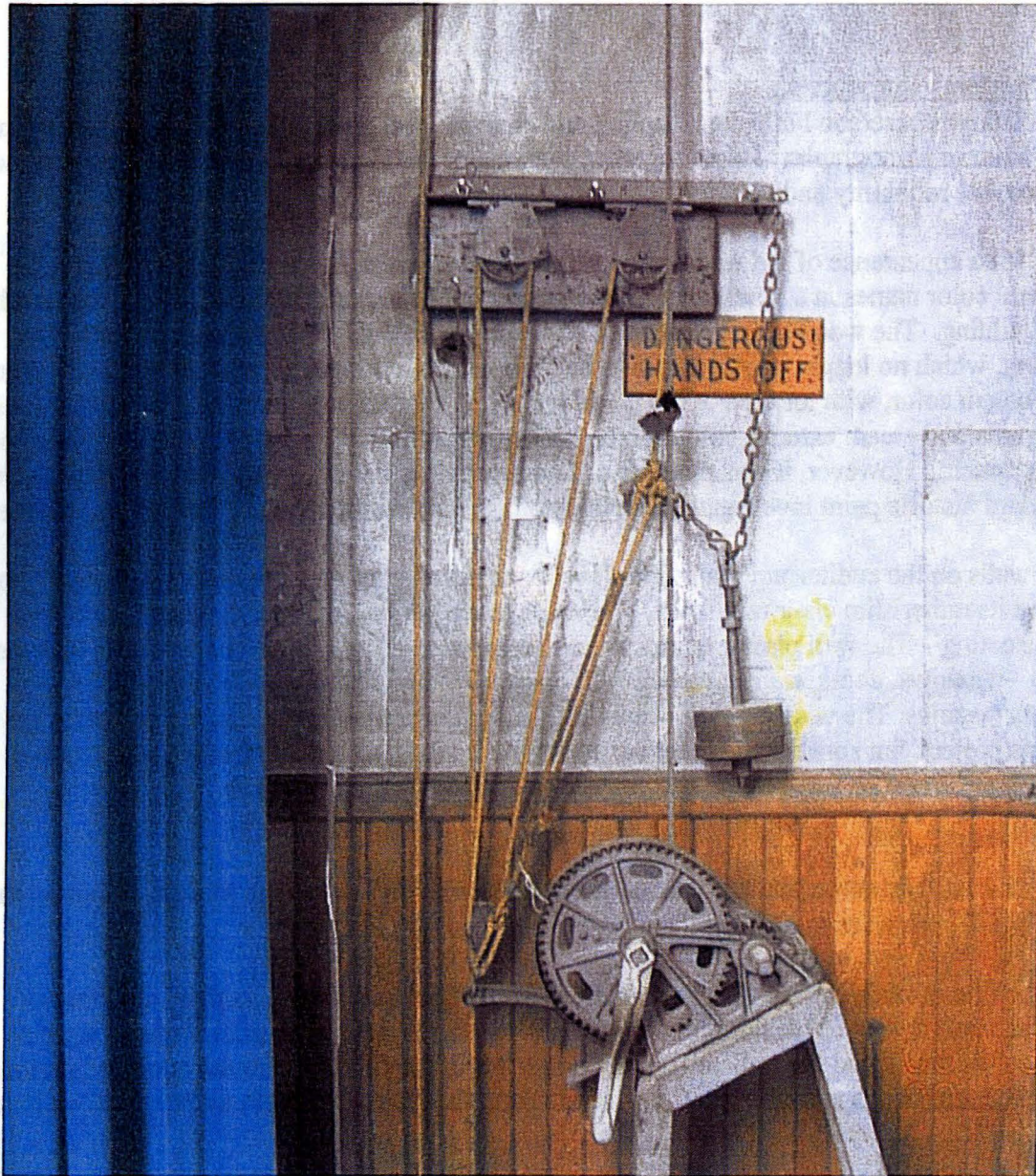


*Provincetown Town Hall
Auditorium and Main Floor Historic Paint*



Provincetown Town Hall
Auditorium and Main Floor Historic Paint

Historic Finishes: Original Colors and Color Placement

The purpose of this report is to provide information about original paint colors and their placement in the auditorium, main stair hall, and primary corridors of the main floor.

