001452

8

HISTORIC STRUCTURES REPORT
Part I

Administrative, Historical
and
Architectural Data

MARIAH WRIGHT HOUSE

APPOMATTOX COURT HOUSE NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

by
Marvin W. Schlegel, Historian
Orville W. Carroll, Architect

001452

HISTORIC STRUCTURES REPORT - PART I

REHABILITATION

OF THE

MARIAH WRIGHT HOUSE

APPOMATTOX COURT HOUSE NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

R E C O M M E N D E D

_____ Date _____
Chief, EODC

_____ Date _____
Regional Director

_____ Date _____
Director

A P P R O V E D

_____ Date _____
Superintendent

HISTORIC STRUCTURES REPORT

PART I

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and

Architectural Data

MARIAH WRIGHT HOUSE

Appomattox Court House National Historical Park

By

Marvin W. Schlegel, Historian

and

Orville W. Carroll, Architect

November, 1959

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

001452

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MARIAH WRIGHT HOUSE

ADMINISTRATIVE DATA

a. BUILDING NAME — Mariah Wright House

BUILDING NUMBER — 15

b. PROPOSED USE - The exterior of this structure will be restored and rehabilitated to conform to its appearance in 1865. Interior alterations and improvements will adapt the Mariah Wright House for use as employees' quarters.

c. PROVISION FOR OPERATION AND FURNISHING - The Mariah Wright House will be maintained from the quarters deduction fund. The employee assigned to occupy these quarters will provide all furniture except refrigerator, range, and hot water heater.

d. PRELIMINARY ESTIMATE - It is estimated that the cost of the proposed work, including stabilization, will amount to $30,522.

MARIAH WRIGHT HOUSE

HISTORICAL DATA

By

Dr. Marvin W. Schlegel
Historian

DEFINITION AND SCOPE OF SURVEY

The Mariah Wright house stands about a quarter of a mile south of the Appomattox Court House green and a hundred yards north of the present location of Virginia Highway 24. The long axis of the house is north and south, with the front facing toward the west. The original building was a story-and-a-half frame structure on the typical Virginia long-house plan with a wide central hall, out of which both front and back doors opened, and two rather small rooms on either side; a steep, narrow, enclosed stairway on the north side of the hall led up to the loft-bedrooms, which were lit only by two small windows on either side of the chimneys at each end of the building. Subsequently, a two-room extension was built, projecting from the northeast corner, resting on piers instead of the solid foundation of the original structure. Another alteration was the addition of a front porch, surmounted by a gable-projection with a large window to give additional light to the second floor; an open stairway (now removed) was built into the hall to provide easier access to the upper story.

ABSTRACT OF OWNERSHIP

The land on which the house stands was purchased by Pryor Wright in 1785 at a time when this section was a remote corner of Prince Edward County.[1] This original purchase of 424 acres was doubled twelve years later when he bought 425 acres adjoining from Robert Pleasants of Henrico County.[2]

By 1812 the expansion of farming along the upper Appomattox encouraged Pryor Wright to consider the erection of a grist mill on Plain Run, which flowed through his property. Together with his son, Pryor Wright, Jr., he made application to the Prince Edward County Court for permission to erect a dam and received the court's approval on 17 November, 1812.[3] At the same time the younger Pryor Wright acquired from William and Mourning Sweeney and Nathaniel and Elizabeth Kelly two small tracts adjoining his father's property.[4] Perhaps because of the disruption of trade resulting from the War of 1812, the dam was not built immediately, and two years later the elder Wright turned over all his interest in the project to his son.[5] Although the mill was in operation by 1820,[6] the assessor did not consider it of sufficient value to be added to the tax lists; nor, for that matter, did he take any notice of the crude farm buildings erected by Pryor Wright, Sr.[7] Nevertheless, when the elder Wright died in 1820, he was a man of means by the standards of his day; he left personal property valued at $4,533.77, including nine Negro men and three books, in addition to land estimated at 925 acres.[8]

The younger Pryor Wright, now a man of thirty,[9] added 115 acres inherited from his father's estate to the four he already owned and celebrated his new position in the community by erecting in 1823 a house impressive enough to attract the attention of the tax assessor, probably the original of the present building.[10] About the same time he married a young girl named Mariah, and in 1827 had a son named Campbell. Pryor Wright's fortune increased along with his family.

He enlarged his land holdings by buying 25 acres of land from the widow Sweeney and her daughter Sally.[12] His slaves increased from two in 1820 to four in 1844; he owned six horses to work his fields; he carried a silver watch and had a metal clock on his mantelpiece, rather than the cheaper wooden timepiece, which was all that some of his less fortunate neighbors could afford.[13]

The importance of Pryor Wright's farm was greatly increased in 1845 when the new county of Appomattox was created and the court house was established on the adjoining property, just opposite the Clover Hill Tavern. When the town of Clover Hill was laid out, Pryor Wright himself bought a lot across from the Court House green and in 1848 erected there a house valued at $500.00.[14] He also had enough surplus capital to invest in several other tracts of land, including fifty acres which he bought from his brother Thomas.[15] In 1851 the assessor took note of his increased prosperity by raising the valuation of his farm 50 per cent, from $1440.00 to $2160.00.[16]

Pryor Wright did not have long to enjoy his growing wealth, however, for three years later he died, leaving his estate to his widow and children.[17] In the division of the property the farmhouse and 71 acres of the farm went to Mariah Wright, who made some improvements in the home, probably some long-cherished ideas which had been opposed by her late husband.[18] She still had with her her youngest child, named Sarah J., born shortly before Pryor's death, and her other daughter Lenice also came to live with her. Lenice was married to John A. Rosser, who operated a wheelwright and blacksmith shop at Clover Hill.[19] John

had the inevitable difficulties with his mother-in-law, and he and Lenice later moved across Plain Run to the Carter House cottage.[20]

THE WRIGHT HOUSE IN 1865

Nothing more serious than these family quarrels disturbed the peace of the Wright farm for the next few years, even though Virginia was caught up in a bloody civil war. The conflict swirled over the state from the Chesapeake to the Alleghenies, but the sounds of battle never reached peaceful Clover Hill. A man named Wilmer McLean, in fact, having seen two battles fought over his Manassas farm, came to Appomattox to escape from the war and bought the Raine place. Then, in April 1865 fate suddenly directed the contesting armies westward toward Clover Hill. On Saturday, 8 April, Lee's ragged veterans trudged over the muddy roads of Appomattox County, desperately seeking to escape the grasp of Grant's ever-lengthening arm. That night Confederate soldiers encamped all around Clover Hill and on the Wright farm. Next morning came a sight which Mariah Wright would never forget. Up out of the low ground to the south came a row of blue-clad soldiers. Spread out in skirmish line, they advanced across the farm, past the very front gate of the yard, up to the edge of the town. At that moment one of Lee's officers came riding out, bearing a white flag. He rode up to the Union brigadier to halt his advance.[21] While the Federal troops waited in front of the house, General Grant and General Lee rode into the town to meet in Wilmer McLean's home and arrange the surrender terms. The Wright farm had seen the last battle of the Civil War.

THE WRIGHT HOUSE AFTER 1865

After the war Mariah Wright continued to live with her daughter Sarah in the farmhouse. In 1870, at the age of 62, she suddenly changed her name to Maria Webb. Presumably this meant she had remarried, but, if so, the mysterious Mr. Webb had disappeared by the time the census enumerator came around on 18 July 1870, and was never heard of again.[22] When Sarah died or married and Maria Webb was left alone in the house, the Rossers moved back in to take care of the place, and stayed there until she died in 1887 at the age of 79.[23] The old widow was buried in the little family cemetery 75 yards south of the house, beside her husband and her children.[24]

Although title to the farmhouse now passed to a Nancy Webb, John Rosser bought out her rights and added the farm to the few acres he already owned.[25] About the same time he was left a widower when Lenice died, and he promptly remarried, making a new will bequeathing all his property to his new wife, the former Laura F. Harris.[26] It was probably at the urging of his new wife that he undertook an extensive remodeling of the old Wright place. Abandoning the dilapidated old outside kitchen, he brought all the household operations under one roof by adding a wing to the house, containing a dining room and an inside kitchen. A new staircase was built into the central hall to replace the old, narrow, ladder-like stairway. The upstairs was lightened by putting larger windows in the south wall and by a gable-projection to permit a window on the west side of the second story. Below the new gable was a porch which gave architectural unity to the front besides providing a shaded

place to sit in the open air.[27]

John Rosser's remodeling may have pleased his young wife, but the expense came at an ill-fated time. Already trade was drifting away from Clover Hill to the new town that was growing up around the railroad station, and, when the Court House burned down in 1892, the county seat also moved to the station. As the decline in local property values was accelerated by the depression which began in 1893, the assessor in 1896 recorded the decrease in John Rosser's personal fortune by reducing his total valuation from $1645.00 to $945.00.[28]

After John Rosser's death in 1903 his widow married R. F. Graupner and eight years later sold the old Wright property to Mrs. Adelia C. Ferguson.[29] In 1919, just after the first World War, Mrs. Ferguson and her husband, State Senator S. L. Ferguson, resold the property to John L. Freeman of Wateska, Illinois.[30] Freeman found the buildings in poor condition and tried to improve the farm by tearing down the dilapidated outbuildings, replacing the broken windows and patching the plaster in the house.[31] After working on the farm for many years, Freeman sold the property to the Federal government in 1937 and moved back to Illinois.

THE HOUSE AND ITS OUTBUILDINGS IN 1865

The historical evidence indicates that the only significant changes made in the house after 1865 were those carried out by John Rosser in 1890. If the architectural evidence shows that any of the alterations attributed to him were made prior to that date, they were presumably made in either 1850 or 1856 and were therefore present in 1865.

The only evidence as to fences and outbuildings is the report of Mr. Freeman on the way he found them in 1920. At that time there was still standing part of the fence around the yard, as shown in his sketch. North of the fence was a weed-choked rose garden. About thirty feet south of the house was the framing of what had once been an outside kitchen, about 16' x 24' in size. The framing was of hewn timbers, with the weatherboarding which had once covered it completely torn off and gone. There was also still standing a full rock chimney, which Mr. Freeman tore down and threw into a hole south of the east end of the kitchen, which was supposed to have been an icehouse. He also put the foundation stone from the kitchen into the same hole. West of the house was an 18' x 20' log barn or stable, and southeast of that was a corn house, the only outbuilding left standing by Mr. Freeman; it has since been torn down.

At least this many outbuildings must have been in existence in 1865. Since Pryor Wright owned four slaves and six horses, he must have had some quarters for them. If he was a tobacco farmer, as he probably was, he would also have needed a tobacco barn. The outside kitchen found by Mr. Freeman must have been the original one for the house--perhaps the slaves slept in the loft--and one may assume that the log barn and the corn house occupied the sites of the original structures, even though they may have been later replacements. The ice house and the yard fence also probably date back to 1865; one can imagine that these were two of the frustrated desires of Mariah Wright's that she was able to satisfy after the death of her husband.

CITATIONS

1. Prince Edward County Records, Farmville, Va., Deed Book 7, p. 163. James Wright and wife Prudence of Bedford County to Pryor Wright of Prince Edward County, 17 April 1785.

2. Prince Edward County Deed Book 11, p. 365. Robert Pleasants to Pryor Wright, 16 October 1797.

3. Prince Edward County Deed Book 15, p. 6.

4. Prince Edward County Deed Book 14, p. 171; William Sweeney and wife Mourning to Pryor Wright, Jr., 14 April 1812. Ibid., p. 682; Nathaniel Kelly and wife Elizabeth to Pryor Wright, Jr., 24 August 1812.

5. Prince Edward County Deed Book 15, p. 173.

6. Appomattox County Records, Appomattox, Virginia, Deed Book 3, p. 118. The mill appears on the Boyer map of Prince Edward County, made in 1820. It was abandoned prior to 1854, for on 27 February of that year Pryor Wright, Jr., sold the land on which "the old mill" was located to Elondjo B. Land, reserving the mill equipment.

7. Prince Edward County land tax records, 1821, 1822.

8. Prince Edward County Will Book 5, p. 471; Prince Edward County land tax records, 1821, 1822. The assessor reduced the acreage total to 830 acres in 1822 "to correct error."

9. Appomattox County census records, 1850, Family 326; he was sixty in 1850. He appears in all Appomattox County records as Pryor R. Wright, to distinguish him from a neighbor named Pryor B. Wright. The "R." probably stood for Rucker, as family tradition seems to indicate that his wife called him by that name; see Happel notes.

10. Prince Edward County land tax records, 1824. The assessor reported in 1824, "$119 Ad on act. of new Building." Since other entries on the same page refer to a "new House" it is possible that this refers to the mill, rather than to a residence.

11. Appomattox County census returns, 1850, Family 326; 1860, Family 426; 1870, Clover Hill Township, Family 487. Mariah was 18 years younger than her husband, and liked to make herself

even younger. In 1850 she told the census-taker that she was 38, rather than 42, and ten years later she admitted only to 43; not until 1870 did she confess her true age, which was then 62.

12. Prince Edward County Deed Book 18, p. 265; Mourning Sweeny and Sarah Sweeny to Pryor Wright, 9 January 1824.

13. Prince Edward County personal property tax records, 1820, 1843, 1844.

14. Appomattox County land tax records, 1847, 1949. The boundary between the Wright property and the Clover Hill tract is marked by the road identified in Park records as the Back Lane.

15. Appomattox County land tax records, 1846-50.

16. Appomattox County land tax records, 1850, 1851. Since the valuation of the house was raised from $100, the figure at which it had been carried for some years, to $300, this could indicate some significant change in the structure. If the 1824 assessment referred to the mill, this might mean the erection of the original part of the present structure; it could also indicate the building of the wing on the house. It is more likely, however, that this is merely part of a general reassessment. The value of a 15-1/4 acre tract which Wright owned was raised from $1 to $2 an acre, while the 50-acre tract acquired from his brother Thomas was left unchanged at $10 an acre.

17. The farm is listed on the 1855 tax records as belonging to the Pryor Wright estate. Although Pryor Wright's will was destroyed when the Appomattox Court House burned in 1892, the tax records and the census returns provide some evidence concerning his children. The oldest son, Campbell, was a shoemaker in 1850, living with his wife Mildred, two children, and three young boys who were apparently his wife's children by a former marriage. (1850 Census, Appomattox County, Family 321). Three other sons, Fontaine (also spelled Fountain), Gilliam, and Chambers, all youngsters in 1850, apparently died within the next ten years, as they are not found in the 1860 census. (1850 Census, Appomattox County, Family 326; 1860 Census, Appomattox County, Family 426). The 1840 census indicates that there were also two other daughters, born between Campbell and Lenice, who had died or married before 1850. (1840 Census, Prince Edward County, p. 238, P. R. Wright family).

18. The remodeling of the house is indicated by the discovery of old newspapers, one bearing a date of March 1856, inside the framing of the northern wall when the plaster was removed in 1941. The assessment of the house was raised in 1857 from $300 to $500, reflecting the changes made by Mariah Wright or another general increase in assessment. Since this newspaper insulation was found only in the original structure and not in the extension, it is probable that the wing was not added at this time.

19. Conversations by Ralph Happel with Mrs. Bessie Ferguson and Mrs. Lenice Gills, nieces of John Rosser, 16 September 1941; 1860 Census, Appomattox County, Family 426.

20. Happel conversations; 1870 Census, Appomattox County, Clover Hill Township, Families 486, 487.

21. Official Records, vol. 95, p. 852. Report of Brigadier General J. L. Chamberlain, commanding first brigade, First Division, V Army Corps.

22. 1870 Census, Appomattox County, Clover Hill Township, Family 487. The name is changed to Maria Webb on the county tax lists for 1871.

23. 1880 Census, Appomattox County, Clover Hill District, p. 346 (microfilm 1353); date of death is determined by a change in the ownership on the 1888 tax list from Maria Webb to Nancy Webb.

24. Family tradition reports that she was buried there, and it is likely that the other members of the family were also interred in the same cemetery.

25. Appomattox County land tax records, 1888, 1890. Family tradition says that Nancy Webb was a daughter of Mariah Wright by her second marriage, but the census records indicate that this was a biological impossibility. Unfortunately, hone of the available records give any clue to Nancy Webb's identity.

26. Appomattox County Will Book, 1, p. 100.

27. The only direct evidence for these statements is the fact that the assessed value of the house was changed from $200 to $400 in 1891—it had been assessed at $300 from 1871 to 1875 and at $200 from 1876 to 1890. It is possible that some or all of these changes may have been made in the 1850's.

