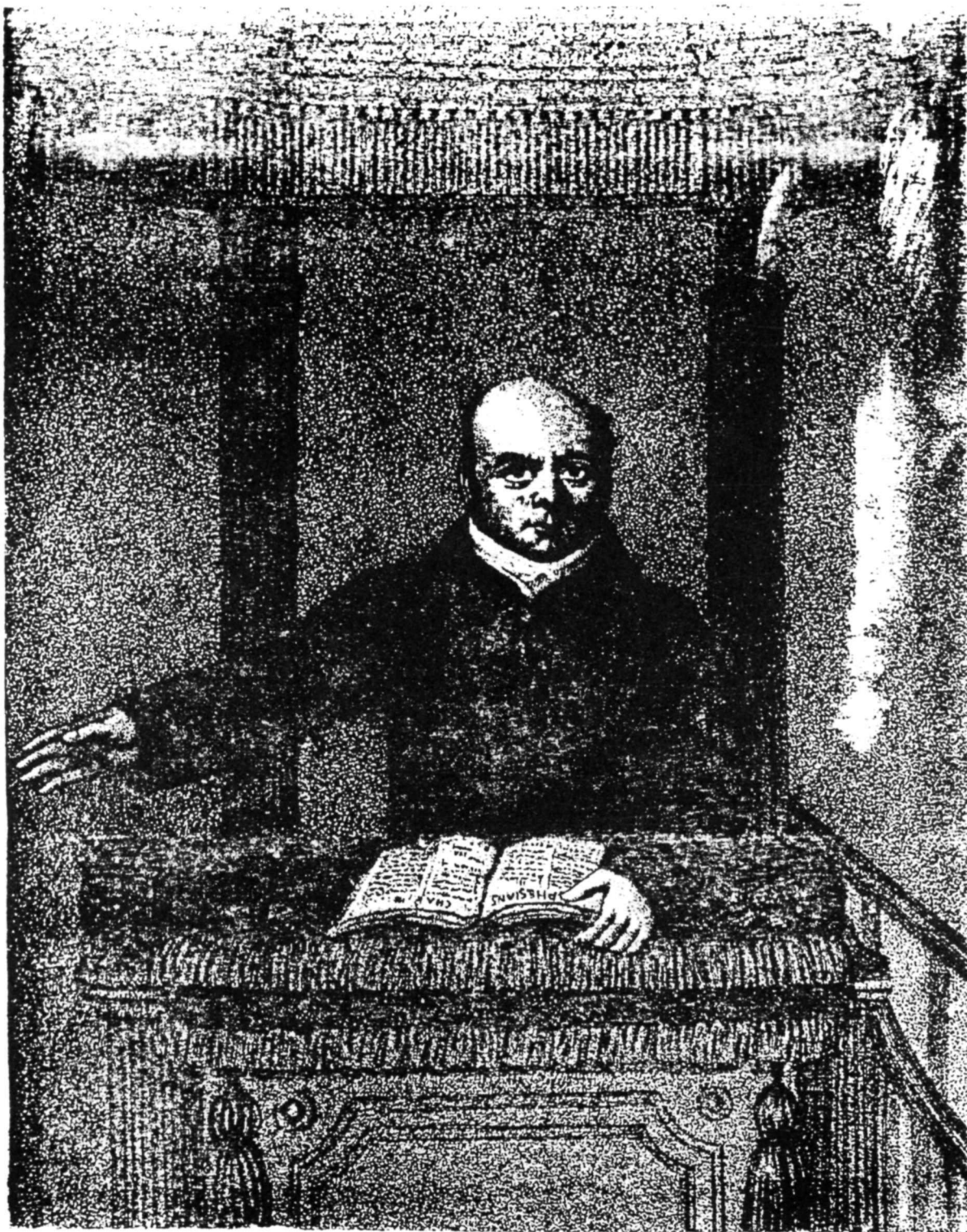
Peabody, George, 1795-1869
Financier, philanthropist
Mathew Brady, 1823-1896
Photograph, salt print, 46 x 38.9 cm. (18⅝ x 15⅝ in.), c. 1860
NPG.76.87



Peale, Charles Willson, 1741-1827
Artist
Charles Balthazar Julien Févret de Saint-Mémin, 1770-1852
Engraving, 5.6 cm. (2¼ in.) diameter, 1806
NPG.74.39.157
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Mellon



Card catalog states: "Portrait of Rev. Paul in the Pulpit formerly standing in the West Church."
Courtesy the Massachusetts Historical Society.



