

the Archives of the State

New Jersey maintains offices all across the State in support of the business of government. The very first of these facilities, the offices of the Secretary of State and the Clerk of the Supreme Court, was situated on this spot within a one-story stuccoed stone building that stood in the north-east corner of the State House lot. Constructed in 1795-96, just three years after the opening of the State House, the building housed vital legal documents pertaining to New Jersey's colonial past and emergent statehood. The offices were pulled down in 1846 when the State House underwent a major expansion planned by architect John Notman. Among the modern descendants of this modest structure are the New Jersey State Archives located down the block at 225 West State Street.

Recent discovery of the office building stemmed from the interplay of archival research and archaeological investigation. Enabling legislation, bookkeeping accounts and other records held by the New Jersey State Archives describe the form and layout of the building and the construction materials used. A map of Trenton from around 1804 shows the State House lot and the office building's approximate location. Archaeological excavations carried out in conjunction with security improvements along West State Street in 2006 uncovered the building's foundations and cellars. As you read this sign, you are standing in the rear office in the northwest corner of the building. The outline of the northern end of the building is delineated by the stones set into the sidewalk.



This artist's rendition of the offices of the Secretary of State and the Clerk of the Supreme Court is based on archival and archaeological evidence. Delaware Street formerly ran along the eastern edge of the State House lot, passing in front of the office building. Portions of the original New Jersey State House erected in 1792 still survive encased within the core of the present-day capitol building.

A map showing the Trenton properties of Daniel W. Coxe, Esq. around 1804 depicts the original State House in the center of the State House lot and the offices of the Secretary of State and the Clerk of the Supreme Court in the corner of the lot along the Second (West State) Street frontage.



Benjamin Smith 27th 1/2 Jonathan Doan Esq. for
carpenter work and other services at building Secretary
and Clerk's Office

1795

17th	to 6th James Morrey 2 9/8	2-9-6
18th	to 6th William Smith 2 9/8	2-9-6
19th	to 6th James Morrey 2 9/8	2-9-6
20th	to 6th William Smith 2 9/8	2-9-6
21st	to 6th James Morrey 2 9/8	2-9-6
22nd	to 6th William Smith 2 9/8	2-9-6
23rd	to 6th James Morrey 2 9/8	2-9-6
24th	to 6th William Smith 2 9/8	2-9-6
25th	to 6th James Morrey 2 9/8	2-9-6
26th	to 6th William Smith 2 9/8	2-9-6
27th	to 6th James Morrey 2 9/8	2-9-6
28th	to 6th William Smith 2 9/8	2-9-6
29th	to 6th James Morrey 2 9/8	2-9-6
30th	to 6th William Smith 2 9/8	2-9-6
31st	to 6th James Morrey 2 9/8	2-9-6
32nd	to 6th William Smith 2 9/8	2-9-6
33rd	to 6th James Morrey 2 9/8	2-9-6
34th	to 6th William Smith 2 9/8	2-9-6
35th	to 6th James Morrey 2 9/8	2-9-6
36th	to 6th William Smith 2 9/8	2-9-6
37th	to 6th James Morrey 2 9/8	2-9-6
38th	to 6th William Smith 2 9/8	2-9-6
39th	to 6th James Morrey 2 9/8	2-9-6
40th	to 6th William Smith 2 9/8	2-9-6
41st	to 6th James Morrey 2 9/8	2-9-6
42nd	to 6th William Smith 2 9/8	2-9-6
43rd	to 6th James Morrey 2 9/8	2-9-6
44th	to 6th William Smith 2 9/8	2-9-6
45th	to 6th James Morrey 2 9/8	2-9-6
46th	to 6th William Smith 2 9/8	2-9-6
47th	to 6th James Morrey 2 9/8	2-9-6
48th	to 6th William Smith 2 9/8	2-9-6
49th	to 6th James Morrey 2 9/8	2-9-6
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51st	to 6th James Morrey 2 9/8	2-9-6
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62nd	to 6th William Smith 2 9/8	2-9-6
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86th	to 6th William Smith 2 9/8	2-9-6
87th	to 6th James Morrey 2 9/8	2-9-6
88th	to 6th William Smith 2 9/8	2-9-6
89th	to 6th James Morrey 2 9/8	2-9-6
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93rd	to 6th James Morrey 2 9/8	2-9-6
94th	to 6th William Smith 2 9/8	2-9-6
95th	to 6th James Morrey 2 9/8	2-9-6
96th	to 6th William Smith 2 9/8	2-9-6
97th	to 6th James Morrey 2 9/8	2-9-6
98th	to 6th William Smith 2 9/8	2-9-6
99th	to 6th James Morrey 2 9/8	2-9-6
100th	to 6th William Smith 2 9/8	2-9-6