28. Appomattox County land tax records, 1896.

29. Appomattox County Deed Book, 13, p. 18. Laura F. Graupner and R. F. Graupner to Adelia C. Ferguson, 20 November 1911.

30. Appomattox County Deed Book 20, p. 18. Adelia C. Ferguson and husband to John L. and Myrtle G. Freeman, 22 December 1919.

31. Freeman's report on the buildings as he found them is appended to this report.

March 30, 1957

Questions for Mr. Freeman About the Freeman Property at Appomattox, Virginia

1. When did you buy this tract? 1920

2. How did you learn it was for sale? from Senitor Ferguson

3. Whom did you buy it from? Senitor & Mrs Ferguson

4. Was it overgrown when you came to Appomattox? yes

Mr. Frank Graves once told me that you did a lot of work clearing ground after you got the place. I did some work.

5. What was the condition of the house when you came here? it had been vacant Two yrs windows Broken plaster down.

6. What repairs or changes did you make? I had window sash made to order for several of the windows the openings were left as was. Patched plaster part in some Place

7. Were the front porch and dining room kitchen ell on the building when you came here? ~~no~~ yes

8. Did you put in the staircase in the hall or was it there when you came? was

9. Were there any outbuildings standing? yes log Stable west of there and a frame Building about 30 ft from South Chimney of house

10. If there were buildings, will you tell me where they stood and something about their construction, i.e. log, weatherboarding, size, interior and exterior finish, etc.? the Building I would say was 16 x 24 ft the framing had been hewn. was in very Bad repair.

11. Did you ever hear that John Rosser lived in the house at one time? yes

12. Do you remember anyone saying anything about what changes John Rosser made in the house? no

Did John Rosser build the dining room kitchen annex or the front porch or change the front roof line? never heard that he did

13. According to our records, this house was occupied in 1865 by Mariah Wright, widow of Pryor Wright. Do you have any recollection of the Wrights owning this house or any information about the Wrights? only hear says

14. Mrs. Bessie Ferguson (you remember her) told me that old Mrs. Wright was buried in the little cemetery just south of the house. Did you ever hear this story? yes Do you know who else is buried in this cemetery? might have heard but dont remember

(Questions for Mr. Freeman - continued)



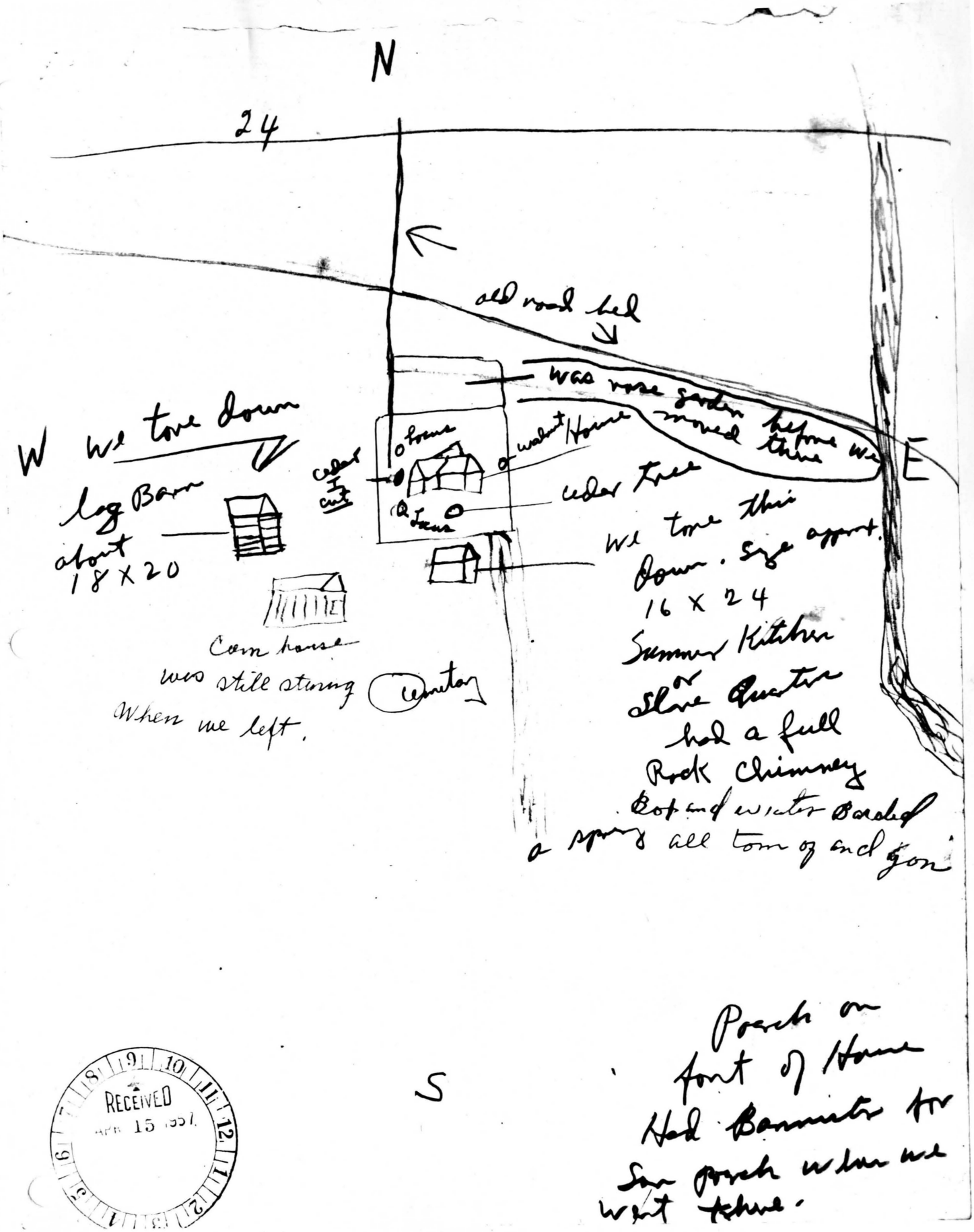
15. Do you have any photographs of the house or grounds taken when you lived there? yes

If so, could you lend them to us so that we can make copies? yes

16. Could you draw a rough sketch of the house and outbuildings, fences, roads, location and type of trees as you remember them? will try

17. Anything you want to add to this account.

There was a hole south of the East end of the Kitchen supposed to have been an ice house when I took the little Building down I put the stone from the Foundation and Chimney in this hole. I cut down one big Cedar tree near the front Porch which had began to die. one walnut tree east of the Kitchen. now still standing had the locust trees Toped. the yard had some fence but was in Bad repair Mr & Mrs Jack Guill lived in the house several years between 1920 and 1928 Mrs Guill still lives in Afton matter if you could get in contact with her I think she could give you the information you desire as to location of out buildings. and Mrs Bessie Ferguson knows quite a bit of the history about the house

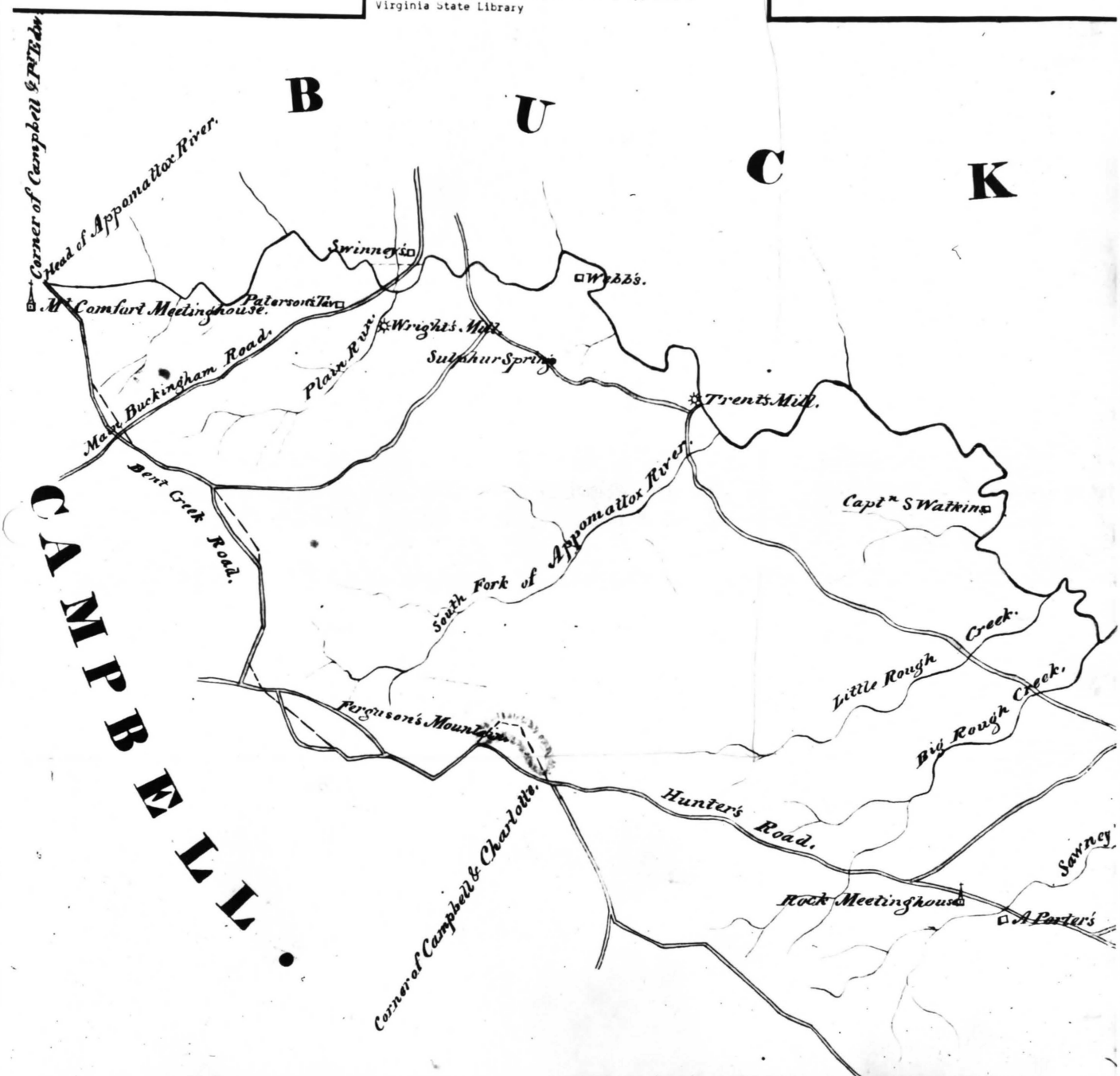


RECEIVED
APR 15 1991

Advance print of Wood's Map showing Wright's Mill on Plain Run. Paterson's Tavern on Main Buckingham Road is our Clover Hill Tavern

reg +
6 8x10 pics

John Wood's Map of Prince Edward County, 1820 ?
Virginia State Library
Neg. C 3309



Advance print of Wood's Map showing Wright's Mill on Plain Run. Paterson's Tavern on the Main Buckingham Road is our Clover Hill Tavern.

The Mariah Wright House circa 1922. Front (west) view. Left to right Anna Lee Godsey, Myrtle Freeman, Larkin Freeman, Andrew Wingfield, Howard Freeman, Robert Dunn, Appomattox, Va. This is the front of the house. Copies from a snapshot lent by Mr. J. L. Freeman, Watseka, Ill., (April 1957).



The Mariah Wright House Circa 1922

Front (west) view

left to right —

Copied from a snapshot lent by Mrs. J. Freeman

W ? Illinois (April 1957)

The Mariah Wright House circa 1922. Front (west) view. Left to right: Anna Lee Godsey, Myrtle Freeman, Larkin Freeman, Andrew Wingfield, Howard Freeman, Robert Dunn, Appomattox, Va. This is the front of the house. Copied from a snapshot lent by Mr. J. L. Freeman, Watseka, Ill., (April 1957).

The Mariah Wright House, January 1936. Photo by National Park Service. Copy by Shearer Robertson, July 1957. View of South Side.



The Mariah Wright House, January 1946

Photo by NPS Copy by S. Robertson July 1957

View of South Side

The Mariah Wright House, January 1946. Photo by National Park Service. Copy by Shearer Robertson, July 1957. View of South Side.

The Mariah Wright House, April 1941. Neg. #611, NPS
Front (West View) of Building


611

The Mariah Wright House, April 1941.
Neg. #611, NPS.
Front (West View) of Building.

The Mariah Wright House, December 1941, Neg. #876, NPS
North Side of Building



The Mariah Wright House. December 1941.
Neg. #876, NPS.
North Side of Building.

The Mariah Wright House, January 1946. East and North Side.
(Photo credit National Park Service)



Illustration No 2.

The Mariah Wright House, January 1946.
East end and North Side.
(Photo credit National Park Service)

The Mariah Wright House. Neg. #1054. Corn Crib in front yard (post Civil War Structure, May 17, 1947, prior to razing.



The Mariah Wright House

Neg. # 1054

Corn Crib in front yard (post Civil War structure
May 17 1947 print + negative



HISTORIC STRUCTURES REPORT

ARCHITECTURAL DATA, PART I

REHABILITATION AND RESTORATION

OF THE

MARIAH WRIGHT HOUSE

APPOMATTOX COURT HOUSE

Virginia

November 1959

by

Orville W. Carroll
Architect

RECOMMENDED

Supervising Architect, Historic Structures — Date Nov 5-59

Chief, EODC — Date Nov 5-59

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service
Eastern Office, Division of Design and Construction

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A. Drawings

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A-2 Preliminary Restoration Drawings NHP-ACH 3072 Sheets - 1

B. Illustrations Photographs - 36

I. FOREWORD

The Mariah Wright House stands about a quarter mile southeast of the old Appomattox Court House site. The property was separated from the Village plat by a road identified in the Park records as the "Back Lane". The land on which the Wright House stands was originally purchased in 1785, by Pryor Wright, Sr., when this section of Appomattox County was part of Prince Edward County.[1]

The Mariah Wright House has no known historical significance other than that it contributed to the Village scene during the final hours of the Confederacy.[2] Confederate soldiers encamped on the Wright farm on the night of April 8, 1865, and its owners no doubt participated in the events of the following day, the surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia, commanded by General Lee, to the Army of the Potomac commanded by General Grant.

After 1887, ownership of the Wright property changed hands several times until its last owner, disrepair exceeding repair, sold the property to the Federal government in 1937. Subsequent stabilization of the structure occurred in 1947 with the repointing of the stone foundations and chimneys, the reinforcing of the chimneys with tie rods and clamps, re-roofing

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1. Schlegel, Marvin, Dr., "Historic Buildings Report, Mariah Wright House, Part I, ACH-NHP, Virginia, July 1958.

2. Report of J. L. Chamberlain, Brigadier General, Commander, First Brigade, First Division, Fifth Army Corps, April 6, 1865, reads as follows: "My skirmish line had reached the town, its right being at the house of Mrs. Wright,...." Notes taken from Ralph Happel file, ACH-NHP, Virginia.

where required, and the removal of the interior wood-lath and plaster. Two interior stairways, a full length porch to the southeast and exterior steps, all ca. 1890, have also been removed.

Research indicates the erection of the original structure by Pryor Wright, Jr. as the year 1823, although evidence is not complete.[3] Several additional outbuildings were added through the years prior to 1865; one being a kitchen building located approximately 30 feet south of the present house, and standing as late as 1920. Mention is also made of an ice house, stable, corn house and tobacco barns, grouped about the house on the south and west sides.[4]

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3. Schlegel, loc. cit., p.2

4. Notes taken from the Freeman material collected March 1957, on file at ACH-NHP, Virginia. Freeman was owner of the Wright property from 1920 until 1937, and did extensive razing of old out-buildings on the Wright property.

II. PHYSICAL HISTORY

A. Original Conditions

A-1. Plan

The plan of the original house is much the same as it exists today with the exception of the door and window locations which are described later. It is a story-and-a-half frame structure 18' x 40' containing three rooms on both floors with chimneys at both ends of the house, serving fireplaces on both first and second floors. The long axis of the house was oriented north and south and bears no apparent relationship to the town plat established some years later.