*Rev. Theophilus Paul,
of Boston in America.*

Lenain, published by Button & Son, Paternoster Row, 1816. Courtesy the Boston Athenaeum.



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

North Atlantic Region

15 State Street

Boston, Massachusetts 02109

IN REPLY REFER TO:

January 20, 1987

Mr. Ed Smith
Anacostia Neighborhood Museum
1901 Fort Place SE
Washington, DC 20020

Dear Ed,

Thank you for sending copies of your two views of Thomas Paul and the pulpit. I agree with you that the painting entitled by the Massachusetts Historical Society "Portrait of Rev. Paul in the pulpit formerly standing in the West Church" most likely shows Paul in the African Meeting House. Although we have no remaining evidence of what the pulpit actually looked like during this period, the pulpit shown bears a striking resemblance to "the standard raised pulpit" of the time as conjectured for the African Meeting House by Frederic Detwiller in 1975. The architectural features, however - notably the columns supporting what one would suppose to be the gallery - are incorrectly placed. Also, if this is the gallery, it is pointing in the wrong direction. Perhaps what we are seeing here is an example of "artistic license" rather than a portrayal of the factual setting. As such, I think you need to view the pulpit with a critical eye.

I hope you find these comments helpful. Please let me know if you come across an early photograph of the pulpit area!

Sincerely,

Barbara Pearson Yocum
Architectural Conservator

APPENDIX F.

Fragments of Yiddish Script Found in Sanctuary

[Editor's note: After the draft historic structure report for the African Meeting House was written in 1982, a number of architectural elements were removed as part of restoration work on the building. This removal uncovered additional information. This appendix was prepared by the author in February 1985 to document some of this information.]

Fragments of Yiddish script were found in the sanctuary in October 1984, preserved behind two elements of the south and west walls, southwest corner.

At the south wall, west of the apse, the post-1855 tongue-and-groove wainscot was removed so that the wall behind could be examined. Found lying loose on one of the five horizontal furring strips to which the wainscot was nailed was a small fragment of Yiddish script measuring about 1-1/2 inches wide by 2-1/4 inches high. This fragment was identified by the American Jewish Historical Society, in a letter dated 11/15/84 to B. Pearson, as being:

difficult to decipher but it is Yiddish and looks like a text from a standard devotional work published for women which was not uncommon. . . . It is difficult to pinpoint the exact date or edition since these works appeared numerous times.

At the west wall, south corner, a wood support was removed from the pre- 1855 wainscot. This wood had previously served as a post-1855 pew seat support. Found wedged between the wood support and the wainscot was another fragment of script. This fragment, measuring about 3-1/2 inches wide by 1-3/4 inches high, was identified by the American Jewish Historical Society as being:

a portion of a prayer book which is recited every month in a special ritual for the new month. The text appears in almost every prayer book and it is difficult to determine which edition it is. From the print it would seem to be the late 19th or early 20th century.

The African Meeting House was sold by the black Baptist congregation in November 1898. The first evidence of the building as being used as a Jewish synagogue is the 1899 *Boston City Directory*. The building remained a Jewish synagogue until July 1972, when it was purchased by the Museum of Afro American History. Therefore, the time when these Yiddish book fragments were lost in the nooks and crannies of the sanctuary may span 73 years.

The two fragments, along with the original letter from the American Jewish Historical Society, were mailed to the Museum of Afro American History on February 11, 1985.

