

## Government - Stafford County Courthouses

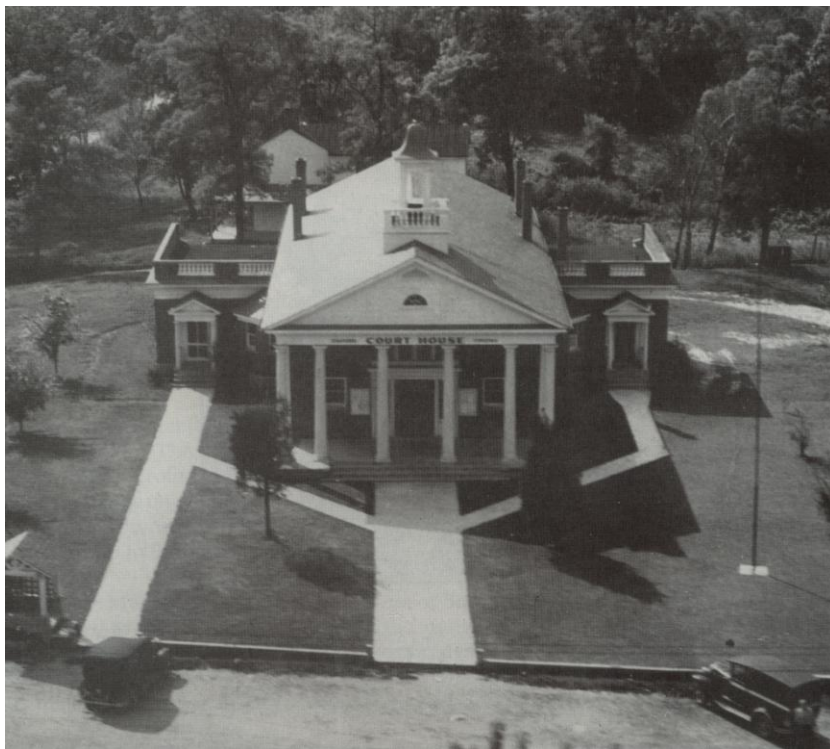
Early documents of Stafford County do not reveal any kind of courthouses. Some types of court sessions were held in private homes.

In 1691, The House of Burgesses created a public port in Stafford County. A town known as Marlborough was created and served as a seat of government and port for Stafford County. A courthouse and other buildings including a tavern were constructed. This courthouse was a wooden structure built on two acres set aside for the courthouse. On Court Days, it would have been a busy place. Not all plantation owners were happy to have trade pass through Marlborough. They asked the General Assembly to suspend the act made in 1691, and it was done.

The courthouse burned in 1715 and was never rebuilt. The town of Marlborough was no longer a center of commerce.

The courthouse location was moved to Stone Landing. (Today that location is south of Stone Point and near the vicinity of Old Creek Side Road.) It remained there until 1783.

As westward movement took place in Stafford County, a more central location was needed. The present courthouse location was bought in 1783, and in 1840 a new courthouse was built. By 1922, it was necessary to tear down that building and construct another one. In 1923, the new courthouse was built on Route 1, and it is still in use today. It was updated and enlarged in 1992.



Picture of Stafford County Courthouse as it looked in 1923

References: Eby, Jerrilynn. *They Called Stafford Home*. Bowie, Maryland:Heritage Books, Inc., 1997.

Field trips: Third grade classes can visit the administration building in the spring, usually in March and April. Students learn about history, map making, county government, review SOLs, and find out about the duties of the sheriff's office. Contact the Citizen's Assistance Office at 658-4516.



Jane Conner photo