Auditorium - Introduction

This study is based on both site sampling and analysis, and on careful scrutiny and enlarging of a few historic photographs. Taken together, the look of the interiors in 1886 can be presented with reasonable reliability and validity.

The 1886 appearance of the Auditorium of the Provincetown Town Hall is described with general color names in a newspaper article locally published on August 26, 1886, the opening of the building. The wood trim is described as "highly polished," typical of the period. The ceiling, which no longer exists, is said to be "laid off in large squares and painted in a general soft cream color, with touches of olive laid upon it." That color scheme sounds harmonious with the green and cream exterior colors of the building. No trace of the original ceiling or its coffered cove remain. However, it was possible to find areas of sound original plaster walls and using standard historic paint investigation methods of analysis enabled the original colors to be seen.¹

The walls on the auditorium main floor level have bead board wood wainscot with a wide band above its rather slim chair rail. walls. The walls of the gallery, on the other hand, have low wainscoting. The wall plaster there has narrow banding of a darker color outlining the wood trim—windows, doors, wainscot chair rail, pilasters. Fortunately, most of the original wall plaster remains. The wide band of original stenciled decoration could not be exposed in the scope of this project, but some of the great variety of colors found there in the attempt to remove overpaint layers are listed in the section "Colors and Color Placement."

The stair hall has some original wall surfaces and some original ceiling plaster, at least at the top landing. Those were sampled and analyzed.

On the first or main floor of the Town Hall and only next to moldings is there any trace of original wall color. All of the primary plasterwork there now is twentieth century material. The colors thus listed for wall and ceiling treatment of the first floor areas/rooms are period-typical, harmonious with the wood, and come from the Sherwin Williams Preservation Palette.

¹ The Provincetown Advocate, August 26, 1886, Number 25, Page 25.



Figure 1. Present Appearance at stage left. Original Plaster and original wood trim.

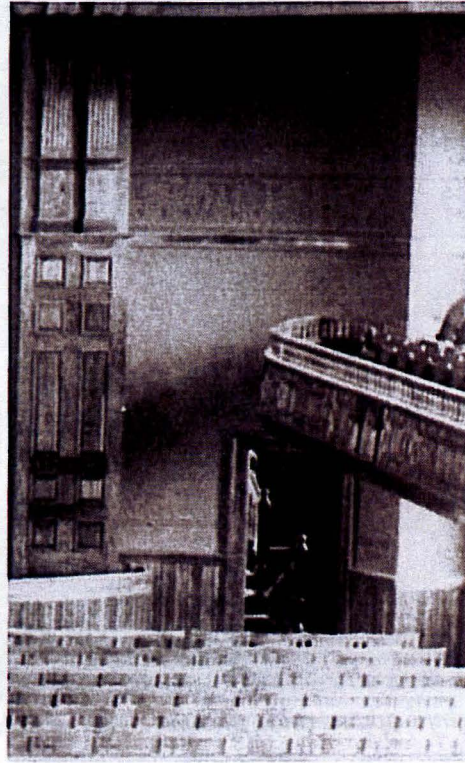


Figure 2. Original appearance of stage right including stenciled band and Banding to left of door.