VII. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Annual Reports of the Massachusetts Baptist Convention, 1824-1825, 1830-1880. Courtesy the Franklin Trask Library, Andover Newton Theological School, Newton, MA.

Armitage, F.D. *Atlas of Paper-Making Fibers*. Epsom, England: Guildhall Publishing Co., 1957.

Atlas of the City of Boston. Philadelphia: G.W. Bromley & Co., 1890, 1898, and 1908.

Atlas of the County of Suffolk, MA. Philadelphia: G.M. Hopkins & Co., 1874.

Bastille-Neiley, Architects. "Outline Specifications for Renovation and Restoration of African Meeting House, Museum of Afro American History, Boston, Massachusetts." Typescript, April 1, 1975. On file at the Museum of Afro American History, Boston, MA, and the North Atlantic Regional Office, U.S. National Park Service, Boston, MA.

"Began With Twenty Members: The First African Baptist Church Society Will Celebrate the 100th Anniversary of Its Founding for a Week, Beginning Thursday Evening." Ca.-1905 photocopy, n.d., no newspaper reference. Courtesy the Franklin Trask Library, Andover Newton Theological School, Newton, MA.

Benjamin, Asher. *The Builder's Guide*. Boston and Philadelphia: 1839; reprinted New York: Da Capo Press, 1974.

Benjamin, Asher, and Raynerd, Daniel. *The American Builder's Companion*. Boston: 1806; reprinted New York: Da Capo Press, 1972.

Bentley, William. *Diary of William Bentley, DD: Jan. 1803-Dec. 1810, Vol. 3*. Salem, MA: Essex Institute, 1911. In SPNEA library, Boston, MA.

Boston African American National Historic Site: Draft General Management Plan and Environmental Assessment. Boston: North Atlantic Region, U.S. National Park Service, 1984. Approved by a record of decision April 1986.

Boston Building Department. "Application to the Building Commissioner for Alterations, Repairs, or Change of Occupancy, 8 Smith Court." Applications dated 6/24/63, 2/16/66, 1/11/73, 2/16/73, 3/16/73, and 10/27/75 (revised 11/5/75).

Boston Building Department. "Citations for Building Violations, 8 Smith Court." Citations dated 8/17/15 and 1919.

Boston *Christian Register*, October 6, 1853.

Boston City Directories, 1811-1920. In SPNEA library, Boston, MA.

Boston Inspector of Buildings Report 1872-1875. Boston: Rockwell & Churchill, 1873. In Boston Public Library, Boston, MA.

- Bower, Beth. "A Research Design for a Data Recovery Program at the African Meeting House, Boston, Massachusetts." Roxbury, MA: Museum of Afro American History, n.d. [circa 1985]. Copy in Cultural Resources Center library.
- Bower, Beth, and Ritchie, Duncan. "Preliminary Archaeological Investigations at the African Meeting House, Boston, Massachusetts." Typescript dated 1975. On file at the Museum of Afro American History, Boston, MA, and the North Atlantic Regional Office, U.S. National Park Service, Boston, MA.
- Brayley, Arthur. *Schools and Schoolboys of Old Boston*. Boston: Louis P. Hager, 1894. In SPNEA library, Boston, MA.
- Bunting, Bainbridge. *Houses of Boston's Back Bay: An Architectural History, 1840-1917*. Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University, 1967.
- Carroll, Orville W. "A Signed and Dated 1851 Furnace in Rome, N.Y." *Bulletin of the Association for Preservation Technology*, Vol. III, No. 4 (1971).
- Chamberlain, Allen. *Beacon Hill: Its Ancient Pastures and Early Mansions*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1925.
- Coleman, Charles L. "A History of the Negro Baptist in Boston: 1800-1875." Unpublished Master's thesis, Andover Newton Theological School, 1956.
- Congregation Libavitz. *Cash Books*, 1930-1934 (in Yiddish) and 1942-1953 (in Yiddish and English). Courtesy the American Jewish Historical Society, Brandeis University, Waltham, MA.
- , *Financial Ledger*, 1935-1942 (in Yiddish). Courtesy the American Jewish Historical Society, Brandeis University, Waltham, MA.
- , *Minute Books*, 1908-1914 (in Yiddish), 1923-1928 (in Yiddish), 1928-1935 (in Yiddish), and 1955-1964. Courtesy the American Jewish Historical Society, Brandeis University, Waltham, MA.
- , *Miscellaneous Ledger*, n.d. Courtesy the American Jewish Historical Society, Brandeis University, Waltham, MA.
- "Cost of The African Meetinghouse and a Resolve." House Documents and Papers/Unpassed, Nos. 6402 and 6404, 1808. State Archives, Search Room 55, Massachusetts State House, Boston, MA.
- Detwiller, Frederic C. "African Meeting House: An Architectural/Historical Analysis." Typescript, July 1975. In SPNEA library, Boston, MA; copy on file at the NAHPC.
- Dickinson, S.N. *The Boston Almanac for the Year 1843*. Boston: Thomas Groom & Co., 1843. In SPNEA library, Boston, MA.

