

HISTORY

House Carpenters book of prices printed by M. Carey in 1812, is adopted for the rule of prices and every undertaker is to say whither he will undertake, at the Prices printed in that book or at what pr Cent more or less... Where an item of work and prices are not to be found directly in the price Book it is to be deduced from the elements furnished by other articles in the book. As the buildings are distributed in portions of a little more or less than a 100 thousand Bricks, each undertaker is to say for How much of these portions he will contract to finish the wooden work by the first day of February next.⁹

Jefferson had inquired into the prices charged by Philadelphia builders as early as 1817, writing to architects and workmen acquaintances he thought might be able to furnish him with a copy of Cary's book; procuring a copy proved difficult. Benjamin Henry Latrobe was able to locate and send Jefferson a "Pittsburg pricebook, compiled from that of Philadelphia [price book]." Ultimately, Jefferson received a copy provided by Cary himself.¹⁰ Concerning the pricing, Jefferson was informed by Thomas Carstairs, a contractor he had worked with decades earlier, that "I find the only material difference is the new book allows about twenty per cent on floors & ten per cent on common stairs more than the book I have sent you, our present working prices and for some years past, is from ten to twenty per cent discount from the book prices or what is generally termd the old price."¹¹

In the end, the Board of Visitors decided to use the printed prices in Cary's book as the wage rate where it applied. The brick masons were paid ten dollars per one thousand common and piece bricks and sixteen dollars for the oil struck and rubbed bricks laid.

The brick used in Pavilion X and the associated student rooms was most likely made by Abiah B. Thorn, a Philadelphia bricklayer working for John M. Perry. In a letter to John Hartwell Cocke, John Neilson wrote:

He [Jefferson] is full of brickmaking ideas at present, he said they had or would engage Mr Thorn (a brick-layer who came here in partnership with Mr Ware) as superintendent of the brick-yard Mr. Jefferson being better pleased with the colour of his brick in No 2 and 4 than he is with other that was made here, he does not know that Thorn was not the maker he that made them left this at the very time I came up herewith Fittz Thorn has since been in the employ of J Perry so that I think Mr Jefferson ought to look at No 8 Hotel C [present day Hotel F]. and the Proctors House, as it was with those jobs only he was engaged in the making of the brick.¹²

In November 1822 Perry was paid a total of \$248.64 for bricks. Of this amount, \$140.64 was for "14,064 bricks in back wall" and \$108.00 for "bricks laid in culvert." In September 1823, Perry was paid \$103.02 for laying 9664 bricks in the area and garden walls of Pavilion X and another \$22.60 for "capping garden walls".¹³

The framing and woodwork at Pavilion X was executed by John Neilson, a master carpenter originally from Northern Ireland. Neilson had worked for Jefferson at Monticello between 1804 and 1808 and then for James Madison at Montpelier until 1810.¹⁴ In the years prior to arriving in Charlottesville, Neilson had been employed by General John Hartwell Cocke, one of the University's Board of Visitors, building Upper Bremo, Cocke's Palladian residence. In addition to Pavilion X, Neilson would also be responsible for the carpentry