The location of the original rooms on the first floor can be determined in section by the presence of larger joists framed under the room partitions during construction. Also, where each 4" partition wall meets the exterior frame, a 6" studding was placed to provide a nailing surface for the interior finish at the corners. Additional evidence of the floor boards varying in widths from room to room indicated the need for a "break" in the floor pattern which occurs under the partition walls.

In the center room, first floor, a steep, narrow enclosed stairway, although altered somewhat, seems to be the earliest means of access to the attic. A small landing, 2' x 2'7", up 8½" from the first floor, preceeds the flight of stairs leading directly up to the second floor. Access to the stairway can be

gained from either the north or center rooms through doors located perpendicular--and adjacent to--the west wall.

A-2. Frame

The original exterior frame of the house was constructed entirely from oak. This differentiates the original from the later remodeling which used yellow pine. A 10" x 10" oak sill, full length of the house into which the oak studding was morticed, rested directly upon a stone masonry foundation approximately three feet above grade. Hand-hewn oak floor joists, varying in widths from 3" to 5¼" and depths from 6½" to 10", spaced approximately 2'-0" on centers were notched into the same sill. Under each of the two room partitions a 10" x 10" oak floor joist was placed to carry the additional load. The four corner posts were "L" shaped and held in place by diagonal bracing. The diagonal corner braces are the same length in all corners with the exception of one in the east part of the south wall. Here, a shorter brace was used to allow a door to be framed between the bottom of the diagonal brace and the chimney. See photo illustration No. 10.

The wall studs measure approximately 3" x 4" with the exception of those framed at the two wall partitions and those framed around the original door locations. These studs measure approximately 6" x 4" and provided, in addition to rigidity, a nailing surface for both the door trim and plaster lath.

The first floor ceiling beams were notched over a 3 3/4" x 8" oak wall plate and extended about 4" beyond the frame

of the house. By cutting the extended ends of the beams on a 24° angle a nailing surface was provided, properly sloped, for the original cornice board and trim. The second floor was laid directly on the ceiling beams. The rafters rested on the second floor boards above the 4" projection provided by the ceiling beam overhang.

The only unique feature of the roof framing is the unusual spacing of rafters and the method of bracing them. The rafters were spaced 3'-0" on center from each end and when the middle of the house was reached, it necessitated the placing of three pair of rafters on 2'-0" centers, to accommodate its dimension of 40'-0". The rafters were held rigid by four diagonal wind braces, 1" x 2½", running from near the ridge in the gable ends downward toward the floor near the center of the house.

A-3. Exterior Finish

a. Weatherboarding - A few pieces of the original weatherboarding are still intact in the upper gable ends and on the north part of the east wall of the original structure. It consisted of poplar boards (not beveled) with a ½" bead. The individual boards vary in thickness; some boards measuring ½" and other boards measuring 5/8". The width of the individual boards vary also from 6½" to 8½", however, all boards were carefully scribed (possibly with a knife) to provide a guideline in maintaining an exposure of 5½" to the weather.

b. Trim - A portion of the original cornice is still intact on the east wall. It is a simple two-piece trim consisting of one 3/4" x 9" beaded yellow pine board used as a fascia and a molded trim board 1" x 3 3/8", yellow pine, "planted" on the surface of the fascia at its upper edge. The overhang of the first floor ceiling beams, cut on a 24° angle, provided a nailing surface for the fascia and trim board.

The verge board for the gable ends no longer exists to furnish an accurate description for this piece. The only evidence remaining (and this is not too clear) is some weathered markings on the original weatherboarding in the gable ends that suggest a tapered barge board was used with dimensions at the ridge of 2 5/8" and approximately 4 7/16" at the cornice. If this were the case, a corner block would be necessary to complete closing the cornice at the eave line.

The corner boards are those originally used. It is in two pieces; one a beaded board measuring 1 3/8" x 3 1/4", the other is a simple rectangular piece measuring 1 3/8" x 1 13/16". The two pieces were butted together and formed an edge for the weatherboarding to stop.

The discovery of re-used pieces of molding that match identically the openings of the original door and window frames leads one to believe that these were the original window and door trim for both the interior and exterior casings. Both interior and exterior trim was molded from a solid piece of wood, cut to

fit a miter at the top and sloping sill at the bottom. The trim is similar to that on the old Sweeney house about one-half mile east built within a few years of the Wright house. At its fullest dimension, the trim measures 1 1/2" x 3 3/16". The small windows in the south room, second floor, are not the original openings although they represent an early alteration, probably prior to 1865. The window jambs and heads are re-used pieces of old window frames and framed in between an original oak studding and a newer yellow pine studding. The original weatherboarding was left intact around these small windows but the improper fitting of the weatherboarding around the frame seems to indicate the new openings were merely an expediency for light and ventilation.

The windows in the north wall, second floor, are definitely included in the later 1890 remodeling and these larger windows now extant, are probably replacements for smaller windows matching those in the south wall.

No evidence of the use of either gutters and downspouts or shutters for windows was found.

c. Roof - The original roof boards remain in use today. They are 3/4" yellow pine boards of random widths, 9½" to 10½". On the gable ends, the roof boards extended 1½" beyond the rafter just enough to cover the extent of the weatherboarding. Over the roof boards was laid a roof consisting of hand-riven and dressed yellow pine shingles. One shingle still in place under the roof of the addition and assumed to be original had an overhang of

5" at the eaves. The shingle butts, in all instances, appeared to be square rather than the typical "fish-scale" type found elsewhere within the park area.

A-4. Doors and Windows

Numerous changes in the fenestration and door locations of the original house can be noted from observation.

Two window frames and one door frame remained intact throughout the numerous remodeling jobs on the Wright house. In all instances, evidence still remains in form of sill notches into the oak studding at the original door and window locations. On the first floor, two doors originally opened to the west, one into the north room and the second into the center room. A similar situation occurs on the east side. In the south wall, a door was placed to the east of the chimney and a window to the west. The door apparently led towards a detached kitchen located about 30 feet to the southeast. If this were the case, the room to the south could have been used for dining purposes. In the north wall, one window was placed on each side of the chimney.

The one original door frame accommodated a door 3' 1 3/8" x 6' 2 3/4". The other four exterior doors correspond to a similar "rough-in" opening. The design of the door itself remains conjectural, since no original doors have been located to date. The interior doors appear to be in their original locations and have a corresponding size.

The framing of the doors and windows was quite simple. The studding was spaced to allow the frames to nail directly into

them. In the case of all the original door openings, a rough header was notched into the studding about 6'3" above the first floor. The 10" x 10" sill was notched about one inch deep to provide a sloping surface for a 1 3/4" door sill and frame. The window frames were also nailed directly into the studding with the window sill extending beyond the frame width and notching into the studding with a 5/8" slope toward the exterior. The window sill extended far enough to the exterior to provide a base for the exterior trim.

Two sizes of windows are apparent from the frame measurements. One frame accommodates a sash size of 20 3/4" x 24" or 4 lights over 4; the second frame accommodates a sash size of 26½" x 24" or 6 lights over 6. In four of the original window locations, newer and larger windows and frames were installed, possibly in c.a. 1890. In each instance, the studding had been re-used in different places throughout the house. The original locations of these pieces can be readily identified.

From existing evidence, two different heights of the window sills were used; one measuring 2'11" and the second 4'0" above the floor. What appears to have been a change in the window heights is evident from additional notches located in each of the original locations up 4'0" above the floor. The two original window frames, both intact, measure 2'11" above the floor to the sill and show the older notch marks in the studding 12" higher. The two windows in the center room and the one window in the south wall seem to be windows measuring 4'0" above the floor only.

On the second floor, or attic, windows in both ends of the house are alterations from the original structure. The windows in the north wall appear to the contemporary with the 1890 remodeling. This is evident from the type of trim, shape and size of the sash. The smaller windows in the south wall, although much earlier, are also alterations. In both instances the windows were framed on one side with a yellow pine studding, toe-nailed rather than morticed into the rafter collar ties as were the oak studs of the original structure. A re-used piece of an old window frame made the frames for the small windows in the south wall. The original weatherboarding was cut to accommodate the new window size and extends beyond the frame jambs and head.

It is assumed from the existing evidence that the smaller type windows were used in both end walls prior to 1865, and that the alterations in the north wall were accomplished at the time the house underwent extensive remodeling in 1890.

A-5. Chimney and Fireplaces

The original design of the chimneys can be seen from photo illustration No. 9. It consisted of a stone base approximately 14 feet high laid in a random pattern and apparently completely stuccoed over.[4] Above this was laid a brick stack about 13½' high, consisting of 45 brick courses laid in common bond. The total width of the brick stack, which enclosed two flues, is 4 brick stretchers and a depth of 2 stretchers and one header. The chimney cap consisted of two corbels; the first, one brick course high and the second, two brick courses high, both offset about ½". The mortar joints originally were penciled.

The fireplaces all seem to have their original brick hearths with the exception of the south room second floor which has a stone hearth. The opening of the south fireplace, room 103, has been reduced in width and height from its original size of 42" high x 46" wide. The fireplace opening in room 101 remains unchanged.

A-6. Interior Finish

a. Floors - The original floors are still intact. It consists of room length yellow pine, T & G, 1 3/16" thick, random width boards, running from about 9" to 16" in width. Each board is face nailed every two feet corresponding to the spacing of the floor joists.

b. Sidewalls - The original finish of the walls on the first floor was plaster over rived wooden lath, with the possible exception of the south wall of the stairway being covered with vertical wood sheathing much as it exists today.

c. Ceilings - Originally, the beaded poplar ceiling beams and second floor boards, all unpainted, were left exposed as the finish on the first floor. It is uncertain how long the ceiling remained in this condition since in subsequent years the beams were furred to a uniform depth and covered with wood lath and plaster.

On the second floor, a similar situation existed. The rafters were left exposed and in later years they were hewn to provide a uniform surface for lath and plaster. Wall stud 24" high, in 2'4" from the eave line, returned the plastered ceiling vertically to the floor.

A-7. Outbuildings, Fences, Walks, Etc.

There remains no visible evidence indicating what outbuildings existed during the 1865 period. However, archeological investigations could uncover site locations of a number of buildings such as the outside kitchen (a 16' x 24' frame structure standing about 30' south of the house), the ice house east of the kitchen, and stables west of the house. Since Pryor Wright owned slaves and livestock to work his farm, there must have existed a number of barns for storing major crops such as tobacco and corn.

In an interview with Mr. Ed Layne,[5] on the Wright grounds, he stated that John Rosser had a plank fence extending from the Back Lane (with a gate here) and surrounding the house on all four sides. The fence ran between the house and the stable-corn crib on the west. A gate west of the house allowed wagons to drive through the house yard and into the stable yard. The fence extended to the south, turned east and enclosed the outside kitchen and ice house, then north to the Back Lane. Layne stated that Rosser could drive wagons on both sides of the house coming from the direction of the Bocock Lane. A small yard gate allowed access to the spring some 500' to the southeast.

B. Existing Conditions

According to Mr. Layne, all fences were plank. He recalls no picket fences. The period recalled, however, is shortly before 1900 and does not necessarily represent the period during the war,

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5. Interview with Mr. Ed. Layne, 84 years old, conducted on Park grounds at the Mariah Wright House, September 9, 1959.

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but it is good evidence that the fence lines were probably kept in repair and represents their location prior to Rossers ownership. Walks were stated to be earthen rather than brick or stone.

B-1. Plan

The ca. 1890 alteration of the Wright house converted the plan of the original house to one resembling many of the older Virginia homes with a symetrical front facade; single entry with a wide central hall having an open stairway to the south and a room on either side. The small enclosed stairway on the north wall of the hall was left in its original state with access from both the hall and the north room.

The west side now definitely became the "front" of the house. The two original doorways were blocked off and weather-boarded over. A newer doorway with a transom light was placed in the center of the house and protected by the addition of a new porch. An identical door with a transom light replaced the smaller door in the east wall opposite the front door, and led directly onto the rear or back porch. Above the west porch roof, a gable was cut into the main roof structure with a door that allowed access to the porch roof, presumably for sitting purposes. By using a partially glazed door in the gable, daylight was provided for the central attic room as well as light for the new stairway.

The south wall first floor, also underwent extensive changes; the door leading out to the once detached kitchen and the window to the west side of the chimney was closed and

weatherboarded over. Additional light for the south room, compensating for the loss of the window was provided for by enlarging the two small original window openings to the east and west, to 6 over 6 light sash with 10" x 12" glass.

A somewhat similar change was made in the north room, first floor. One original window was closed in the east wall and one to the west of the chimney in the north wall. The original window to the east of the chimney (north wall) and the original window in the west wall were both enlarged, again for additional light, to 6 over 6 light sash with 10" x 12" glass.

To the rear, a two room extension, 16' x 24' was built projecting from the northeast corner of the original house. It was constructed on rock piers, rather than a solid foundation like the original house and provided for new kitchen and dining facilities with provisions for additional sleeping quarters in the loft space above. A steep narrow open stairway, now removed, was located in the rear kitchen room and allowed heat to filter upstairs to warm the room above. A ceiling-suspended chimney in the extreme east end of the addition served as the flue for the kitchen cook stove, now a new cast iron stove replaced the open fireplace that must have served for many years in the detached kitchen. Access to the addition on the first floor was gained through one of the original outside doors from Room 101 and through the two exterior doors facing south onto the rear porch constructed when the addition was built. In the process of

constructing the new addition, an original window frame in the east wall, Room 101, was lathed and plastered over.

Any visible means of access from the grade to the floor level of the old house was removed during this remodeling.

As the addition stands today, the interior is gutted; the partition, stairway, flue, floors and all the interior finishes have been removed; the full length porch to the south has been removed and a large part of the original metal roof is missing. The frame of the addition has settled to a point of failure near the center span. The exterior weatherboarding and roof boards, applied in the 1890's, is still in good condition.

B-2. Foundation and Frame

The existing foundation of the Wright house is about 75% intact with the stone masonry in a very unstable condition. Some exterior pointing in 1947 has held a few stone together but generally, a partial collapse could occur at any time. Portions of the 10" x 10" oak sill are held in place by locust posts rather than by the masonry wall.

Apparently the original house had no provisions for a basement, but in later years an attempt was made to excavate a partial basement. This is evident by the remains of a small access door at grade level, located to the west of the south chimney, and also the removal of two to three feet of soil in the south half of the crawl space. From all indications it was never finished or in any event, never used to any large extent.[5]

The 10" x 10" oak sill resting on the stone masonry wall is about 90% rotted away. Many of the floor joists are also in the same condition with their interiors completely disintegrated. This is particularly true of the 10" x 10" joists framed under the two partitions. The deterioration has not affected most of the studding, diagonal bracing, and rafters but portions of the oak wall plate and several of the first floor ceiling joists (poplar) are affected by rotting.

The framing in the addition is generally in good condition with the exception of the sill and the floor which are beyond salvage.

B-3. Exterior Finish

The entire exterior finish represents materials applied since the 1890's. The weatherboarding, cornice, doors and windows, the front porch, the rear addition and porch, metal roofs and wall paint can be dated within a period of 70 years.[6] Some changes in window glass were made as late as 1920 according to its owner at that time, Mr. Freeman.

a. Weatherboarding - The present weatherboarding is a plain yellow pine board, measuring 5/8" x 6 3/4" with a varying exposure to the weather, 5 3/8" to 5 3/4". A few pieces of original beaded yellow heart poplar weatherboarding remain in the gable ends and on the north east wall. There are no indications

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6. It is uncertain if all the changes noted were completed at the same time since the trim of the addition is different in all respects to the trim of the cornice on the main house.

that paint was ever used until the present weatherboarding received one coat of yellow paint. From conversations with local residents, this paint was applied within the last 40 years.[7]

b. Trim - All the exterior trim except the corner boards represent post-Civil War methods of manufacturing and construction. The eaves and rake were extended past the original roof line and both crown and bed moldings mitered completely around the house, including the front gable. The porch was also finished with a similar trim. The crown and bed moldings for the addition are plain rectangular boards with a beveled top and bottom edge, set on a 45° slope; the rake was finished off with a tapered vergeboard extending over a corner block at the eave line. In all respects, the addition seems like an earlier type construction compared to the cornice and trim of the main house.

c. Roofing - The present roof retains the original roof boards of rough sawn yellow pine, 3/4" thick with varying widths, 9½" to 10½". The original wooden shingle roof was replaced with a raised seam metal roof and later repaired with an asphalt paper which exists today.