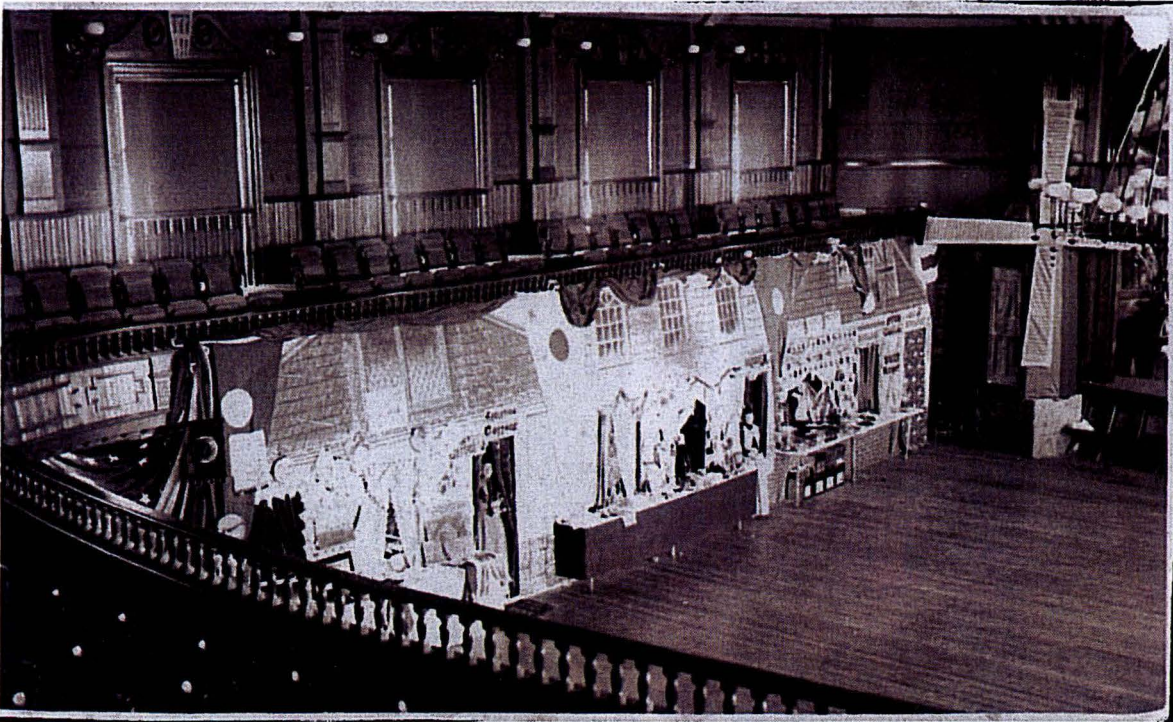


Figure 3. Original appearance of South wall of balcony.



Figure 4. Present appearance of South wall or balcony.

The early photos (c1891) can be selectively enlarged to show areas of decorative painting, primarily stenciling. It was not possible in the scope of this report to strip away later wall paint on the textured plaster and reveal the original stencil patterns. It was possible to look at small samples from the stenciled areas under the microscope and see several different colors.

Ceiling

The original ceiling has been removed, so cannot be sampled. However, enlarging the copies of older photos shows that there was stenciling there too. The August 26, 1886 issue of the Provincetown Advocate, however, describes the ceiling of the Auditorium thus

“The ceiling catches the eye of the artistically inclined almost immediately. It is laid off in large squares, and painted in a general soft cream color, with Touches of olive laid upon it.”²

Although no historic colors for the Auditorium ceiling remain, it would not be difficult to select appropriate colors, should the ceiling be restored.

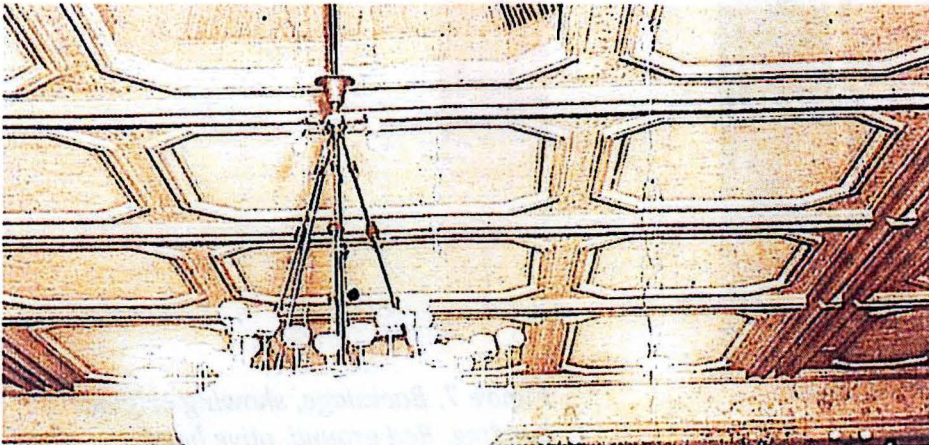


Figure 5. Photograph of historic ceiling. Note stencil between coffers.

