

HISTORIC STRUCTURES REPORT

001446

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Part I

RECONSTRUCTION OF THE COURT HOUSE

APPOMATTOX COURT HOUSE NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

by

James N. Haskett, Historian

and

Henry A. Judd, Architect

0014216

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PART I

for

RECONSTRUCTION

of

APPOMATTOX COURT HOUSE

Appomattox Court House National Historical Park
Appomattox, Virginia

by

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December 1962

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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RECOMMENDED

Thomas Norris (by telephone)
Superintendent

Date January 8, 1963

Robert E. Smith
Acting Chief, EODC

Date December 17, 1962

APPROVED

Elbert Cox
Regional Director, Southeast Region

Date *January 15, 1963*

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Architectural Data, written by Henry A. Judd, Architect, EODC

Other Sections, written by James N. Haskett, Historian

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5. Administrative Data

- a. Structure Name - Court House
Structure Number - B 13
- b. Proposed Use - It is proposed that the Court House be reconstructed to supplement the 1865 appearance of the Village. It would also provide space for vitally needed interpretive facilities. The reconstruction would involve only the exterior.
- c. Provision for Operation and Furnishing - Funds for the maintenance of the Court House would come from the regular Buildings and Utilities, and the Management and Protection accounts.
- d. Preliminary Estimate - The estimate for the cost of reconstructing the Court House is \$172,500.

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6. Historical Data

Cauble's two reports¹ provide all necessary data on the Court House and its environs for this project. Therefore, it is felt that no appreciable results can be obtained by additional research.

1. Cauble, Frank P., DOCUMENTED REPORT ON THE APPOMATTOX COURT HOUSE BUILDING AT APPOMATTOX COURT HOUSE NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK, 1959.

Cauble, Frank P., CULTURAL HISTORY AS OF 1865 OF THE VILLAGE GREEN IN APPOMATTOX COURT HOUSE, 1959.

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7. Architectural Data

The Appomattox County Court House was erected in the center of the village of Appomattox Court House in 1846, and served that village until it was destroyed by fire in 1892. By this time the village had started to decline and a new settlement had started to spring up along the railroad which passed about three miles from the village. The new Court House replacing the one destroyed by fire was built in this new settlement in the 1890's. No remains of the original Court House have survived above ground. However, the Court House square managed to survive the years and the underground remnants remain to give the exact location and size of the building, as well as the size of bricks and various miscellaneous details.

This evidence is recorded in a report by Archeologist Edward McM. Larrabee, dated April 1961, and entitled Archeological Exploration of The Court House Building and Square, Appomattox Court House NHP, Appomattox, Virginia. Practically all the county records were in the Court House when it burned; therefore, written material pertaining to the structure was destroyed along with the structure. A few newspaper advertisements and miscellaneous data remain which confirm the archeological findings. Research Historian Dr. Frank P. Cauble has assembled this material in his Documented Report on the Appomattox Court House Building, which was distributed by the Regional Office on September 21, 1959.

It is fortunate that a few photographs of the building were made before it burned, two of which were taken by Timothy O'Sullivan a few days after General Lee's surrender at Appomattox. A later photograph of about 1890 gives a view showing an end wall which is not visible in the Brady photographs and which also gives evidence that the Court House had deteriorated by that time. Some of the columns and rails had been replaced and the building was generally in shabby condition. There are also numerous sketches of the village area; however, they show no details of the building. All pertinent photographs and sketches are contained in Dr. Cauble's report.

Because of the clarity of Timothy O'Sullivan's ~~Matthew Brady's~~ photographs, many details are visible which give basis for an accurate reconstruction of the east and west facades.

No attempt is being made to explain the interior of the original structure in this report, as the interior of the building will be constructed for modern use and will not be restored. Dr. Cauble's report contains sketch plans prepared by long-time residents of Appomattox--Mr. C. A. Hancock and his wife. These plans have many inaccuracies, but they do give a general idea of the original internal use of the building.

Various mid-nineteenth-century buildings in the Appomattox area were studied in order to obtain the details which were not discernible from photographs.

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8. Archeological Data

Larrabee's Report ¹ contains all available archeological data.

1. Larrabee, Edward McM., ARCHEOLOGICAL EXPLORATION OF
THE COURT HOUSE BUILDING AND SQUARE, APPOMATTOX COURT
HOUSE NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK, APPOMATTOX, VIRGINIA,
April, 1961.

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9. Landscape Data

With reports completed or pending on every major structure and feature in the Village Area, little is to be gained by a general study on landscape. Wherever specific information is needed, it can easily be secured from existing reports.

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10. Furnishings and Exhibition Data

As the reconstruction is to be exterior only, no historical furnishings will be needed.