B-4. Doors and Windows

All doors and windows are post-Civil War, with the exception of the two attic windows in the south end. These windows appear to date shortly after the erection of the house and before

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7. Layne interview; stated never recalling the house being painted until Mr. Freeman underwent extensive repairs after 1920. Mr. Layne was acquainted with both Mariah Wright and John Rosser before their deaths.

1865. The first window replacements on the first floor had sash with 6 over 6 lights and glass size 10" x 12" and 8" x 10" glass size on the second floor, north wall. The sash Mr. Freeman replaced in the 1920's apparently had the large 24" x 30" glass found in several of the windows. The doors and windows are in fair condition but have no significant value to the proposed period of restoration.

B-5. Chimney and Fireplaces

The chimneys are those originally constructed; the lower 14' base is constructed of field rock laid in a random pattern and surmounted by a brick stack 13½ feet high. The general condition of the chimney is good but recent mortar work in 1947 does not correspond to the old in color and texture. Faint pencil-ing marks can be seen on the brick work and enough large stuccoed surfaces of old mortar remain to suggest that the entire rock base was stuccoed.

One chimney cap is missing and the other is slowly breaking away. An attempt to stabilize both chimneys was made in 1947, when a tie-rod with "S" clamps was installed through the attic level. It seems to be of no structural value and may do more harm than good due to the expansion and contraction of the tie-rod. The brick stack in the addition has been completely removed.

The three brick hearths have some brick removed but enough of the original pattern remains to re-construct them to their

original appearance.

B-6. Interior Finish

a. Sidewalls and ceilings - All sidewalls and ceilings on both floors have had their wood lath and plaster finish removed. The only interior finish remaining are a few vertical wall boards enclosing the stairway in Room 102.

b. Floors - The general condition of the flooring on both floor is considered good. Some boards on the first floor show signs of deterioration near the outside walls and partitions but the floor is useable.

B-7. Outbuildings, Fences, Walks, Etc.

All the information concerning outbuildings is very meager. A description of the outbuildings was given by Mr. Freeman but not enough facts are stated to aid in restoration. One photograph exists that shows the presence of a stable and corn crib but both are believed to be post-war. The site of the kitchen and ice house can probably be located with local interviews and archeological investigations.

Walks and fences are entirely conjectural. A family cemetery plot to the south is still identifiable as well as the spring that served for domestic water.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR RESTORATION

The Mariah Wright House remains the last historic structure unrestored within the old Appomattox Court House village.

The physical frame of the house has deteriorated with extreme acceleration within the past ten years making the following recommendations necessary to save the structure as background for the 1865 Village scene.

It is recommended that the exterior of the Wright House be restored according to Architectural Drawing No. NHP-ACH 3072 (See Appendix A-2). This would necessitate the removal of the existing porch, the front gable, the rear addition, doors and windows, cornice and weatherboarding, all dating from the post-civil war period, and the replacement of the same architectural elements according to the proposed architectural drawings.

It is also recommended that the interior space be rehabilitated for future use as park employee living quarters. This would include the excavation of a partial basement with a heating and cooling (alternate) system, washing facilities and the modernization of the first floor to adapt its use as living quarters with living-dining, kitchen, bedroom and bathroom facilities.

It is recommended that the attic rooms be left unfinished to provide storage space only.

Since the introduction of the new entrance road to the village area passes within a few hundred feet of the Mariah Wright

House, it is recommended that the outbuildings be considered as a necessary feature of the landscape and utilized as functions of the house. It is recommended that the once detached kitchen, about 30 feet south of the existing house, be re-built to serve as additional sleeping quarters for larger family needs or as a guest house; and the stable rebuilt utilizing it for car storage. At the present time, it is not known conclusively where the existing sites of the detached kitchen, ice house, stable and fences are located. To expedite this information, it is recommended that an archeologist conduct an investigation for the above mentioned features soon.

It is also recommended that the fence lines be located and fences reconstructed on the archeological evidence found along with the Layne interview findings on fences.

If underground electrical service is planned after restoration, it is recommended that temporary electrical service be installed to the area until the permanent installation is finished. Provisions for tying into such an underground system should be provided at the time of restoration.

It is recommended that the water, sewage and drainage systems be completed while the necessary earth moving equipment is on the job. Water and sewerage can be tied to existing lines.

A thorough examination of the original exterior wood cornice and weatherboarding showed that the house as it originally was built and occupied prior to the Civil War, was never painted.

In keeping with the intentions of the principals of restoration, it is recommended that the house be left unpainted. As a prevention against deterioration, and maintenance, it is recommended that the exterior wood work be given two coats of "Hydrozo" or a similar product as directed by the manufactures specifications.

In general, the total proposed program for the rehabilitation and restoration of the Mariah Wright House can be comprehended more fully in the following cost estimate report and a careful study of the preliminary architectural drawings submitted.

IV. COST ESTIMATE

Demolition of Recent Additions	400
Excavation and Foundation, including Drainage, Sewer and Water	6,165
Fireplaces and Chimneys	800
Restore and Stabilize Framing	7,800
Roofing	795
Exterior Finish	1,380
Interior converted to Quarters	10,055
Miscellaneous	350
10% for Contingencies	2,775
Total	30,520

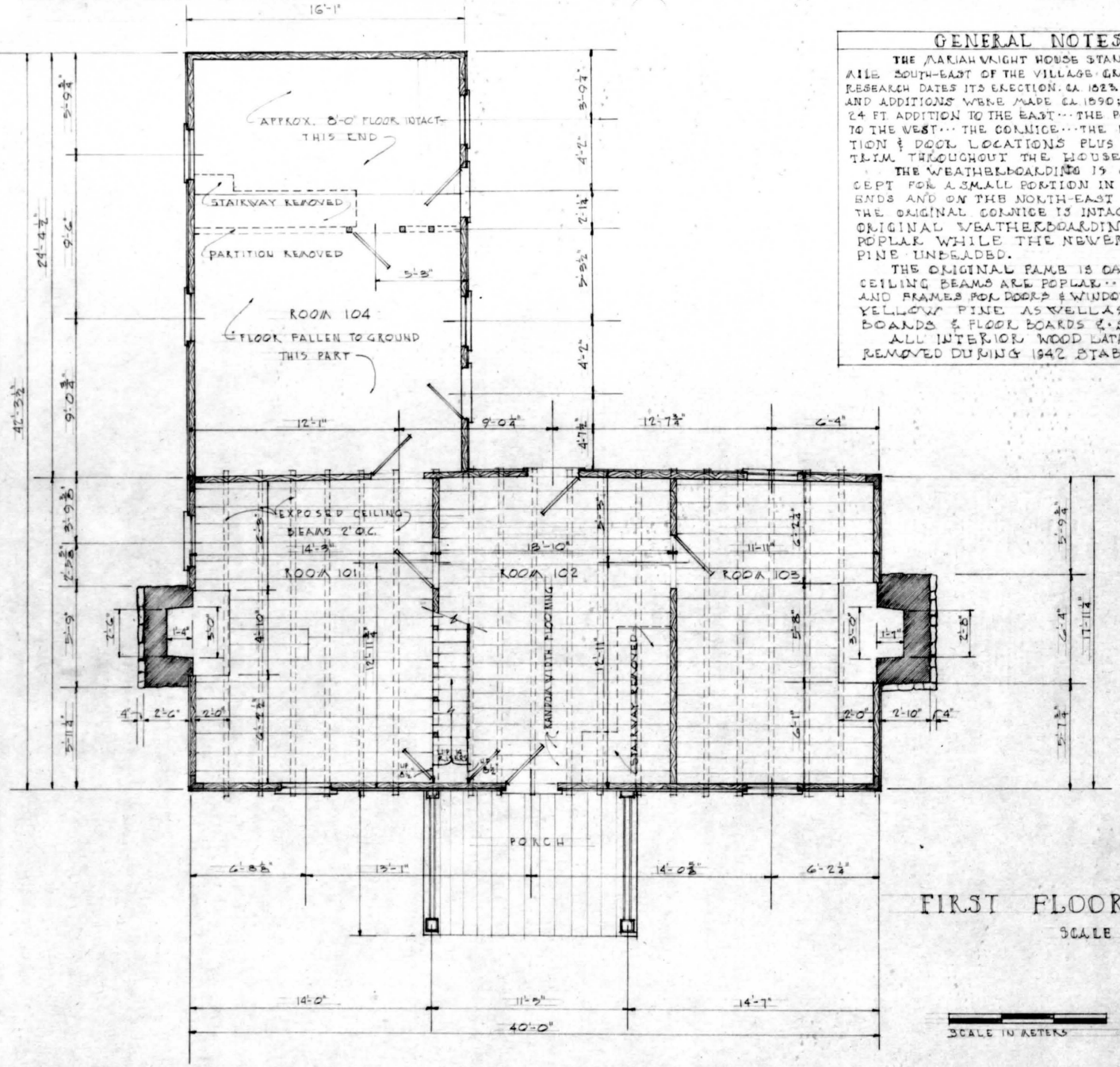
V. APPENDIX

A. Drawings

A-1.	Existing Conditions, HABS	7 Sheets
A-2.	Preliminary Restoration Drawings NHP-ACH 3072	1 Sheet

SHEET 1 OF 7 HABS AUGUST 1959

First floor plan and general notes of the Mariah Wright House showing existing conditions.



GENERAL NOTES

THE MARIAH WRIGHT HOUSE STANDS ABOUT ½ MILE SOUTH-EAST OF THE VILLAGE GREEN. HISTORICAL RESEARCH DATES ITS ERECTION CA 1823. ALTERATIONS AND ADDITIONS WERE MADE CA 1890; MAINLY THE 24 FT. ADDITION TO THE EAST··· THE PORCH & DORMER TO THE WEST··· THE CORNICE··· THE FENESTRATION & DOOR LOCATIONS PLUS INTERIOR TRIM THROUGHOUT THE HOUSE.

THE WEATHERBOARDING IS CA 1890 EXCEPT FOR A SMALL PORTION IN THE GABLE ENDS AND ON THE NORTH-EAST SIDE WHERE THE ORIGINAL CORNICE IS INTACT. THE ORIGINAL WEATHERBOARDING IS BEADED POPLAR WHILE THE NEWER IS YELLOW PINE UNBEADED.

THE ORIGINAL FRAME IS OAK··· 1ST FL. CEILING BEAMS ARE POPLAR··· CORNICE AND FRAMES FOR DOORS & WINDOWS ARE YELLOW PINE AS WELL AS ROOF BOARDS & FLOOR BOARDS & SHINGLES.

ALL INTERIOR WOOD LATH & PLASTER REMOVED DURING 1942 STABLIZATION.

FIRST FLOOR PLAN

SCALE ¾" = 1 FT-0"

SCALE IN METERS

SCALE ¼" = 1 FT-0"

O.W. CARROLL DEL. AUGUST 1959
UNDER DIRECTION OF UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, BRANCH OF PLANS AND DESIGN

APPOMATTOX COUNTY VIRGINIA

NAME OF STRUCTURE
MARIAH WRIGHT HOUSE

APPOMATTOX COURT HOUSE NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

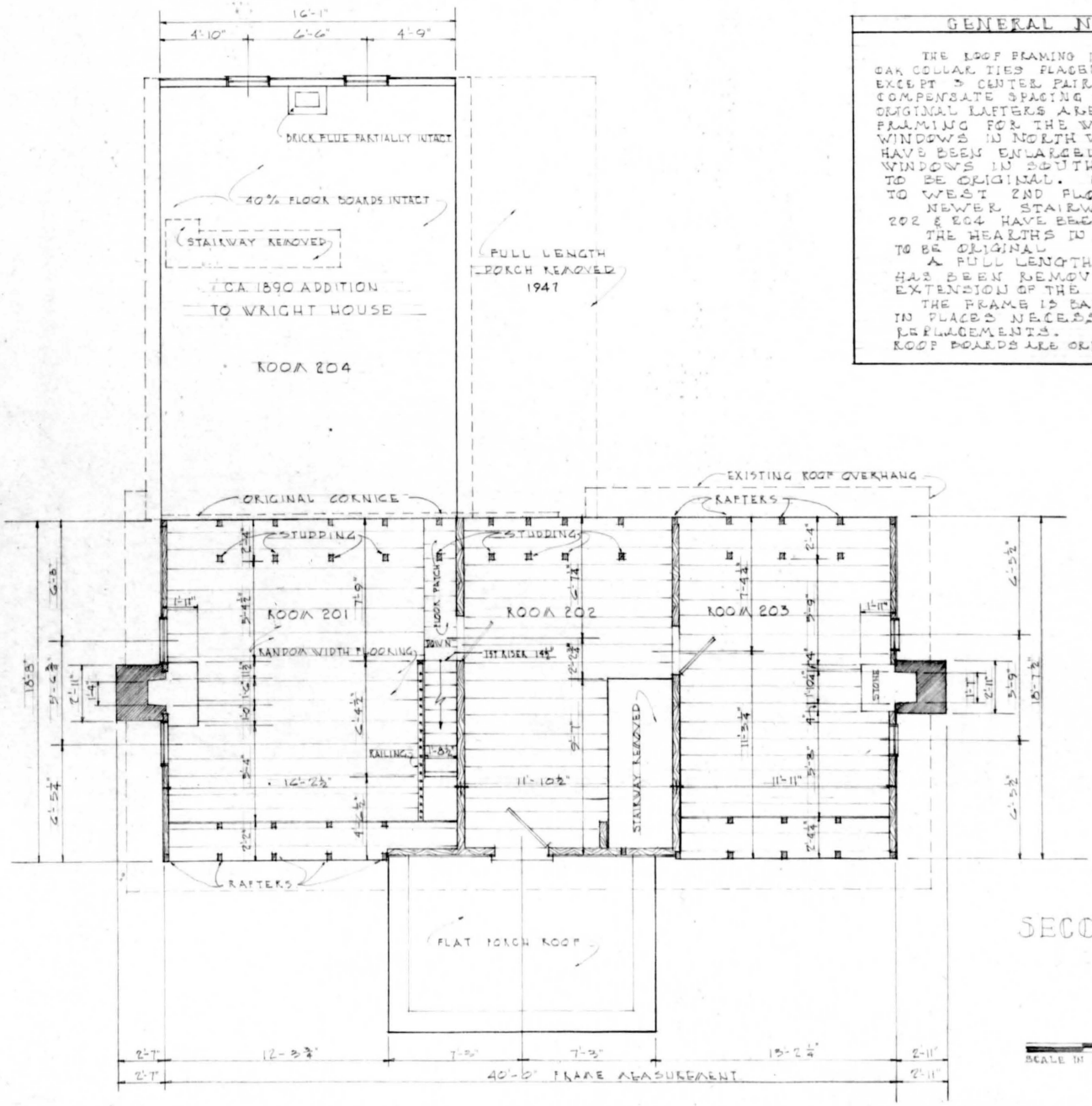
SURVEY NO.

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
SHEET 1 OF 7 SHEETS

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS INDEX NUMBER

SHEET 2 OF 7 HABS AUGUST 1959

Second floor plan and general notes of the Mariah Wright House showing existing conditions.



GENERAL NOTES

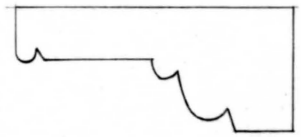
THE ROOF FRAMING IS OAK RAFTERS & OAK COLLAR TIES PLACED ON 3'-0" CENTERS EXCEPT 3 CENTER PAIRS SPACED 2'-0", TO COMPENSATE SPACING OVER A 40'-0" SPAN. ORIGINAL RAFTERS ARE CUT OUT TO ALLOW FRAMING FOR THE WEST DORMER. WINDOWS IN NORTH WALL 2ND FLOOR HAVE BEEN ENLARGED WHILE SMALL WINDOWS IN SOUTH WALL APPEAR TO BE ORIGINAL. EXTERIOR DOOR TO WEST 2ND FLOOR IS ALSO CA. 1890 NEWER STAIRWAYS IN ROOMS 202 & 204 HAVE BEEN REMOVED.

THE HEARTHS IN ALL ROOMS APPEAR TO BE ORIGINAL.

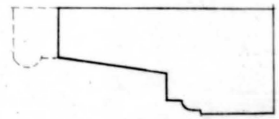
A FULL LENGTH REAR PORCH HAS BEEN REMOVED. ALSO THE EXTENSION OF THE EAST FLUE IN 204

THE FRAME IS BADLY DETERIORATED IN PLACES NECESSITATING SOME REPLACEMENTS.

ROOF BOARDS ARE ORIGINAL.



