



Alexandria Times

Established in 1797 as *The Alexandria Times and Advertiser*

Out of the Attic

Alexandria City Hall

Alexandria Times, September 16, 2010

Image: Alexandria City Hall, around 1920. Cameron Street, around 1920. Photo, Library of Congress.

In 1817, the Alexandria government erected a new market house on North Royal Street. The three-story brick building was designed by noted architect Benjamin Latrobe and featured a cupola containing a bell and town clock. The first floor was a market with stalls on the market square and the upper floors housed the Alexandria Library, court clerk's office, a museum and, after 1827, space for Alexandria City Council meetings.

A fire on May 19, 1871, destroyed the Alexandria City Hall and Market House, and German-born architect Adolf Cluss, a prominent Washington Architect during the Victorian period, designed a U-shaped replacement later that year. The new west wing, seen in this photo taken around 1920, soon featured a replica of the earlier clock tower. Local architect Benjamin F. Price developed a plan for replicating the earlier Latrobe steeple for an estimated \$8,000, which was funded with private donations, and the clock tower was erected in 1872. The clock tower spire still has a slate sheath in its original diamond pattern.



The lettering above the central doorway reads "Municipal Offices" and even in the early 1870s, this wing, on upper floors, housed the offices for the city's auditor, tax collector, board of health and gas works. There were also chambers for the Aldermen and Common Council. Butcher stalls occupied the first floor, and two butchers' trucks are visible in this image.

Also visible are chimneys, seen atop the northwest and southwest sides of the wing, which have since been removed. Overall, the west façade of this wing looks remarkably unchanged today.

"Out of the Attic" is published each week in the Alexandria Times newspaper. The column began in September 2007 as "Marking Time" and explored Alexandria's history through collection items, historical images and architectural representations. Within the first year, it evolved into "Out of the Attic" and featured historical photographs of Alexandria.

These articles appear with the permission of the Alexandria Times and were authored by Amy Bertsch, former Public Information Officer, and Lance Mallamo, Director, on behalf of the Office of Historic Alexandria.



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