At the back of the main floor of the auditorium (i.e., the bottom or underneath side of the gallery) There is another area that is, in effect, a ceiling. It is the underside of the large gallery above. It has three different colors. The two flat horizontal areas have the same ceiling color as the foyer outside the main doors. The narrow vertical band that indicates the different level of the "front of the gallery" overhang has a different color from the larger lower "entry area ceiling" area. The two moldings that band the top and bottom of that vertical band have a third color. There, the wall colors are used.

Cf. photo with color placement outlined. Maybe floor plan? Or section—to locate "entry area ceiling....?}

2

Walls

"The lower part of the walls is painted in a quiet tone of dull red, and above this tones of a lighter red and dull yellow are used, . . ." Paint investigation on the original textured plaster of the walls below and above the chair rail show that the description is accurate.



Figure 6. Backstage at wainscot.



Figure 7. Backstage, showing original banding. Red ground, olive band.

The historic photographs (1891, 1880s) show clearly that a wide decorative border was painted on the auditorium walls above the gallery wainscot and at that height on either side of the stage. Investigation indicates that it was approximately 22" high including plain border stripes. It involved at least four different colors. The bordering stripes appear to be of colors used in the pattern of the design.

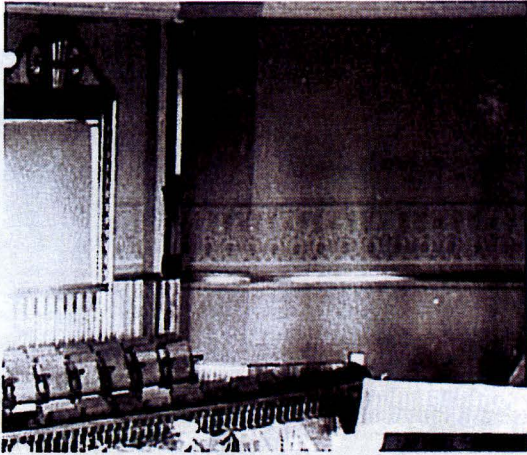


Figure 8. Stencil at balcony. Photo c 1891.

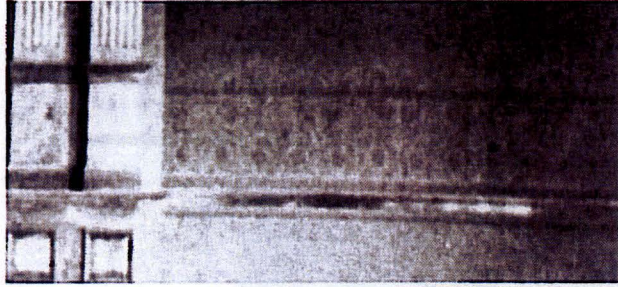


Figure 9. Detail: band approx 22" high including plain border stripes.

The photograph labeled "Cape Cod Views, Nickerson, Photo" also shows a border approximately 14" high with a single border stripe at its top just above the chair rail of the main floor wainscot. That, too, exists beneath more recent paint layers.



Figure 10. Cape Cod Views, Nickerson, Photo. Historic view of ceiling cove.



Figure 11. Balcony at stage, present.