EXTERIOR TRIM



INTERIOR TRIM

TWO PIECES EXTERIOR--ONE PIECE INTERIOR TRIM FOUND REUSED ON WALLS--ORIGINAL



SECOND FLOOR PLAN

SCALE ¼" = 1 FT-0"

SCALE IN METERS

SCALE ¼" = 1 FT-0"

O.W. CARROLL - DEL. AUGUST 1959
UNDER DIRECTION OF UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, BRANCH OF PLANS AND DESIGN

APPOMATTOX COUNTY
VIRGINIA

NAME OF STRUCTURE
MARIAH WRIGHT HOUSE

APPOMATTOX COURT HOUSE
NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

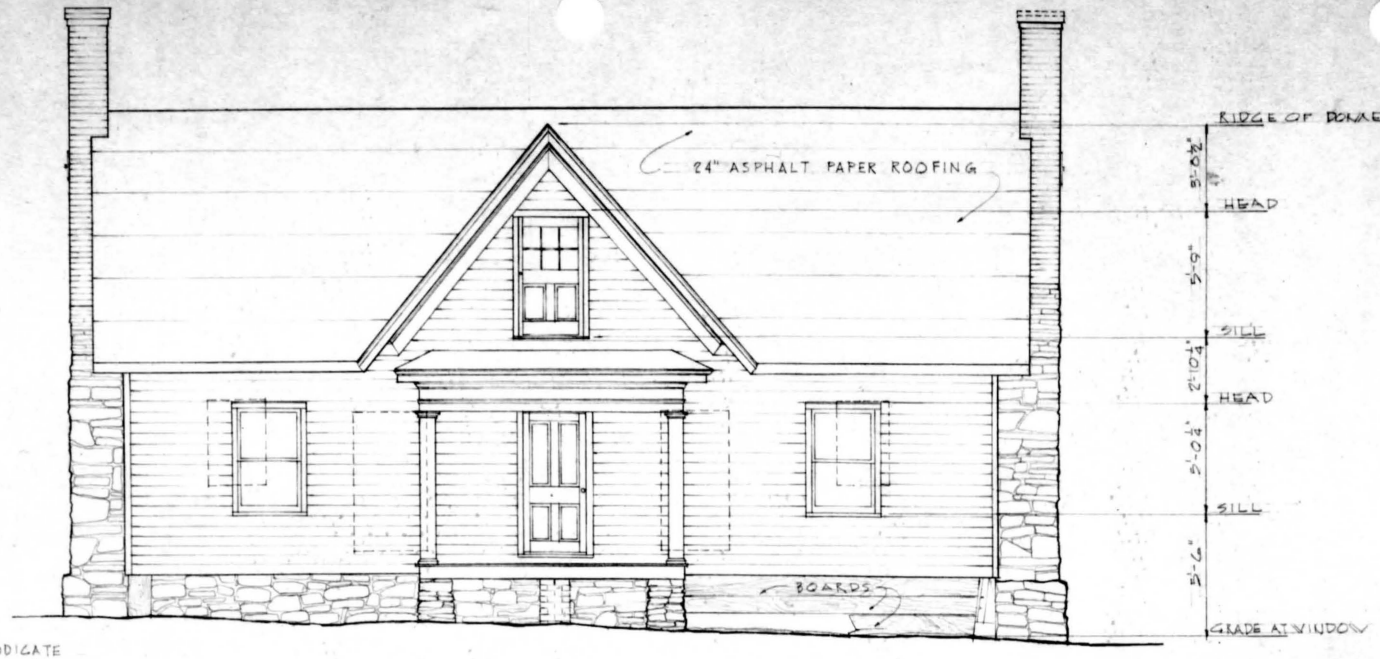
SURVEY NO.

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
SHEET 2 OF 7 SHEETS

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS INDEX NUMBER

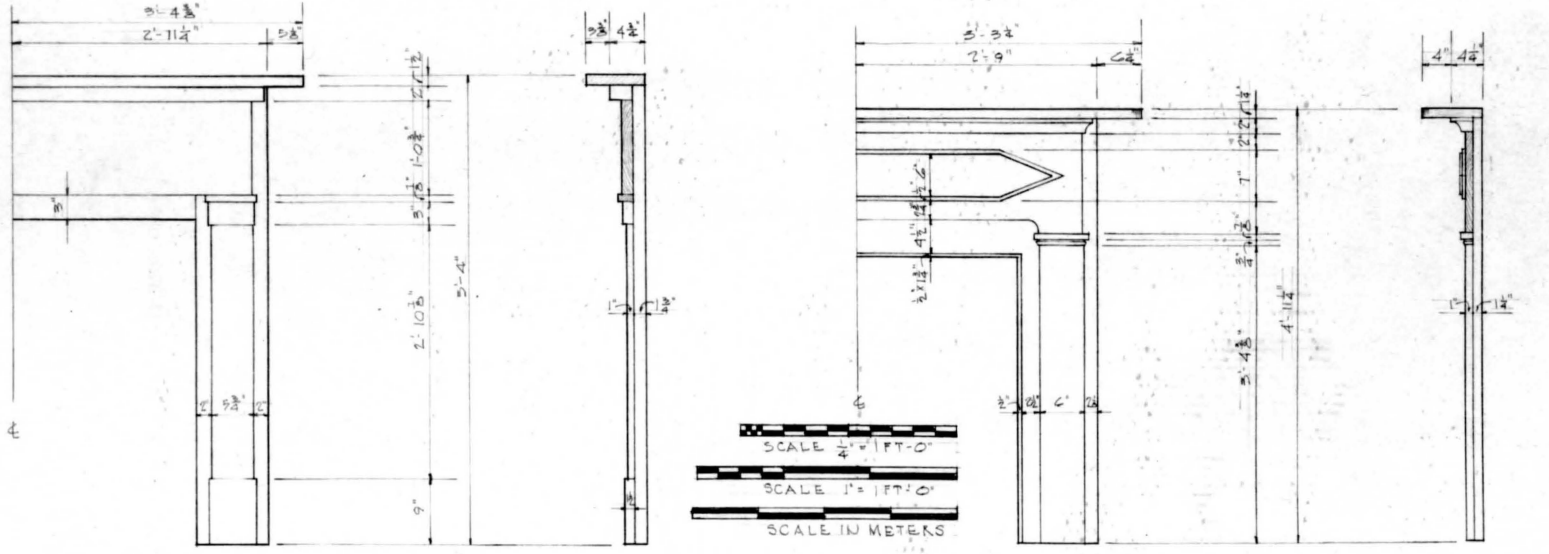
SHEET 3 OF 7 HABS AUGUST 1959

West elevation showing existing conditions with dotted lines showing original window and door locations. Mantels, Room 101 and 103 shown in detail.



NOTE: DOTTED LINES INDICATE ORIGINAL DOORS AND WINDOWS ALL DOORS-WINDOWS-TRIM AND DORMER ADDED CA. 1890.

WEST ELEVATION SCALE 1/4" = 1 FT-0"



FRONT VIEW END VIEW FRONT VIEW END VIEW

MANTEL ROOM 103 MANTEL ROOM 101

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APPOMATTOX COUNTY
VIRGINIA

NAME OF STRUCTURE
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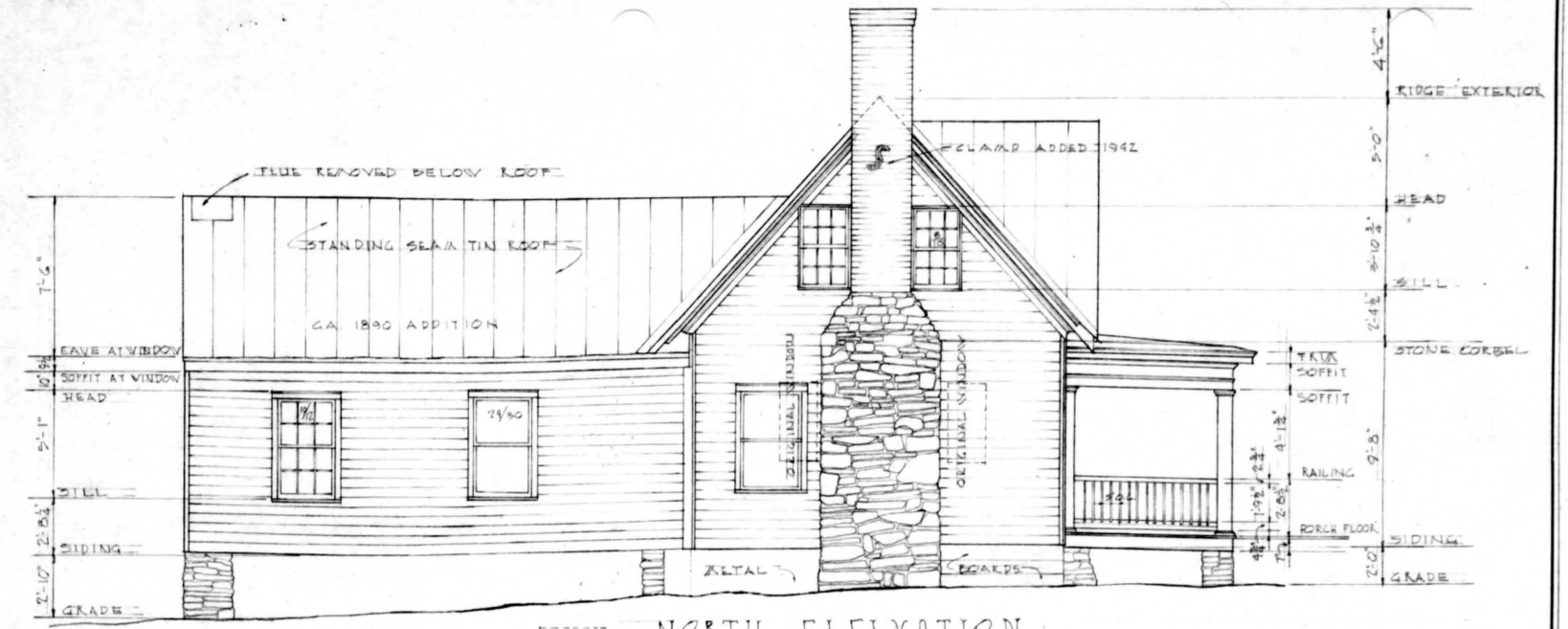
APPOMATTOX COURT HOUSE
NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

SURVEY NO.

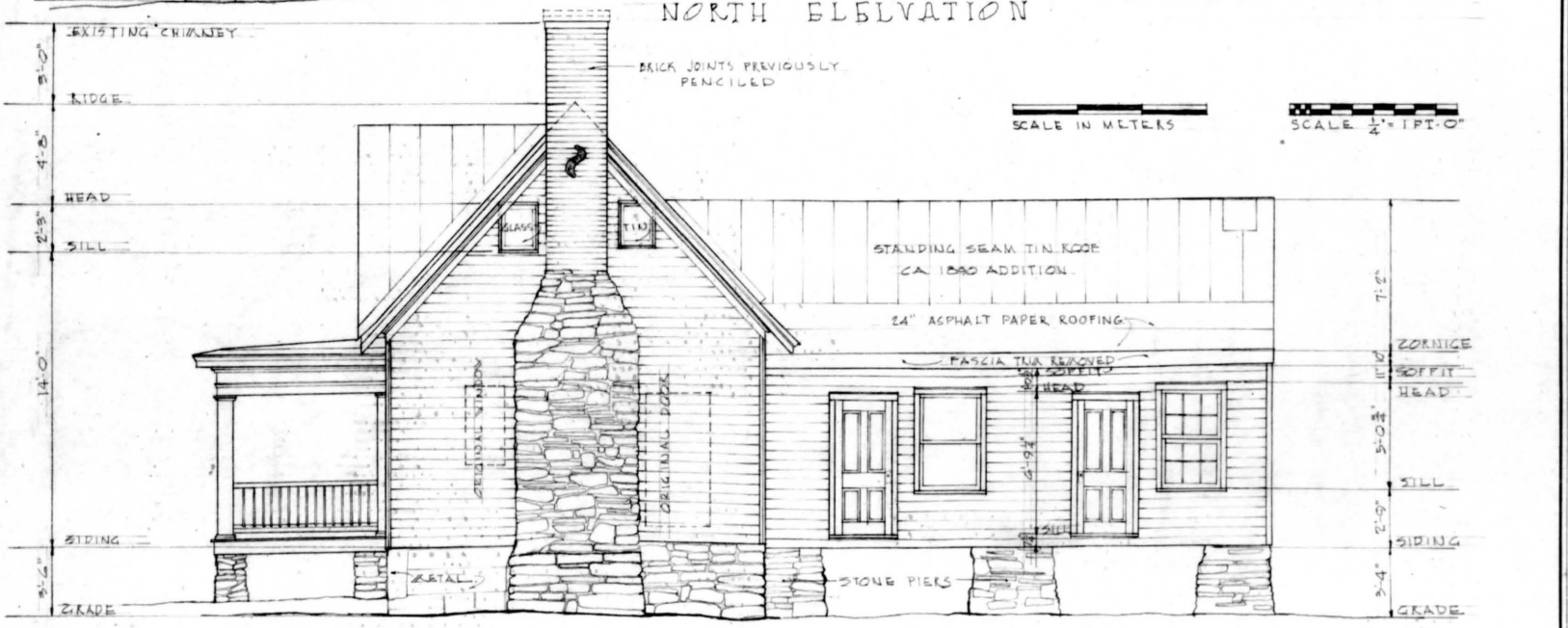
HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
SHEET 3 OF 7 SHEETS

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS INDEX NUMBER

North and south elevation showing existing conditions.



NORTH ELEVATION



SOUTH ELEVATION

O.W. CARROLL · DEL · AUGUST 1959 UNDER DIRECTION OF UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, BRANCH OF PLANS AND DESIGN	APPOMATTOX COUNTY VIRGINIA	NAME OF STRUCTURE MARIAH WRIGHT HOUSE	APPOMATTOX COURT HOUSE NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK	SURVEY NO.	HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY SHEET 4 OF 7 SHEETS

SHEET 5 OF 7 HABS AUGUST 1959

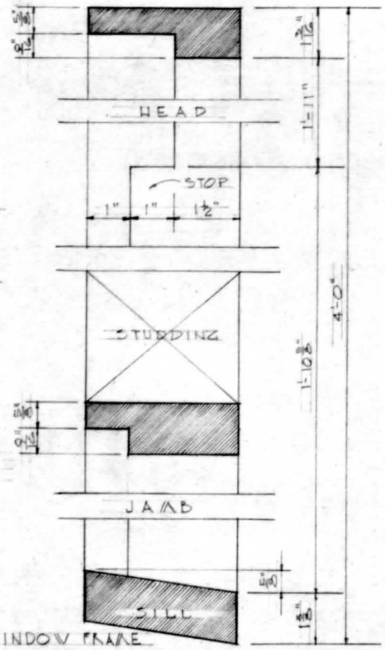
East elevation showing existing conditions; original window and door frame details first floor, pre-Civil War window detail second floor, Room 203.



