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HISTORIC STRUCTURES REPORT
ARCHITECTURAL DATA

RECONSTRUCTION OF THE VILLAGE FENCES

APPOMATTOX COURT HOUSE NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

by

Orville W. Carroll
Architect

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APPOMATTOX COURT HOUSE NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

June, 1959

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Orville W. Carroll
Architect

RECOMMENDED

_____ _____

Supervising Architect, Historic Structures — Date

_____ _____

Chief, EODC — Date

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

Eastern Office, Division of Design and Construction

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FOREWORD

This report covers the fences in the village area of old Appomattox Court House for which we have some ready and reliable information. Most of the data is from photographs and cards in the files at Appomattox Court House National Historical Park. A great deal more study is necessary before all fences in the area can be reconstructed and a few may have to be conjectural. Very few photographs of the area have been located and those show only the Tavern, the Court House and the McLean House. No contemporary photographs of the other buildings in the period of historical interest have been located.

From the information now available, we can make a fairly accurate reconstruction of the fences around the McLean House and in front of the Tavern. Numerous out buildings once existed in the fence line. In most cases these places can be taken care of by a temporary section of fence. In other places, such as the Ice House site in the McLean yard, a void in the fence will be more practical.

With the help and direction of the Regional Chief of Interpretation, J. C. Harrington, we have located some of the post holes for the fence in front of the Tavern. This gives an accurate location of the fence line and the location of the gates. A similar study should be made at the McLean House.

Henry A. Judd
Architect

WESTERN AND EASTERN APPROACHES TO THE VILLAGE OF APPOMATTOX

FENCES

The fences along the old Richmond-Lynchburg Stage Road leading into the old Appomattox Court House Village, during the Civil War period, were of two kinds. The earliest view of these fence types are shown in Webber's Lithograph, April 9, 1865, which shows a fence leading into the village from the west, either of the post and rail or post and plank (also called post and board.) A later and much more conclusive photograph, taken ca. 1892, clearly shows a post and plank fence leading into the village from the west. Also shown are the west end of the McLean House and the Tavern buildings in the background.[1] The approximate sizes of the planks and their spacing can be estimated fairly accurately although some differences in spacing seems to exist from one side of the road to the other.

A Plecker photograph, ca. 1892, shows the western approach to the village from the approximate location of the Confederate cemetery. The same post and plank fence can be identified leading out from the village and continuing out as far as the limits of the town plat or to the intersection of the Tibbs Lane and Back Land Roads. Tibbs Lane and Back Lane also show clearly that they were fenced with the post and plank type of fence. From this intersection and continuing toward Lynchburg (and also presumably toward Richmond), the rail fences of the snake or worm (zig-zag) type were used.

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1 Markham, Edwin (ed.), Brothers for Ever, the Age of Union, 1854-1868, Wm. H. Wise & Co., New York and Chicago, 1912, vol XII of series, The Real American in Romance, p 452.

This fence was quite common in the area and a few old worm fences still exist. The Plecker photograph also shows worm fences used to separate fields beyond the confines of the village plat.

A second Plecker photograph, ca. 1892, shows a worm fence on the road leading east toward Richmond as far as the Charles Sweeney place, starting, at least, from the Appomattox River. Another photograph, taken at the same time, shows a close-up detail of the worm fence near the spot of Lee's Farewell Address.[2] These worm fences probably lined both sides of the road wherever land was farmed.[3]

Chestnut was used primarily in all the early split-rail worm type fences with the posts being either chestnut or locust. In the post and plank fences, heart yellow pine was used for the plank or horizontal members and locust for posts. In both cases the fence was left to weather in its natural state without the benefit of paint or preservation. For additional information concerning fence details and construction, see Drawing No. ACH-NHP 3070, April 1959, and specifications.

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2 Original Plecker photographs on file at Appomattox Court House National Historical Park, Va.

3 For additional information see "Research on Historic Fences" by Ralph Happel, Master Plan for 1942, NHM-APP 2077-B.

VILLAGE PROPER

FENCES Court House

According to the description left by Mr. J. R. Horsley, a former county clerk, and Mr. Moses, a former county commissioner, the fence enclosing the court house was octagonal with 3 stiles north, east and west. For additional information and first-hand descriptions (not entirely accurate) see "Research on Historic Fences" by Ralph Happel.[4]

The Court House fence is well documented in an old Brady print of 1865.[5] The print indicates a morticed post and rail fence, with the rails probably about 2" x 6" spaced at intervals from the top rail of 9", 6", 5" and 4". The top cap is described as 8" but probably is closer to 7" and beveled. The rails were sawn, dressed, and painted, possibly Spanish brown.[6] The posts were 6" square hand-hewn locust and according to a bid released in 1894, "...for the erecting of a fence around the Court House and Clerk's office, upon the plan and order of a fence around the old Court House, bids to be received, for so much a panel of 8 feet...".[7] The fence was ordered painted but the color was not specified. The Webber lithograph of 1865 also shows the fencing around the Court House to be post and rail, actagonal and with the stiles (steps) in place. See fence details Drawing No. ACH-NHP 3070, April 1959.