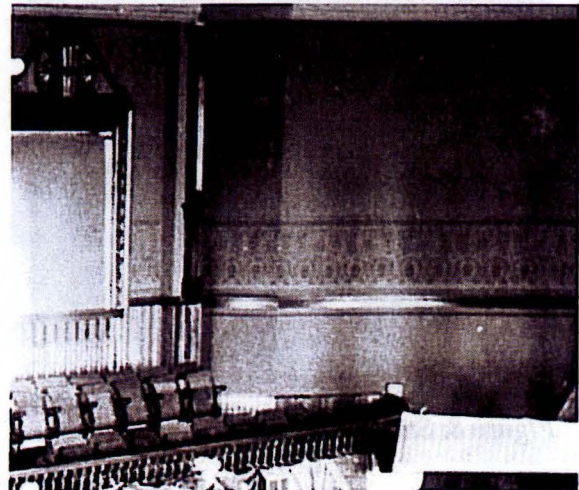


Figure 12. Balcony showing stenciled border.

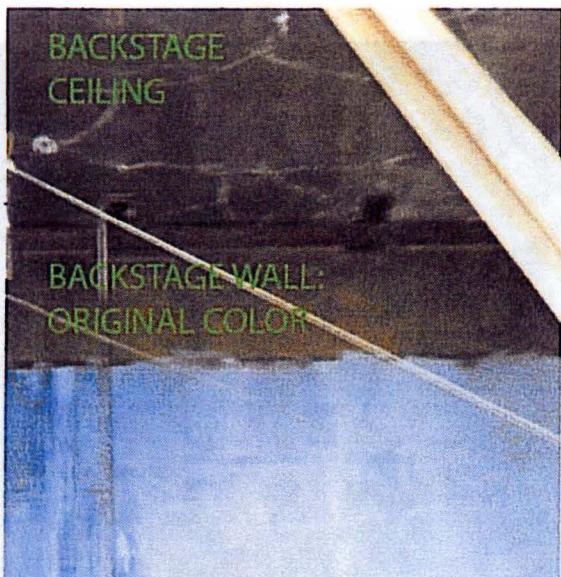


Figure 13. Backstage showing original wall color and possibly original ceiling color greatly soiled above modern blue.

Foyer/Stair Hall

Ceiling

The ceiling (best seen on the upper auditorium foyer area) was originally a pale soft slightly greenish blue. The soffit of the stairs between the main floor and the auditorium has not been sampled, because the plaster did not appear to be original. It probably originally had the same pale soft slightly greenish blue color as the ceiling.

Walls

The walls above the wainscot appear to echo the lighter wall color of the Auditorium walls above the wainscot. At the top of the chair rail and around the arched window head it is likely that there was originally at least one colored band. That has not yet been verified. It would be slightly narrower than the one on the main level of the Auditorium.

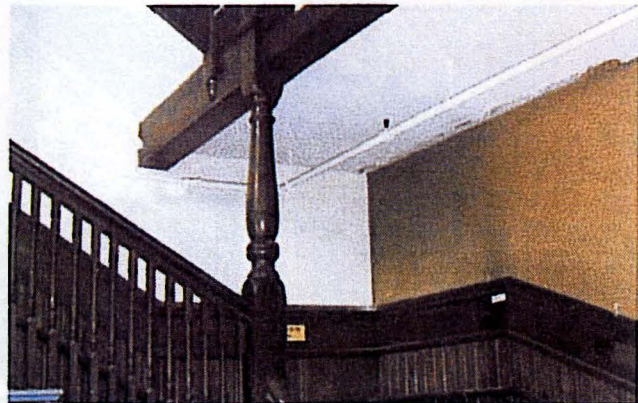


Figure 14. Arched window head at landing. Figure 15. Ceiling at first floor landing should match soffit under upper flights of stairs.

Main Floor Corridor/Rooms

So far, no historic photographs or descriptions of these rooms has been found. The main courtroom may have been described or photographed. Virtually all plaster is 20th century and recent, but the original high wood wainscot remains.

Ceiling

The ceilings have not been sampled. The "soft cream color" of the Auditorium's original ceiling, should be a default color choice for the main corridor ceiling.

Walls

Sampling on walls that were bearing walls and had the textured plaster of the original wall surfaces in the Auditorium were sampled. There were only 3 or 4 paint layers, suggesting that the original paint there was a calcimine or water-soluble paint that had been stripped.