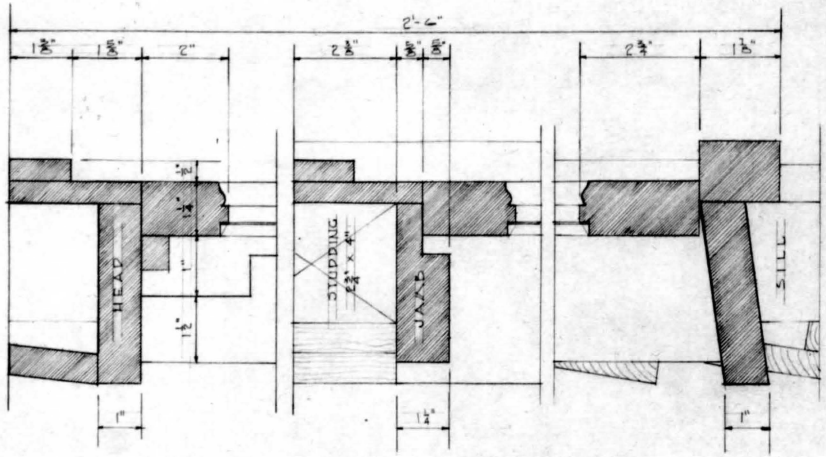
EAST ELEVATION SCALE ¼" = 1 FT.-0"

ORIGINAL DOOR FRAME
½ FULL SIZE

NOTE: BOTH ORIGINAL DOOR AND WINDOW FRAMES FOUND INTACT IN WALLS



ORIGINAL WINDOW FRAME



SECTION WINDOW 2ND FLOOR SOUTH WALL OF ORIGINAL HOUSE SCALE AT HALF SIZE

SCALE IN METERS

SCALE AT HALF SIZE

SCALE ¼" = 1FT.-0"

O.V. CARROLL · DEL. AUGUST 1939
UNDER DIRECTION OF UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, BRANCH OF PLANS AND DESIGN

NAME OF STRUCTURE

APPOMATTOX COUNTY VIRGINIA

MARIAH WRIGHT HOUSE

APPOMATTOX COURT HOUSE NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

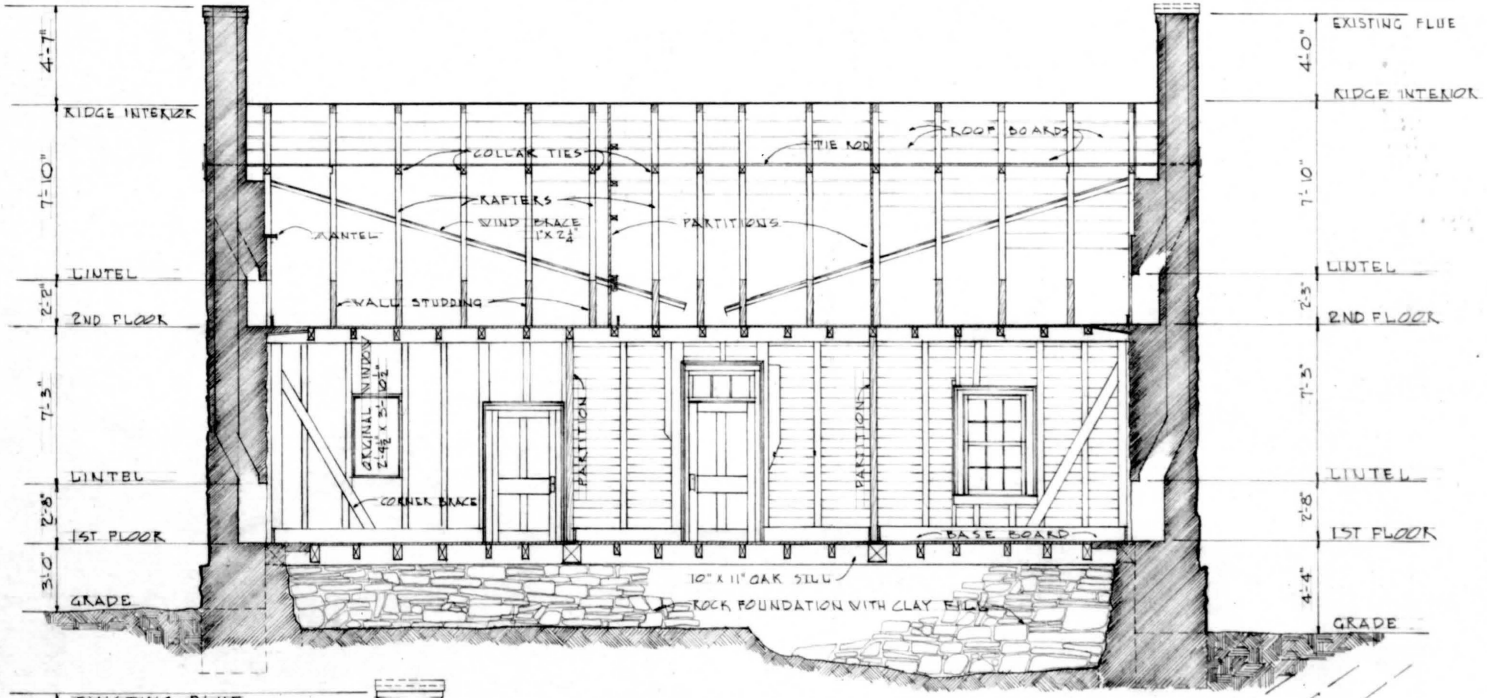
SURVEY NO.

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
SHEET 5 OF 7 SHEETS

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS INDEX NUMBER

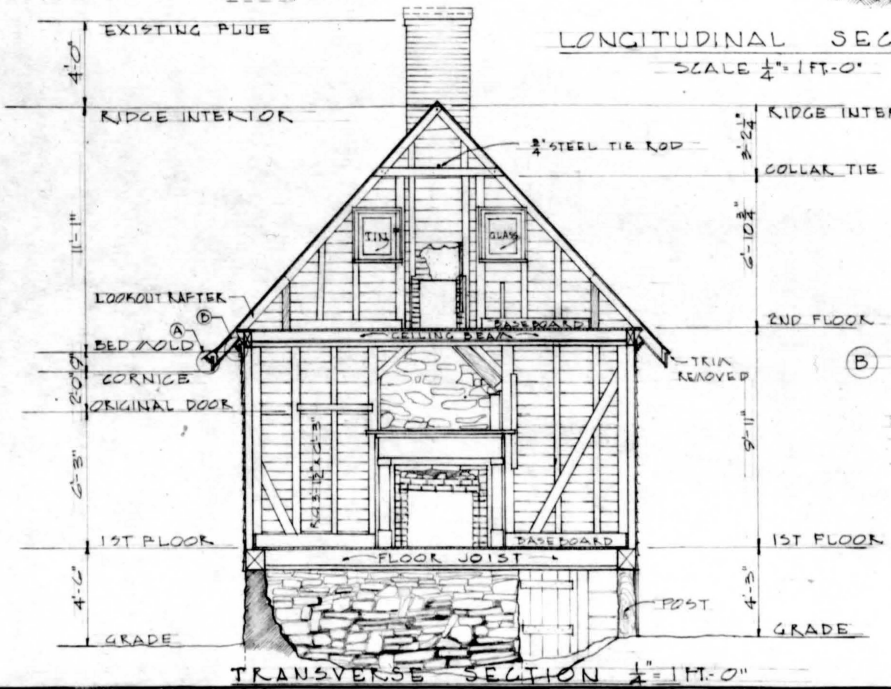
SHEET 6 OF 7 HABS AUGUST 1959

Longitudinal and transverse sections of Mariah Wright House showing existing conditions of interior frame.

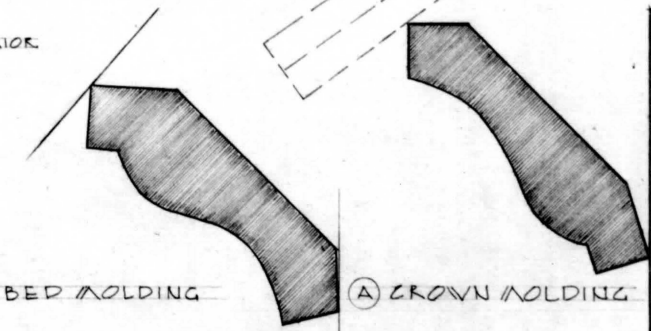


LONGITUDINAL SECTION

SCALE 1/4" = 1 FT.-0"



TRANSVERSE SECTION 1/4" = 1FT.-0"



(B) BED MOLDING (A) CROWN MOLDING

NOTE: BOTH CROWN & BED MOLDINGS RUN CONTINUOUS AROUND EAVES & GABLE ENDS OF ORIGINAL HOUSE - TRIM CA. 1890

FASCIA FS

SCALE 1/4" = 1FT.-0"

SCALE METERS

O.W. CARROLL. DEL. AUGUST 1939

UNDER DIRECTION OF UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, BRANCH OF PLANS AND DESIGN

APPOMATTOX COUNTY VIRGINIA

NAME OF STRUCTURE

MARIAH WRIGHT HOUSE

APPOMATTOX COURT HOUSE NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

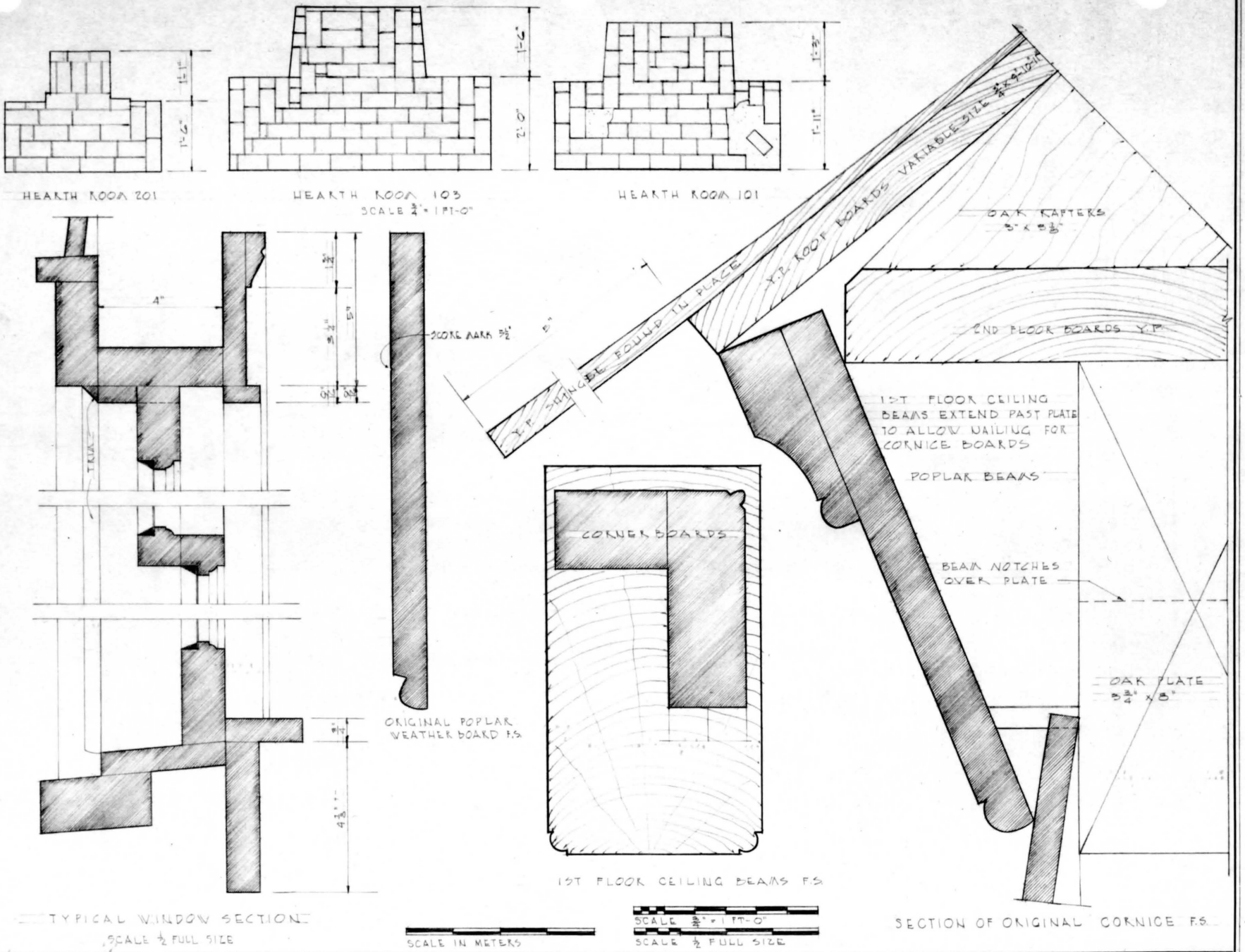
SURVEY NO.

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

SHEET 6 OF 7 SHEETS

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS INDEX NUMBER

Original corner boards, ceiling beams, poplar weatherboarding, cornice and brick hearths as found in place; included are window details of ca. 1890 window frame and sash.



O.W. CARROLL, DEL. AUGUST 1959
UNDER DIRECTION OF UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, BRANCH OF PLANS AND DESIGN

APPOMATTOX COUNTY
VIRGINIA

NAME OF STRUCTURE
MARIAH WRIGHT HOUSE

APPOMATTOX COURT HOUSE
NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

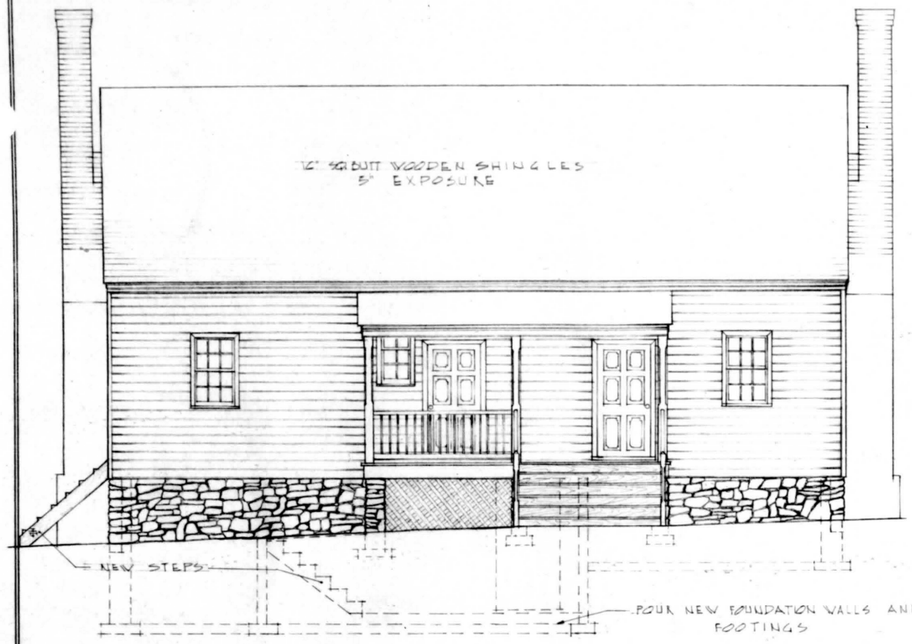
SURVEY NO.

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
SHEET 7 OF 7 SHEETS

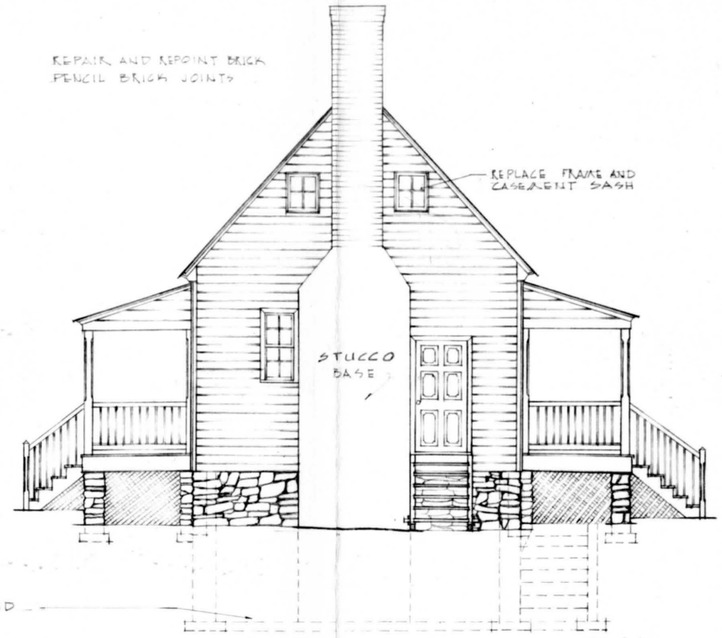
LIBRARY OF CONGRESS INDEX NUMBER

A-2. RECOMMENDED RESTORATION
OCTOBER 1959

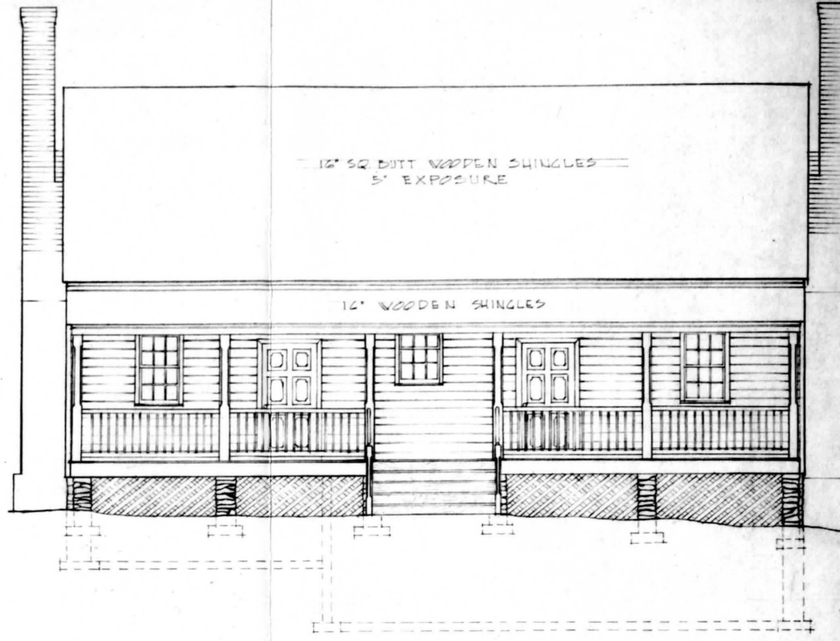
Preliminary restoration drawings NHP-ACH 3072 are based primarily on existing structural evidence and comparative studies of existing structures in the Appomattox area dating back to 1865.