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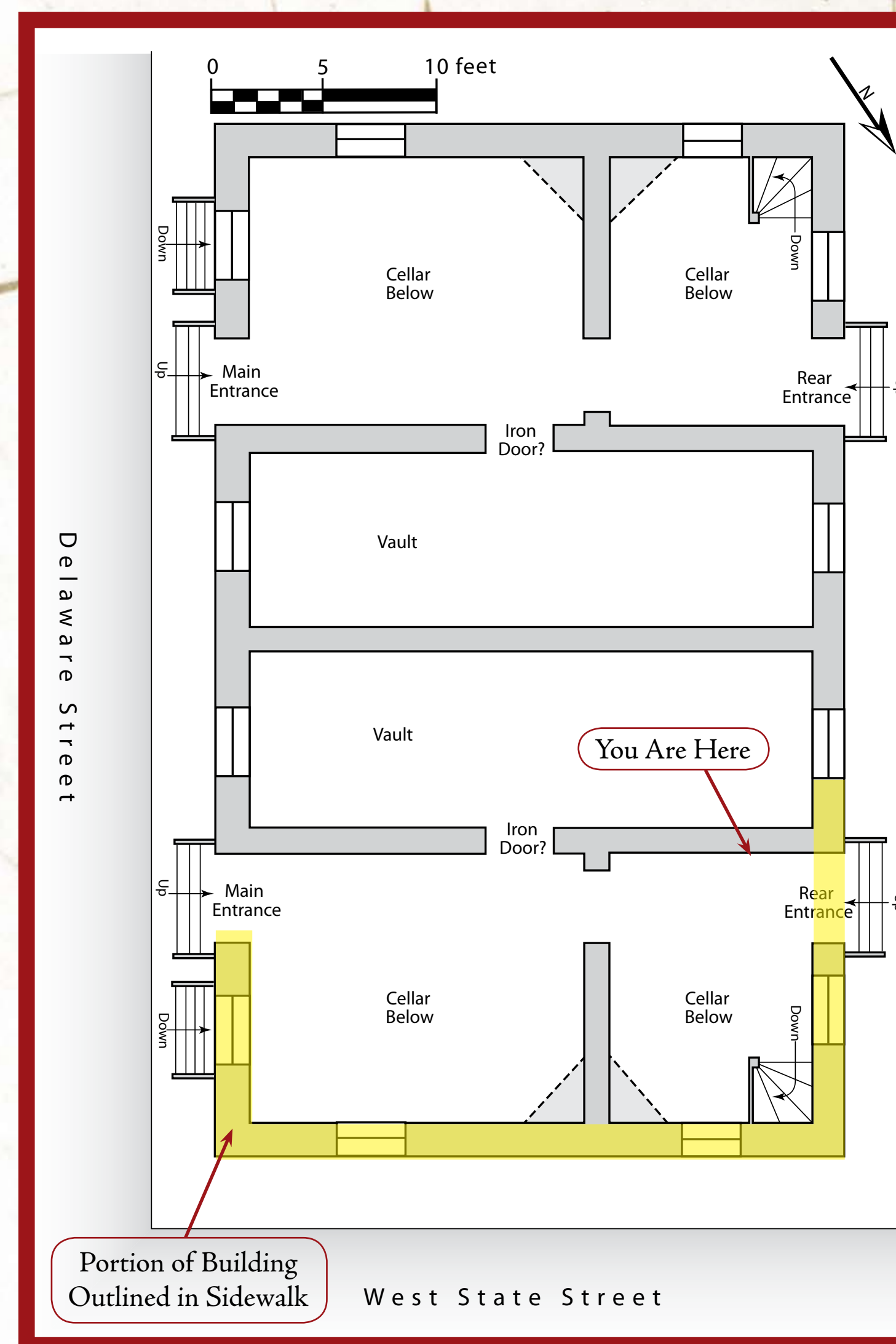
97th

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The office building was designed and built by Jonathan Doan, who was similarly responsible for constructing the State House. This document is one of Doan's bills to the State for carpentry work.



This reconstruction of the floor plan of the building shows offices, with cellars beneath, at each end and fireproof vaults with iron doors in the uncellared central portion of the structure.



Below the sidewalk of West State Street, an archaeologist exposes the footings of the stoop beneath the northern entrance into the office building [above left]. In the late summer of 1797 a "State House Necessary" was constructed within the State House lot. Probably a stone masonry structure with at least three privies beneath a single roof, these facilities served State legislators and office staff alike. In March of 2006 archaeologists found one of the privy shafts of the State House necessary directly beneath the West State Street portico of the State House [right].