- Downs, Arthur Channing, Jr. "Zinc for Paint and Architectural Use in the 19th Century." *Bulletin of the Association for Preservation Technology*, Vol. VIII, No. 4 (1976).
- Ehrenfried, Albert. "A Chapter in the Evolution of the Boston Synagogue." *Jewish Advocate*, September 30, 1943.
- , *A Chronicle of Boston Jewry: From the Colonial Settlement to 1900*. Coypright by Irving Bernstein, 1963.
- First Independent Baptist Church and Society in Boston. "To the Public, and all who Encourage Religious Elevation." Subscription, 1853. On file at the Museum of Afro American History, Boston, MA.
- Friedman, Lee M. "A Beacon Hill Synagogue." *Old-Time New England*, Vol. 33, No. 1 (July 1942).
- Garrison, William Lloyd, ed. "Decade Meeting in Joy St. Church." *The Liberator*, November 19, 1858.
- , "Obituary, Domingo Williams." *The Liberator*, January 21, 1832.
- Goss, W.F.M. *Bench Work in Wood*. Boston: Ginn & Company, 1887 and 1890.
- Hansen, Constance C. *Baptist Beginnings in Boston*. July 1980.
- Harding, Louis A., and Willard, Arthur C. *Mechanical Equipment of Buildings*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1916.
- Historic American Buildings Survey. "Abolition Church—Boston-Suffolk Co.—Mass" (MASS-2-74). U.S. Department of the Interior, 1934. Original drawings on file at the Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division.
- "Historical Sketch of The Peoples Baptist Church of Boston Massachusetts In Its Connectional History." *150th Anniversary Celebration: Peoples Baptist Church (1955)*.
- "Historical Sketch of The Peoples Baptist Church of Boston Massachusetts In Its Connectional History." *170th Anniversary Celebration: Peoples Baptist Church (1975)*.
- Homer, Rachel J., ed. *The Legacy of Josiah Johnson Hawes' 19th Century Photographs of Boston*. Barre, MA: Barre Publishers, 1972.
- Kidder, *Architects' and Builders' Pocket-Book* (15th ed.). Borrowed from a private collection: no publication information available.
- Levesque, George A. "Inherent Reformers—Inherited Orthodoxy: Black Baptists in Boston, 1800-1873." *Journal of Negro History*, No. 4 (1975).