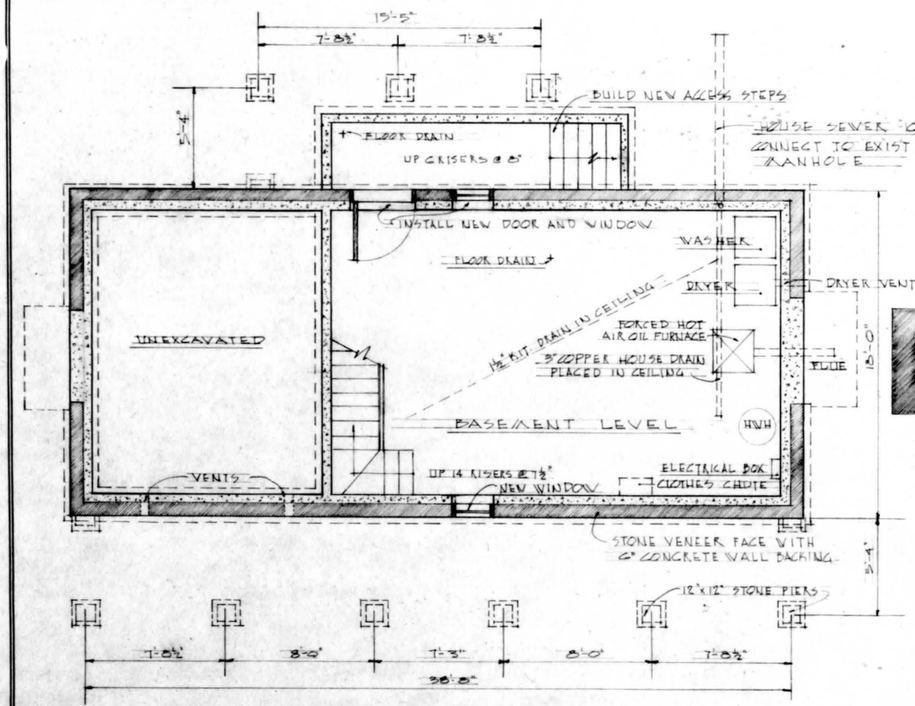
EAST ELEVATION



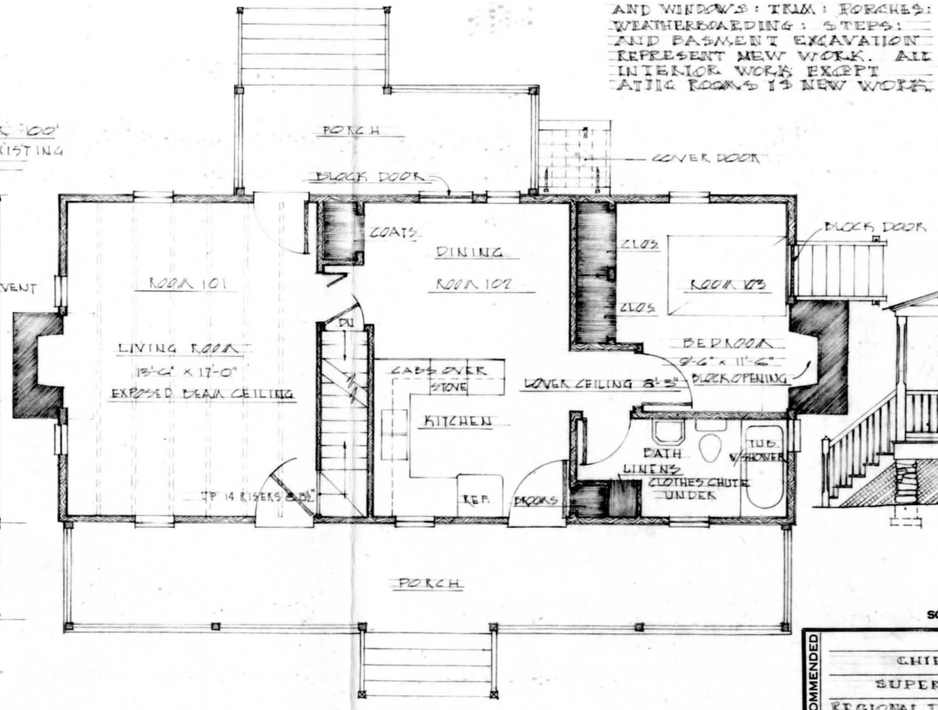
SOUTH ELEVATION



WEST ELEVATION

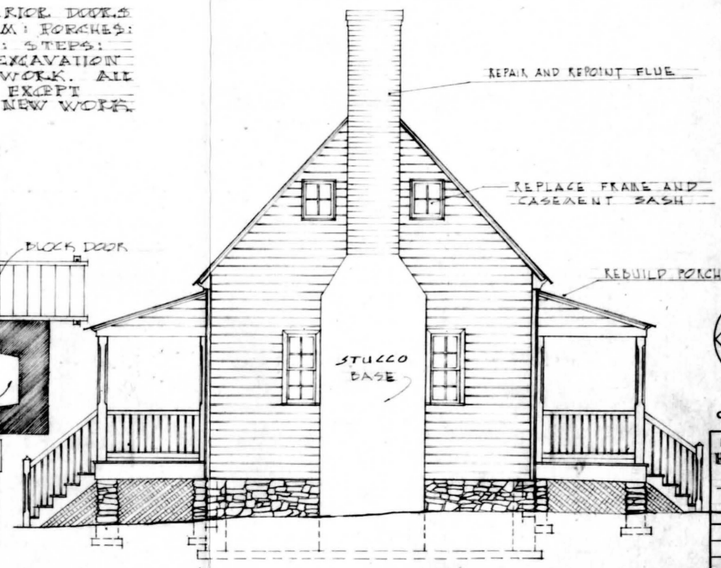


BASEMENT PLAN



FIRST FLOOR PLAN

NOTES: ALL EXTERIOR DOORS AND WINDOWS; TRIM; PORCHES; WEATHERBOARDING; STEPS; AND BASEMENT EXCAVATION REPRESENT NEW WORK. ALL INTERIOR WORK EXCEPT ATTIC ROOMS IS NEW WORK.



NORTH ELEVATION

ORIENTATION

SCALE ¼" = 1 FT. 0"

MARK	DESCRIPTION OF REVISION	DATE	INITIAL

RECOMMENDED

CHIEF - EODC — DATE

SUPERINTENDENT

REGIONAL DIRECTOR - REG 1

CHIEF - DIVISION D.E.C

APPROVED

DIRECTOR -

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
DIVISION OF DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION
PREPARED BY
EASTERN OFFICE

TITLE OF DRAWING
REHABILITATION MARIAH WRIGHT HOUSE
VILLAGE AREA
LOCATION WITHIN PARK
APPOMATTOX COURT HOUSE NATIONAL PARK
NAME OF PARK

PREPARED: NPS STAFF
DESIGNED: RVC
DRAWN
CHECKED

REGION ONE
FCP NO.
SHEET 1 OF 1
DRAWING NO. ACH-NHP 3002
DATE 10-21-77

BASIC DATA EXISTING STRUCTURE

PRELIMINARY PLANS

V. APPENDIX

B. Illustrations - - - - - 36 photographs

ILLUSTRATION NO. 1

One of the earliest views of the Mariah Wright House after its acquisition by the Park Service in 1937. This shows the general features of the Wright House after remodeling attributed to John Rosser in 1890's. View is from the west.

Ph. Ralph Happel, April 1941
Neg. No. 611, Appomattox Court House NHP



ILLUSTRATION NO. 2

View taken from northeast corner of 1890's addition to the original Wright House, showing conditions before stabilization program started in 1947. Note rear porch and chimney.

Ph. credit National Park Service
Neg. No. ACH NHP



ILLUSTRATION NO. 3

Interior view of entrance hall looking west, room 102, showing original stairway to the right and the 1890's stairway to the left, now removed.

Ph. Green, HABS, ca. 1940
Neg. No. ACH NHP



ILLUSTRATION NO. 4

Room 101, view to the northwest before removal of plaster from walls and ceiling in 1947.

Ph. Green, HABS, ca. 1940
Neg. No. ACH NHP



ILLUSTRATION NO. 5

View of attic rooms taken from room 101 looking south into rooms 202 and 203. Photo taken before the removal of lath and plaster in 1947. Compare with photo Illustration No. 27.

Ph. Green, HABS, ca. 1940
Neg. No. ACH NHP

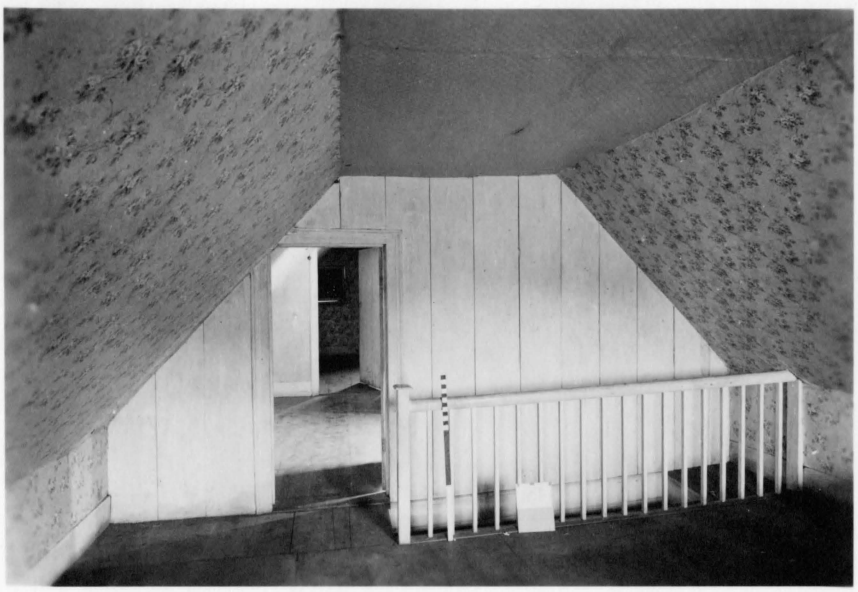


ILLUSTRATION NO. 6

Present day view of Mariah Wright House from the west. Front porch, gable, doors and windows, cornice and rake trim and weatherboarding all date after 1865. Note condition of foundation to the right.

Ph. Jack E. Boucher, December 1958
Neg. No. EODC 546



ILLUSTRATION NO. 7

View from the north. Alterations to the original house can be compared with the proposed restoration drawing which show original conditions prior to 1865.

Ph. Jack E. Boucher, May 1959
Neg. No. ACH NHP



ILLUSTRATION NO. 8

View taken from the east. Compare with photo illustration No. 2 taken before stabilization in 1947.

Ph. Jack E. Boucher, December 1958
Neg. No. EODC 543



ILLUSTRATION NO. 9

View taken from the South. Small attic windows appear to be pre-civil war period with original weatherboarding remaining with gable end cut around the window frames. Pointing of chimney and stone masonry work done in 1947.

Ph. Jack E. Boucher, December 1958
Neg. No. EODC 547



ILLUSTRATION NO. 10

Interior of room 103 looking south showing present condition of room. Lath and plaster had been removed exposing all the original window and door openings. One original window opening (sill notch) can be seen to the right of the fireplace up 4'-0" from the floor. An original door opening with header still intact can be seen to the left of the fireplace and presumably led to the outside kitchen some 30 feet away. Fireplace has been altered in size. Notice the short diagonal brace to the left allowing for framing of door jamb.

Ph. Jack E. Boucher, December 1958
Neg. No. EODC 569



ILLUSTRATION NO. 11

Close-up view of window opening in south wall, room 103, showing studding built out and pegged to accommodate width of window frame.

Ph. Jack E. Boucher, December 1958
Neg. No. EODC 579



ILLUSTRATION NO. 12

Interior view of east wall, room 103. Original studding has been cut above and below window replacement. Note original notch for a sill cut in the studding to right of window.

Ph. Jack E. Boucher, December 1958
Neg. No. HODC 536



ILLUSTRATION NO. 13

North view of room 103 looking into room 102 and room 101.

Notice position of removed stairway overhead.

Ph. Jack E. Boucher, December 1958
Neg. No. HCDC 563



ILLUSTRATION NO. 14

West view of room 103, showing original sill cuts in studding to left of window; the original oak stud has been cut to allow room for the newer window of 1890's.

Note unequal spacing of studs against equal spacing of ceiling joist.

Ph. Jack E. Boucher, December 1958
Neg. No. HODC 549



ILLUSTRATION NO. 15

North view of room 102 showing possible original stairway location. Re-used studs can be seen in wall to left. Interior doors appear to be in original location.

Ph. Jack E. Boucher, December 1958
Neg. No. HODC 539

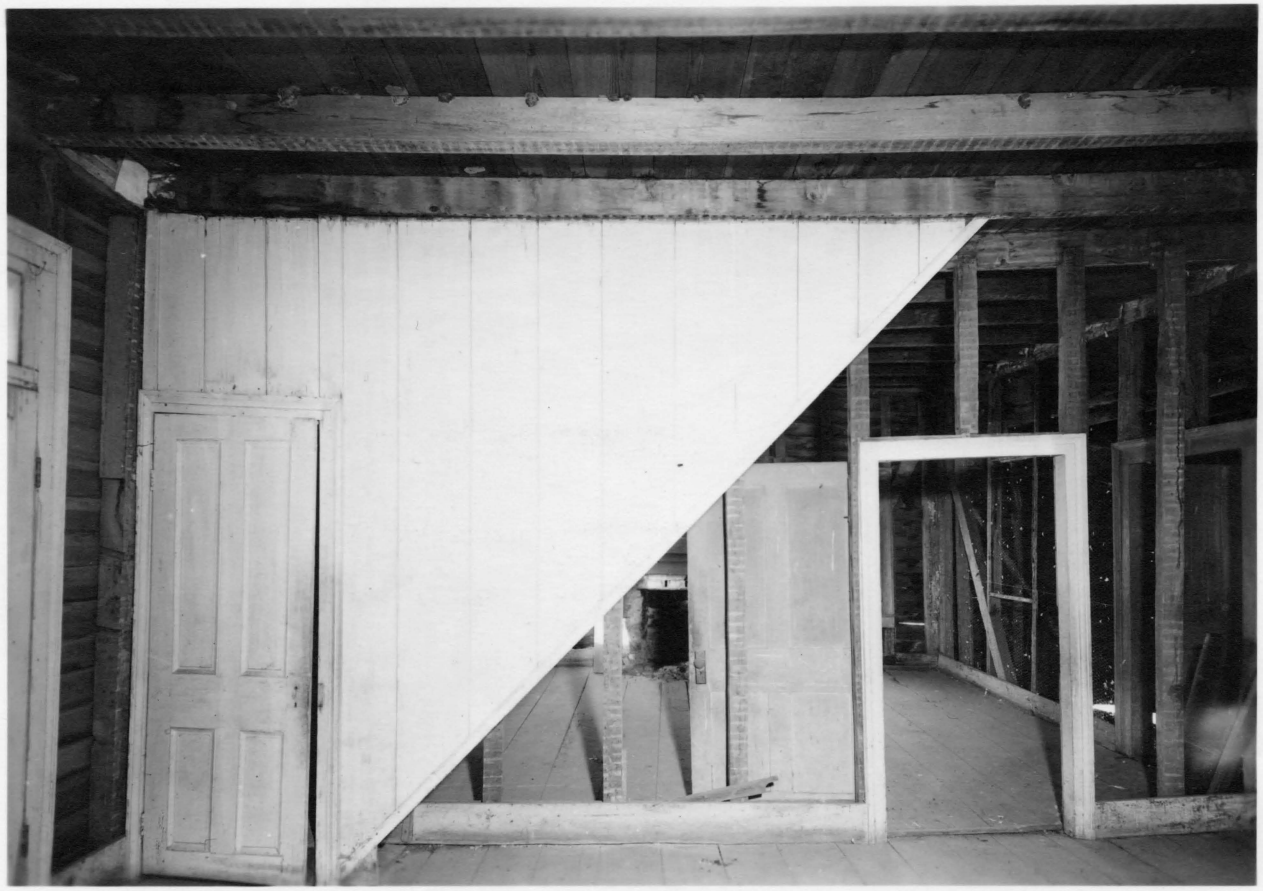


ILLUSTRATION NO. 16

West view, interior of room 102. Present door occupies position of an original window while original door location can be seen to the left with header up 6'-3", intact.

