

Dumfries, Va. – 2 June 1803
Governors Executive Papers – John Page
Accession #41056, Box 1, Folder 1

Dumfries District Court the 2 June 1803

The report of William Tyler and William Morgan two of the commissioners appointed at this term to examine into the State of the Gaol erected for this District at Haymarket was returned in these words” In pursuance of an order of the honorable the District Court of Dumfries dated the 25th day of May 1803 directed to William Tyler, Henry Washington and William Morgan or any two of them. We the subscribers have viewed the Public Gaol erected for this District at Haymarket, and report to the court as follows. The situation of the gaol independent of the doors and windows we consider as sufficiently strong to secure the prisoners that may be confined therein. The doors to the criminal’s rooms are sufficiently strong, but improperly hung on the inside, and will jeopardize the life of the gaol here if they are not changed to the outside, and it’s our opinion that his life will not be sufficiently secured unless there are Iron Grates erected on the inside. There is a great space in the upper end of the Staple which receives the Bolt of the Locks & will enable the criminal to make his escape with the assistance of a small piece of iron calculated to the purpose. We do further report that there are five Doors and ten Windows in said Gaol, the outward Door we do also state is sufficiently strong, the other two in the Debtors Rooms are trifling and insubstantial, being made of thin Pine Plank, with very indifferent & small stock Locks, and the Doors are also hung on the inside, and can with the greatest ease be opened with a Pen Knife, or ten penny Nail, the four Windows in the Criminal Apartments are secure with double Iron Grates & sufficiently strong except as to two of the Windows, which have two or three bars in each broke, there are two indifferent Locks on the lower Doors and one good one. The rest of the Windows are considered to be sufficiently secure.

Haymarket, 30th May 1803
Wm. Tyler
Wm. Morgan

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Accession #41056, Box 3, Folder 2
Condition of Hay Market Courthouse & Jail

At a Superior Court held at Hay Market for the District composed of the Counties of Loudoun, Fauquier, Fairfax and Prince William the 19th day of May 1804. Present, the Honorable Paul Carrington Junior Esquire, Judge.

On the motion of the Attorney for the Commonwealth it is ordered that Gwyn Page, Thomas Swann, William Tyler and Edmund Brooke Esquire or any three of them do view the present situation of the Court House and Lott, the Clerk’s Office and Gaol of the District generally as to the state of repair in which these buildings now are and report thereon to the Court.

June 1st 1804 – A report of Edmund Brooke, William Tyler and Thomas Swann Esquire, three of the commissioners appointed at this term to examine into the present situation of the Court House lot &c returned their report in these words “In obedience to an order of the humble the District Court of Haymarket hereunto annexed we have examined the present state of Gaol and Clerk’s Office of the said District, as also the situation of the Lott whereupon the Public Buildings stand and upon this review do report, that an additional door of iron grate is necessary to each of the criminal rooms for the safety of the Gaoler whose life otherwise would be exposed to danger in opening the doors of those apartments for the conveyance of necessaries to the criminals. Those grate doors we think should be hung on the inside of the rooms and the other doors on the outside thereof. The locks upon both doors of the criminal rooms are out of order and without strong new locks these rooms are insecure. The post of the outer door of the gaol being shrunk leaves the ketch at too great a distance from the bolt which may be remedied by a facing of iron, a pair of hinges is necessary to one of the Debtor Rooms, the door of which has fallen down in consequence of the hinges being broken. A floor over each of the Debtor Rooms we think would be convenient to the Gaoler and necessary for the preservation of the joist and floors below as well of the comfort of persons confined by preventing the snow and rains from being drifted into these rooms: The door to the upper stairs of the Gaolers apartment we think highly necessary to protect the same from the influence of severe Rains & Snows. The roof of the Clerk’s Office has lost several sheets of slate, which occasions it to leak and the slate being broken new sheets will be required to repair this loss, and without such repairs the office will be much injured. The Clerk’s Office in other respects is in good repair except a part of the cornice on the outside which being insufficiently nailed has fallen and which can easily be tacked on again. An additional press for the books and papers of the said office is required those belonging to the same being nearly full. With respect to the improvements necessary on the Lott upon which the Public Buildings stand. We think from the complaints expressed about the distance of drinking water that a well upon the said Lott would remedy this inconvenience and is a desirable object as well to the Clerk and Gaoler, whose convenience ought to be particularly considered, as to those who attend the Courts at their Sessions. An

enclosure of Posts and Railing is an improvement which we also deem highly necessary to the Public Square to prevent the trespassing of stock and the intrusion of Suttlers whilst the Courts are sitting, which are frequently much incommoded thereby – To make the repairs and alterations above specified and the improvements necessary on the Public Lott we think from the best estimate we are able to form from our own opinion and the judgment of others will require the sum of three hundred pounds at the least. Given under our hands this 31st day of May 1804.

E. Brooke
William Tyler
Thos. Swann

Which is ordered to be certified to the Executive of this Commonwealth forthwith.

Teste, J. Lawson C.D.C.