

HISTORY

diverted as little as possible to the general engagement of the Professors required for the institution, until provision be made of buildings for their accommodation, & for dieting & lodging the students; and that the measures adopted by them for the buildings of the present year be approved & pursued.”³³

There was dissent among some of the Visitors about the plans for the university after the March meeting. Joseph Cabell, having communicated with Cocke and James Breckenridge, wrote Jefferson on April 17 that the “plan of pavilions and dormitories along the area of the University will be beautiful & magnificent, and unlike any thing which I have seen in Europe or America.” However, Cabell had reservations about the practical aspects of the spaces within the pavilions: “With respect to the Lecturing rooms in the pavilions,” he wrote, “permit me to ask whether a more spacious plan would not be advisable in the further prosecution of the buildings. Some of the Professors will probably not have crowded classes, and these might have the use of the Halls now finished or in a state of preparation. But many of the Professors will in all probability have very numerous attendants & the idea of repeating the same Lecture to the residue of a large class would be very disagreeable.” Looking ahead, correctly it would turn out, Cabell suggested that “In the lapse of years, it may be proper to resign the pavilions entirely to the accommodation of the Professors, and to provide Lecturing Rooms in separate buildings.” He, too, had reservations about the flat roofs: “it seems to be much doubted,” he wrote, “whether they will not leak, and require renewal in the course of six years.” Cabell also suggested that “some other style” be “adopted for the Hotels & back ranges.”³⁴

Joseph Cocke sent a letter to Jefferson that was carefully timed to follow on the heels of Cabell’s letter. In it Cocke praised the “Dormitories upon the upper level, connecting the pavilions,” and stated that the only change he would suggest would be that the “low pitched roofs concealed by a railing (upon the plan I once suggested)” might prove more economical and less likely to leak than flat ones, while at the same time rendering the “rooms more comfortable by keeping the Sun at a greater distance from the ceilings.” Cocke also enclosed his ideas for the areas behind the pavilions, including a scheme that combined a hotel and dormitories into a single structure and made the gardens behind the pavilions larger.³⁵ These two letters and a meeting of Jefferson and Cocke on May 12 at the university resulted in the postponement of construction of the first hotel until the Visitors could discuss the situation at their next meeting. Instead of the hotel, Jefferson wrote, they decided “to begin the Eastern range of pavilions,” explaining that those pavilions could be “used for hotels until wanting for the Professors.” Thus, he explained, “we are proceeding to have 3. pavilions erected on the Eastern range, with their appurtenant dormitories, in addition to the 4. built, or to be built on the Western range, so that we may have 7. pavilions, with