Ph. Jack E. Boucher, December 1958
Neg. No. EODC 560



ILLUSTRATION NO. 17

East view of center room 102. Note window sill notch to the right of the door covered over with a piece of original exterior door trim. Present door occupies position of an original but lower doorway opening.

Ph. Jack E. Boucher, December 1958
Neg. No. HODC 538



ILLUSTRATION NO. 18

Close-up view of exterior door and window trim found re-used in walls of room 102.

Ph. Jack E. Boucher, December 1958
Neg. No. EODC 552

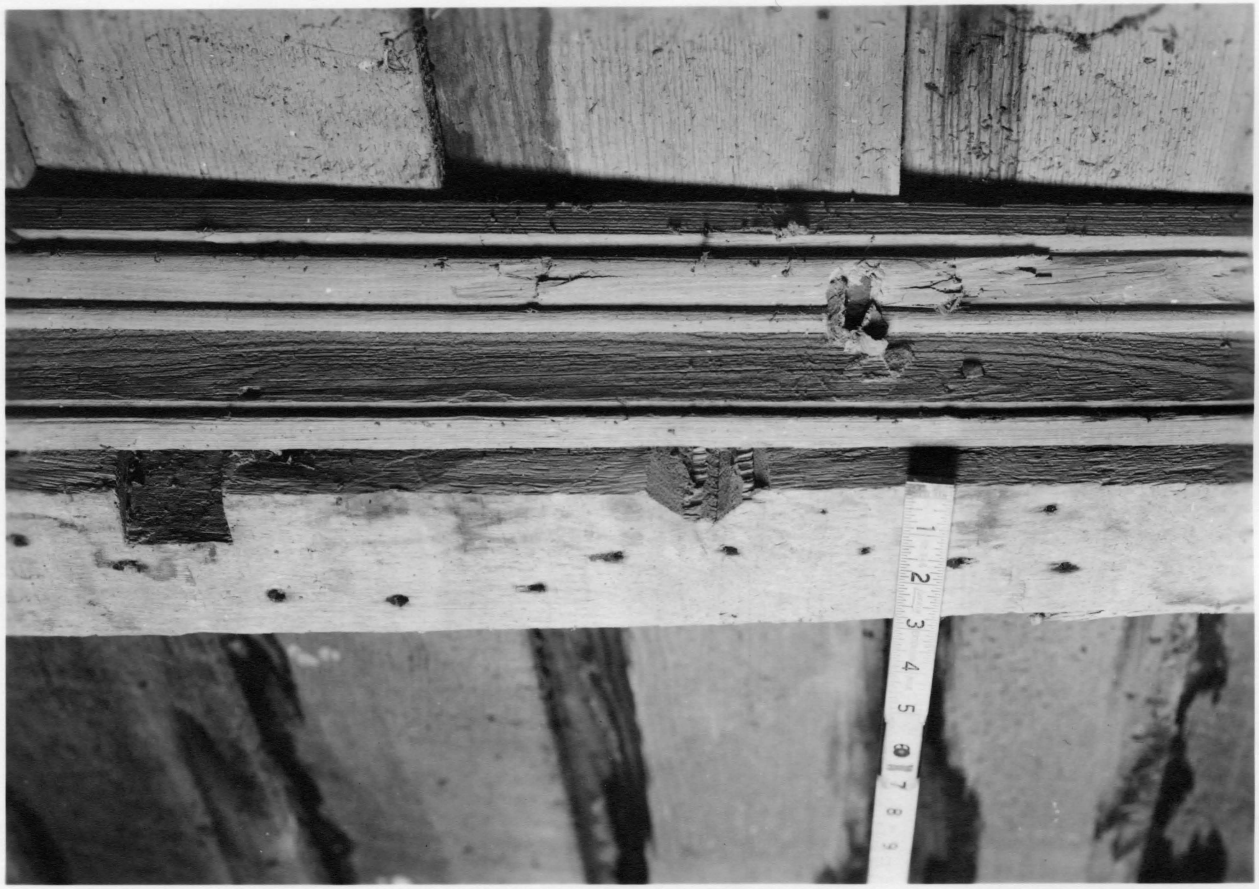


ILLUSTRATION NO. 19

North view of room 101. An original window frame can be seen in place to the left of the fireplace; a similar window opening was found to the right of the fireplace. Notice how the diagonal corner brace was cut to allow the newer window frame to be installed. This view shows the unusual wide floor boards used on both floors throughout the rooms of the original structure. Notice beading on poplar ceiling beams.

Ph. Jack E. Boucher, December 1958
Neg. No. HODC 540



ILLUSTRATION NO. 20

Northwest corner of room 101 showing framing construction of corner. All the original framing members were oak except the ceiling beams, first floor, which are poplar.

Ph. Jack E. Boucher, December 1958
Neg. No. EODC 553

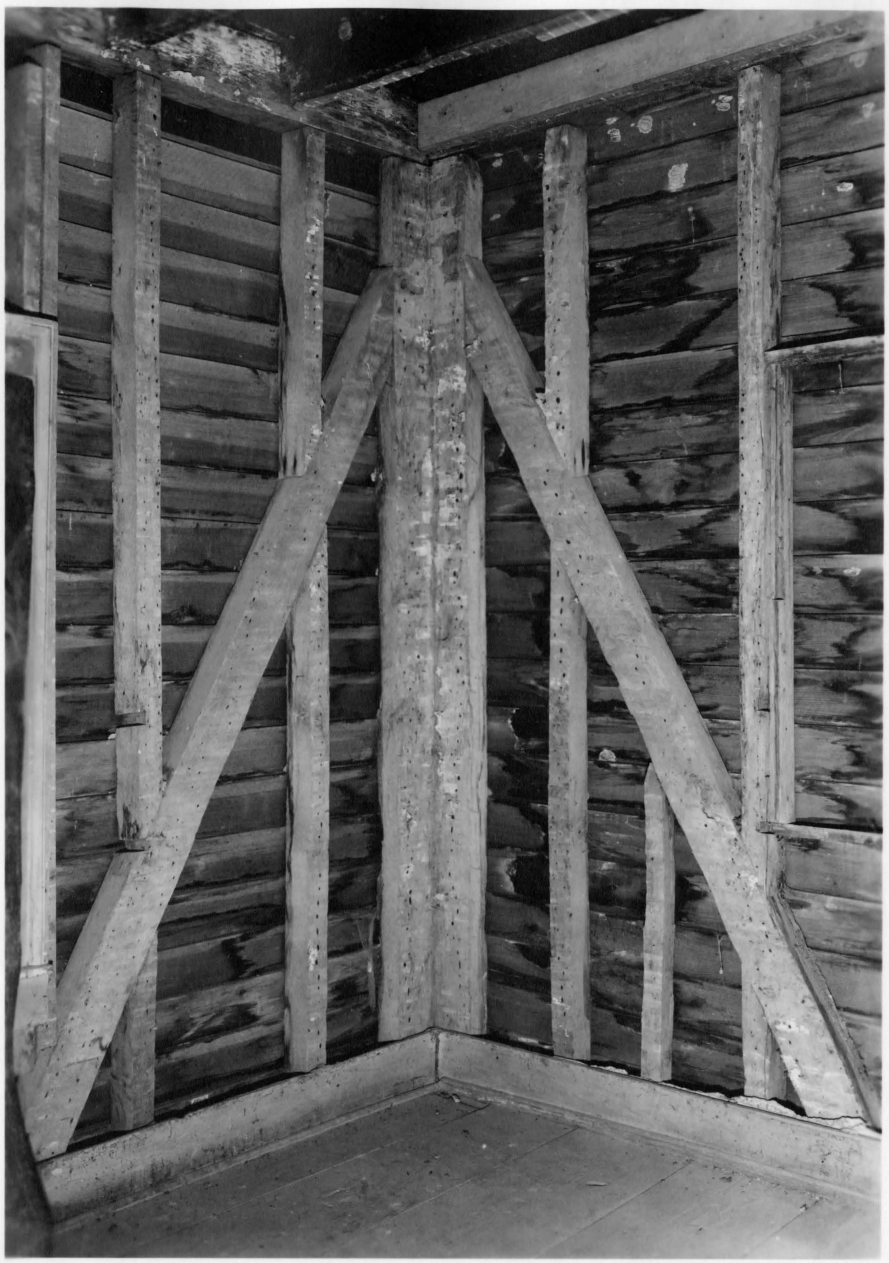


ILLUSTRATION NO. 21

Close-up view of an original window frame still intact in north wall, room 101. Notice two sets of sill notches 12" apart.

Ph. Jack E. Boucher, December 1958
Neg. No. EODC 577



ILLUSTRATION NO. 22

View of west wall room 101. An original door frame is still intact in the wall to the left. An original window opening is indicated by the sill notches to the right of the present window.

Ph. Jack E. Boucher, December 1958
Neg. No. HODC 541



ILLUSTRATION NO. 23

East wall of room 101 showing an original window frame still intact from the original design of the house. The present door is in an original position. Room beyond is the rear addition built in the 1890's.

Ph. Jack E. Boucher, December 1958
Neg. No. EODC 537



ILLUSTRATION NO. 24

South wall of room 101, showing the original stairway leading up to the attic rooms. Partitions and interior doors are in original positions. Note stairway can be entered from either room 101 or room 102.

Ph. Jack E. Boucher, December 1958
Neg. No. EODC 564



ILLUSTRATION NO. 25

View of the steep narrow (20½") stairway. The top riser measures 14½" indicating an early alteration to the stairs.

Ph. Jack E. Boucher, December 1958
Neg. No. EODC 557

ILLUSTRATION NO. 26

View of attic room 201. Notice 3'-0" spacing of oak rafters with wind braces. Windows are post-civil war. The steel tie-rod was placed during the 1947 stabilization period.

Ph. Jack E. Boucher, December 1958
Neg. No. EODC 558



ILLUSTRATION NO. 27

South wall of room 201. Note change in flooring width at stairway indicating an early alteration to stairs.

Ph. Jack E. Boucher, December 1958
Neg. No. HODC 566



ILLUSTRATION NO. 28

View of north wall in room 202. Roof boards are original.

Note rafters cut out for dormer framing.

Ph. Jack E. Boucher, December 1958
Neg. No. EODC 574



ILLUSTRATION NO. 29

West wall of attic room 202, showing 1890 dormer construction using yellow pine.

Ph. Jack E. Boucher, December 1958
Neg. No. EODC 567



ILLUSTRATION NO. 30

Southeast view of room 202 and 203.

Ph. Jack E. Boucher, December 1958
Neg. No. EODC 555

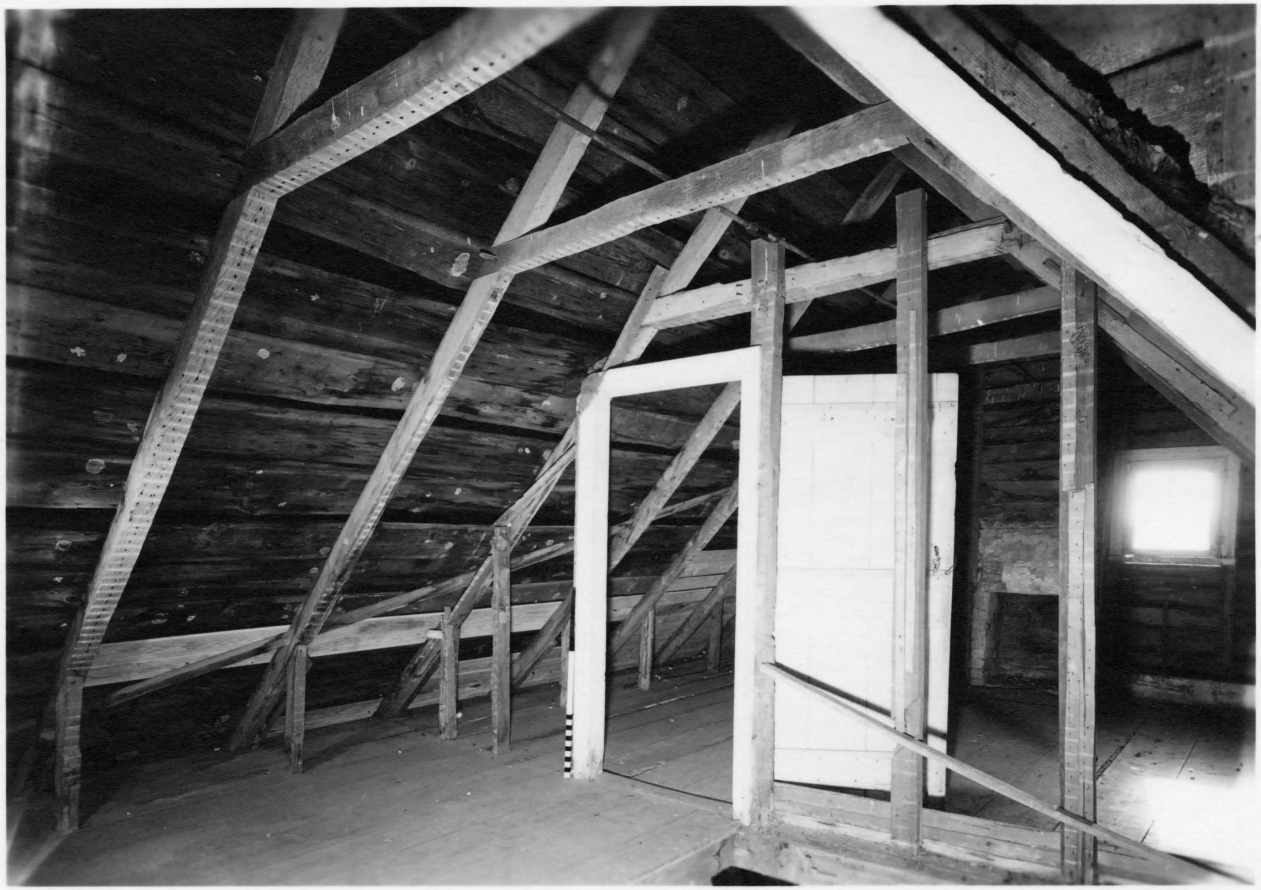


ILLUSTRATION NO. 31

South view of room 203. Windows appear to be pre-civil war with upper 12 boards in gable original poplar weatherboarding. Note framing of rafters at collar tie and ridge positions.

Ph. Jack E. Boucher, December 1958
Neg. No. EODC 575



ILLUSTRATION NO. 32

North view showing comparative type of construction between the addition and the original house. Framing member in the addition are all sized and circular sawn of yellow pine whereas the original framing is either hewn or whip-sawn oak.

Ph. Jack E. Boucher, December 1958
Neg. No. HODC 561



ILLUSTRATION NO. 33

East view into rear of addition. Originally constructed with two rooms with a stairway--all that remains of the partition that separated the two rooms is the door in the foreground.

Ph. Jack E. Boucher, December 1958
Neg. No. HODC 550



ILLUSTRATION NO. 34

Attic view of addition looking east.

Ph. Jack E. Boucher, December 1958
Neg. No. EODC 551



ILLUSTRATION NO. 35

View of the original cornice still intact on the northeast corner of the eave line.

Ph. Jack E. Boucher, December 1958
Neg. No. EODC 568



ILLUSTRATION NO. 36

View of the Sweeney House located approximately one-half mile east of the village. Although this house is privately owned it represents a house constructed during the same period and with similar details to that of the Mariah Wright House. Notice cornice, rake, cornerboards, beaded weatherboarding, door and window trim, design of the front door and general construction of the house.

Ph. Unknown, received in ACH-NHP file, February 1943
Neg. No. ACH NHP

