

## HISTORY

the terraces in front of the pavilions and dormitories along the lawn are much decayed, and require immediate and extensive repairs. This damage has been the more rapid of late years, by reason of the large drafts upon the funds for the erection of the new building, and the consequent inability to apply adequate funds to timely renewals and repairs. Longer delay would be attended with great inconvenience from the leakage of rain water through the plastering below, and with great danger of destruction to the buildings from the falling of sparks of fire upon the decayed planking above. The same cause has prevented the adoption of efficient means to introduce a more adequate supply of water within the precincts—a measure of such importance as to be considered indispensable to the perfect safety of the buildings.”<sup>84</sup>

Apparently making these repairs took longer than expected, as the 1854 annual report stated that “the work of repairing the terraces and of procuring a better supply of water at the university, has not yet been commenced. But preparatory steps have been taken, and these important improvements will probably be in active progress in the course of a short time.”<sup>85</sup> On May 31, 1855, the executive committee entered into a contract for “the reconstruction of the terraces.” The Board of Visitors planned

to use, in aid of the reconstruction, such portions of the wooden trellis railing, bordering the present terraces, which might be found to still be standing in a sound state, and with a view to greater durability, and better protection from fire, to sheathe the flooring of the new terraces with an upper coating of sheet copper. But the committee, being invested with the authority to modify the plan, subject to a limit of \$10,000 on the amount to be expended, and having discovered, upon careful investigation, that there was but little of the existing railing in a sound state, and that a covering of sheet copper would be very costly, and at the same time not durable and permanent as a walk, finally decided to change both these features in the original design— substituting for the wooden trellis an iron railing, and for the copper sheathing a heart pine floor, well tongued and grooved, with its upper surface protected by a series of three coats of white lead paint, surmounted by an equal series of coats of Bridgewater paint, with an interposition between the two series of a coating of the best twilled duck or canvass, well rolled and incorporated with the painting. It is anticipated that a superstructure over the colonnades of the lawn, thus prepared, will be impervious to water, and of great duration.<sup>86</sup>

In June 1855 the Board of Visitors reported that the work was being undertaken:

Upon the subject of the terraces the committee were more successful- An advantageous contract was made with George W. Spooner for the entire work, within the limit proposed, and for a less sum, to be completed by the 1<sup>st</sup> day of December next... This however could not have been accomplished but by dispensing with the copper covering and substituting in lieu of it, a covering of heart pine plank of the best discription [sic] well seasoned and tongued & grooved, with seven coats of paint, and a final covering