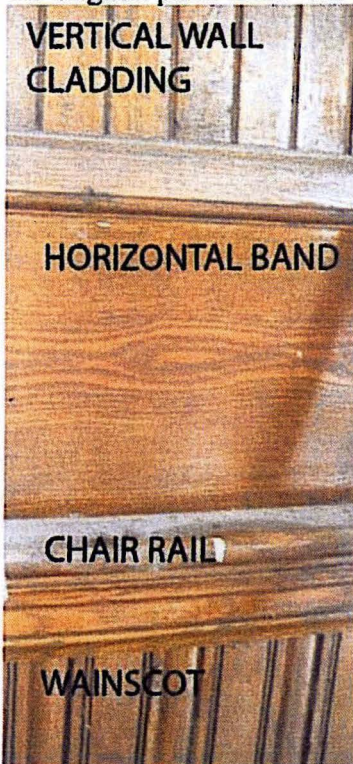


Figure 10. Wainscot

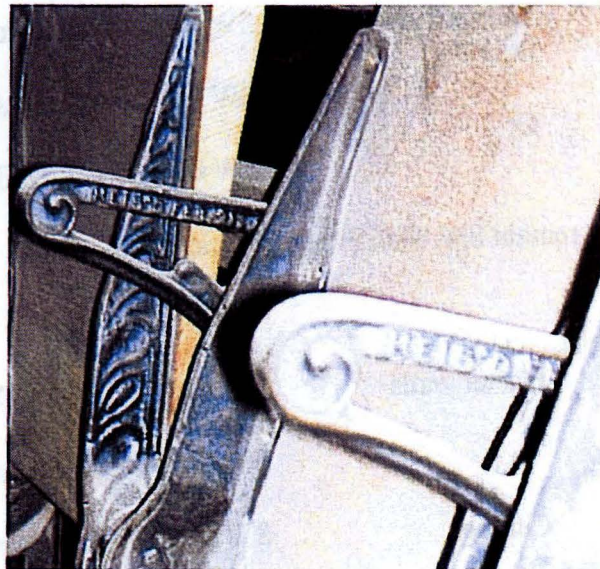
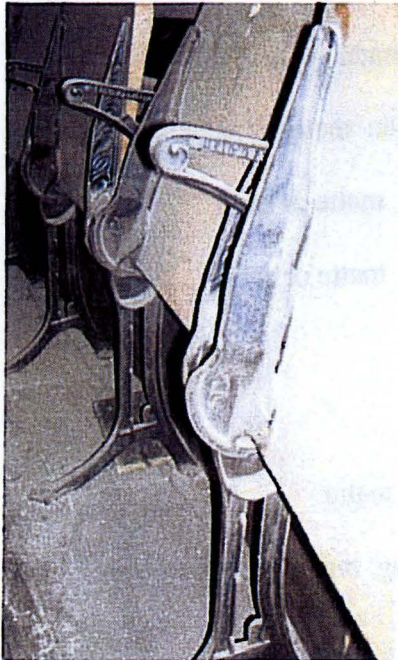


Figure. 11. Main corridor, first floor.

The paint treatment recommended for this area is based on Victorian color theory. Because I found the use of reddish-orange tones of a certain value I am confident in suggesting complimentary colors for the first floor offices: a palette of greens. Furthermore the historic photos show the wide band painted around all openings in the main hall and this treatment is recommended for the first floor corridor. A simple use of one 3" - 4" wide dark painted stripe about 4" above the chair rail of the wainscot is suggested, to continue a consistent Victorian aesthetic throughout the primary public spaces in the building. This treatment could be done at minimal expenditure and with high visual value.

Hardware

The amount of 1886 original hardware remaining is impressive.



Provincetown Town Hall

Colors & Color Placement

N.B. Banding should be painted to outline all openings. E.g., around door frames, window frames, and open "arch" ways

In general, wood floor finish should be dark brown.

Wainscot finish should be medium warm brown.

MAIN CORRIDOR, FIRST FLOOR

These colors are selected for period appropriateness.

