

## Episode 3 Field Recording

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**Meggan Cashwell 00:02**

Well, we're standing on the Lawn in Thomas Jefferson's Academical Village in front of Pavilion X. It's a beautiful, warm day. What strikes me is that it's very quiet, for the most part. Classes have ended. There are very few people out here. The individuals that I do see are actually a part of the historic preservation team here at UVA. They are working to restore portions of Pavilion X, and two adjacent Lawn rooms. And I'm wondering, Randi, as we stand in front of this space, which is a home, it is actually still a home, a faculty member lives there today. Can you tell us more about what it would have been like to learn the law in someone's private living quarters?

**Randi Flaherty 00:53**

Yes, so this, Pavilion X, was really the home of the Law School for a century. And the home of the Law School meaning it was the home of the law professor and his family, and the enslaved community that lived and worked on the property. But it was also the home of classes for a while. So, Pavilion X does have a classroom space, in which professors traditionally lectured and carried out their classes. It's just right off the front entrance. In a lot of the other pavilions it actually has its own separate entrance, but in Pavilion X it's the same as the private entrance. The Law professor's office was also part of this complex, and John Minor actually took over some of the student Lawn rooms that are next to Pavilion X to expand out his office. You can imagine all the books he accumulated over the years that called for that. But he would have given some of his classes here. He would have hosted students in his office to mentor them. He had students over for dinner. So, the family life and the professional life are very mixed in this period. There were sons and daughters here who would have maybe overheard lectures, enslaved community working here who maybe would have overheard the lectures as well. So, this is a mix of domestic and professional space.

**Meggan Cashwell 01:56**

And how many students would he have had here?

**Randi Flaherty 01:59**

So, when he started the law program was rather small, it was around thirty-five students. When he started, UVA was actually at its low point, after a series of student riots, so enrollment was down. But

very quickly after he started, UVA enrollment and the Law School enrollment grew. So, he very quickly, into the 1850s, had, I think enrollment was around in the seventies. So, you can imagine this classroom space here in Pavilion X, which is really just sort of a large dining room, or living room, getting really crowded. And the need for more space would have been felt pretty quickly, as it was felt throughout the other schools at UVA. So, there was classroom space at the Rotunda and a lot of schools, including Law, would have moved to the Rotunda for the teaching.

**Meggan Cashwell** 02:44

And you can really get this feel, this interdisciplinary feel, standing on the Lawn and thinking about students attending classes and lectures in other pavilions; also speaking to the fact that Minor wasn't just teaching law students, right, I mean he was teaching students who were pursuing other disciplines as a profession. And you mentioned that, of course, women and enslaved persons would have also been overhearing these lectures. There was really no way to contain the law. But I'm also wondering about this role of Minor as mentor. I know that he was a teacher in other capacities as well, and apparently a Sunday school teacher. Did he lead those Sunday school classes here in Pav X?

**Randi Flaherty** 03:22

Yes, he did hold a Sunday school for enslaved people prior to the Civil War. I don't know if he actually held them here. But I believe they were somewhere close to the Lawn. In addition to the Sunday schools, he also would teach the people that he enslaved the Bible and have lessons for them, I believe in his home, as his daughter did as well. So, that would have taken place in Pavilion X. After the Civil War, he also hosted a Sunday school for students. So, Christianity and religion were very much a part of how he understood the law as divinely created in terms of natural law, and how he understood his mentoring role with students and family, and enslaved people.