

The next day, Brockenbrough suggested that a window would work better than a door, and explained that he had already prepared a stone sill and window frame for that opening. Jefferson immediately wrote back that he thought a door would be “greatly preferable to a window both as to appearance & use, exactly such as in my parlour, except that the bottom panels had better be of wood.” It is not known if a door was ever placed in the opening. In the earliest known photograph of the Rotunda (1868), 12/12 sash are clearly shown in all three second-story openings. These upper level brick openings, and the corresponding openings on the north elevation, should be probed to determine if the brick was modified after the initial construction.

Furnishing and fittings: At the first-story level, two large 1906 bronze memorial plaques commemorating Confederate soldiers from the University who died in the Civil War are fastened to the brick wall surface on either side of the doorway. Between the east window and the east pilaster, there is a bronze plaque in memory of soldiers from the University who died in World War I. A bronze plaque in honor of Woodrow Wilson, a graduate of the University, is mounted to the wall between the west window and west pilaster. The pre-fire photographs do not reveal any objects attached to this facade.

On each side of the doorway, there are four small holes in the masonry that presumably mark the locations of holdbacks.