Plaster walls SW 6353 Chivalry Copper matte
With
SW 0008 Cajun Red satin for banding matte

Ceiling SW 6217 Topsail matte

COURT ROOM FIRST FLOOR

Plaster walls SW 0018 Teal Stencil satin

Ceiling SW 0046 White Hyacinth matte

OFFICES Plaster walls SW 0042 Ruskin Room Green matte or satin

Or

SW 0040 Roycroft Adobe matte or satin

Or

SW 0009 Eastlake Gold matte or satin

Ceiling can remain SW 0046 White Hyacinth throughout.

STAIR HALL

Plaster walls SW 6353 Chivalry Copper matte
With
SW 6341 Red Cent for banding matte/thin/glaze tint

Ceiling SW 6217 Topsail matte

AUDITORIUM

Plaster walls SW 6347 Chrysanthemum matte
With
SW 6341 Red Cent for banding -thinned, as a glaze tint

Ceiling—cf. history. Possible cream color SW 2833 Roycroft Vellum matte

Stencil band colors SW 6353 Chivalry Copper
SW 6347 Chrysanthemum
SW 0042 Ruskin Room Green
SW 0009 Portrait Tone
SW 6054 Canyon Clay
SW 2854 Caribbean Coral
SW 0013 Majolica Green

Note that these were seen only after having had some paint stripper applied, which may have slightly shifted color tones.

The stage area and backstage had the same basic wall colors as the Auditorium

The balcony or gallery portion overhanging the east end of the Auditorium had some striping/narrow banding which is called out and shown below.

Conclusion

The Provincetown town Hall shows the best of American Victorian color treatment. Further research should be done to determine a close match for the stenciling. However, we can be sure that the interior had a polychrome paint scheme including reds greens and creams. This treatment as outlined in this report will lend a dignity and vibrancy to this historic interior.



Provincetown Town Hall
 Phase II: Comprehensive Restoration
 & Renovation
 260 Commercial Street
 Provincetown, MA

Project ID: 1477.01
 DATE: 1.28.2010
 DRAWN BY: JMG
 REVIEWED BY: MGA

SEAL

MK & A McGinley Kalsow & Associates, Inc.
 ARCHITECTS & PRESERVATION PLANNERS
 324 Broadway - PO Box 45245
 Somerville, MA 02145-2803

INTERIOR
 PAINT SCHEME

No. **A1.1**



1 INTERIOR ELEVATION
 SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"

KEY		
AUDITORIUM	OFFICES	JUDGE WELSH ROOM
- Walls	- Walls	- Walls
- SW0042 Ruskin Room Green	- SW0009 Eastlake Gold	- SW0018 Teal Stencil
- SW6347 Chrysanthemum	- SW0042 Ruskin Room Green	- Ceiling
- SW0040 Roycroft Adobe	- SW0046 White Hyacinth	- SW0046 White Hyacinth
- Ceiling	- Ceiling	- Accent Band
See Ceiling Plan A1.2	- SW0046 White Hyacinth	- SW0008 Cajun Red
- Accent Band	- Wainscot/Trim	
- SW6341 Red Cent	- SW0040 Roycroft Adobe	
- Bathroom	- SW2803 Rockwood Terra Cotta	
- SW0040 Roycroft Adobe	- Stained Wood	