- Lynn, Catherine. *Wallpaper in America: From the Seventeenth Century to World War I*. New York: W. W. Norton & Co., Inc., 1980.
- Minot, William. "Address at the Dedication of the Smith School, Boston," 1835.
- Minutes of the Boston Baptist Association, 1812-1848. Courtesy the Franklin Trask Library, Andover Newton Theological School, Newton, MA.
- Minutes of the Boston South Baptist Association, 1849-1867 (unbound) and 1868-1898. Courtesy the Franklin Trask Library, Andover Newton Theological School, Newton, MA.
- Minutes of the Boston West Baptist Association, 1893-1917. Courtesy the Franklin Trask Library, Andover Newton Theological School, Newton, MA.
- Minutes of the Sabbath School Teacher's Convention, 1853-1856, 1858-1864, 1866. Courtesy the Franklin Trask Library, Andover Newton Theological School, Newton, MA.
- Mitchell, Burditt & Associates, Inc. "The Historic African Meeting House." Typescript, June 11, 1973. In SPNEA library, Boston, MA.
- Morse, Jedidiah. *A Discourse Delivered at the African Meeting-House, In Boston, July 14, 1808, in Grateful Celebration of the Abolition of the African Slave-Trade, by the Governments of the United States, Great Britain and Denmark*. Boston: Lincoln & Edmonds, 1808. On file at the Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston, MA.
- Museum of Afro American History. *African Meeting House*, 1975.
- Myers, Denys P. *Gaslighting in America: A Guide for Historic Preservation*. Washington D.C.: Department of the Interior, 1978.
- Nell, William G. *The Colored Patriots of the American Revolution*. Boston: R.F. Wallcut, 1855.
- National Park Service. *Boston African American National Historic Site: Draft General Management Plan and Environmental Assessment*. Boston: North Atlantic Region, 1984 [approved 1986].
- Nelson, Lee H. *Nail Chronology as an Aid to Dating Old Buildings*. American Association for State and Local History, Technical Leaflet #48 (1968).
- Owens, Pearl M. "History of Peoples Baptist Church." Typescript, October 1975. Courtesy the Franklin Trask Library, Andover Newton Theological School, Newton, MA.
- Peterson, Charles E., ed. *Building Early America*. Radnor, PA: Chilton Book Co., 1976.
- Plenderleith, Harold J., and Werner, A.E.A. *The Conservation of Antiquities and Works of Art*. London: Oxford University Press, 1976.
- Priess, Peter. "Wire Nails in North America." *Bulletin of the Association for Preservation Technology*, Vol. V, No. 4 (1973).

- "Records of the Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Society; 1802-1835." Manuscript courtesy the Franklin Trask Library, Andover Newton Theological School, Newton, MA.
- Rosebrock, Ellen F. "A Historical Account of the Joy Street Block Between Myrtle and Cambridge Streets." Typescript dated December 22, 1978, and January 30, 1979. On file at the Museum of Afro American History, Roxbury, MA.
- Seabury, Carl. *Boston Observed*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1971.
- Shaw, Charles. *Topographical and Historical Description of Boston*. Boston: Oliver Spear, 1817. In SPNEA library, Boston, MA.
- Suffolk County Land Registration. Books 3 and 8548. Suffolk County Court House, Boston, MA.
- Suffolk County Registry of Deeds. Books 211, 264, 273, 392, 401, 423, 435, 676, 2566, 2573, 2640, 2940, 2976, 2980, 2985, 3426, 3657, and 8548. Suffolk County Court House, Boston, MA.
- Vanderweil, Gary. "Draft Heating and Ventilating Systems of the Victorian Era." 19th Century, Spring 1976.
- A Volume of Records Relating to The Early History of Boston Containing Minutes of The Selectmen's Meetings 1811 to 1817 and part of 1818*. Boston: Municipal Printing Office, 1908. In SPNEA library, Boston, MA.
- Walbert, Benjamin L. "The Infancy of Central Heating in the United States: 1803 to 1845." *Bulletin of the Association for Preservation Technology*, Vol. III, No. 4 (1971).
- Ward, Gerald W.R. "The Society of Associated Housewrights of The Town of Boston 1804-1837." Typescript, 1973. In SPNEA library, Boston, MA.
- Wright, Carroll D. *Report on The Custody and Condition of The Public Records of Parishes, Towns, and Counties*. Boston: Wright and Potter Printing Co., 1889. In SPNEA library, Boston, MA.