Provincetown Town Hall
Historic Interior Paint Scheme

260 Commercial Street
Provincetown, MA

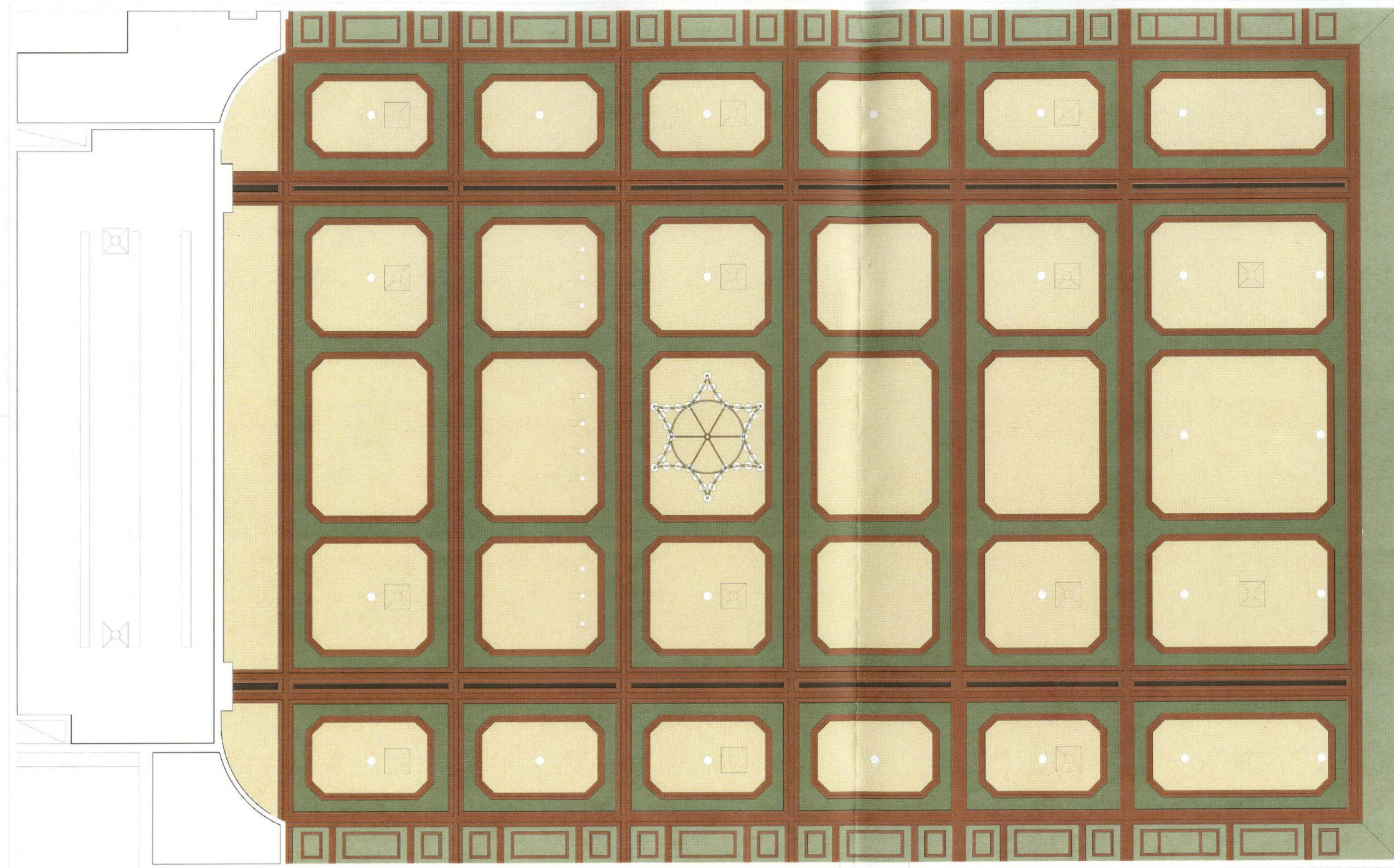
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DATE: 2.17.2010
DRAWN BY: JMG
REVIEWED BY: MGA

SEAL

MK & A McGinley Kalsow & Associates, Inc.
ARCHITECTS & PRESERVATION PLANNERS
324 Broadway PO Box 45248
Somerville, MA 02145-0248

RENDERED
REFLECTED
CEILING PLAN

No. **A1.2**



HISTORIC PAINT COLOR LEGEND:

- P1: ROYCROFT VELLUM 2833
- P2: ARTICHOKE 6179
- P3: ROCKWOOD TERRA COTTA 2803
- P4: ROCKWOOD DARK BROWN 2808
- P5: CLARY SAGE 6178

1 PROPOSED AUDITORIUM/BALCONY RCP
SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"