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4 Ibid.

5 Library of Congress, Brady Collection, Print 222

6 Happel, op. cit.

7 Supervisors Record, Appomattox County, No. 1, p. 51, at Nov. 1894 meeting.

VILLAGE PROPER

FENCES Tavern

The Patteson-Hix or Clover Hill Tavern was fenced across the front or south side with a picket fence having a cap at the top and a panel at the bottom. This fence formed the enclosure for the north side of the Court House "green". Brady's wartime photograph[8] shows an excellent view of this fence along the front of the tavern and dining room wing as well as the gates, their approximate location and a lamppost. The exact dimensions of the fence can only be determined by assuming a basic picket size and judging relationships of fence heights to persons in the picture.

Mrs. Mary Ellen Hickok in her graphic descriptions shows relative positions and types of fences surrounding the Tavern and its dependencies.[9] She shows a front fence (strictly picket) with two gates (one a double gate) facing the "green", and a rail and board immediately to the rear of the Tavern kitchen and servant's quarters. About 100 feet north of this fence is shown a worm fence enclosing a garden for the Tavern. Mrs. Hickok shows the front picket fence abutting a store on the east and a small one room office on the west, both of these buildings are now missing. On the east property line of the Tavern is shown a rail and board fence running from the now extinct store facing the "green" to the well and cemetery about 250 feet north. A double gate is indicated centered between the Tavern and the Tavern kitchen.

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8 Library of Congress; Brady Collection, Print 220

9 Mrs. Mary Ellen Hickok material received June 30, 1942, is on file at the Appomattox Court House National Historical Park, Va.

Here again the horizontal members and pickets in these fences would be heart yellow pine--sawn, dressed, and painted white. The rail and board fence might have been whitewashed but the worm fence to the far rear would have been unpainted.

Archeological investigations carried on May 5-8, 1959, resulted in the location of what is believed to be the original fenceline for the Tavern on the Court House square. Six post hole marks were uncovered on the south property line and three to the west. Spacing intervals were approximately nine feet (9') on centers. To determine the remaining dimensions of the fence, a basic dimension of 3" for the picket was selected. This produced a fence height of 3'7" with a picket spacing of 1-1/2".

For the remaining fence dimensions refer to Drawing No. ACH-NHP 3070, April 1959.

VILLAGE PROPER

FENCES McLean House

The fencing surrounding the McLean House cannot be determined exactly during the Civil War period because of the lack of complete photographic coverage. The Webber lithograph of 1865 shows the McLean House from both the south-west and north-west views. Both views show a picket fence on the north and on the west sides, with the picket fences terminating at buildings. The fence in front (north) terminated at the Raine House and the west fence terminated at a small outbuilding belonging to McLean. At the extreme south-west corner, south of this small outbuilding (now missing) a post and plank fence is shown. Webber's view from the north-west shows the fences in this same relationship. The exact design of the fence cannot be determined from this lithograph except that it was a picket fence and had a fairly large gate at the front.

In Plecker's photograph of ca. 1892, the fence to the west of the McLean House is well documented. Two pickets labeled McLean House fence (now at the Appomattox Court House NHP) match the general design of the Plecker photograph. Whether this was the original fence design can be questioned by Brady's 1865 photograph print No. 223. A distinctly different type of picket fence is shown connecting the house and running toward the fence on the west property line. Not only does every other picket alternate in height, but the top is carefully detailed in a diamond shape. Next to the house can be seen a style (steps) serving in lieu

of a gate. The fact that this cross-sectional fence has been altered is noticeable in U. S. Signal Corps photograph No. BA74, a copy of a Plecker photograph, ca. 1892.

The newer fence consisted of a less refined picket, wider, of equal height and with a simple 45 degree cut at the top replacing the more refined picket of the 1865 period. The style has been removed and replaced with simply an opening in the fence. Two additional photographs give a glimpse of this earlier fence in question; Brady print No. 221 and one other unidentified print on file at the Park, 1865, both taken from within the McLean yard from the north east. The same detailed picket described earlier can be seen to the west (right) of the house. Whether this elaborate type fence was used on the west and north property lines of the McLean House is to date unanswerable, however, very positive proff of the 1892 type and design of fence exists. Note the gate in the picket fence adjacent to the vineyard in the 1892 Plecker photograph from the west. Apparently the owners of the McLean House had access to a garden on the lot immediately to the west. Brady's photograph of 1865, taken from the road on the north-east side shows the fence adjoining and separating the McLean property from the adjacent lot to the east.[10] This fence is shown to be a picket fence with a cap rail. One cap rail remains intact several bays down the fence southward indicating that the separating fence was also capped. In an engraving taken from Grant's Memoirs, this same fence is shown as a picket fence without a cap rail but with

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10 Brady, op. cit., print 224

square topped pickets.[11] The fence is terminated by abutting into the ice house. An access gate from the McLean House was provided nearby the ice house. Another section of picket fence joined the McLean House and the ice house and formed the remaining enclosure for the yard to the south-east.

For additional construction details see Drawing No. ACH-NHP 3070, April 1959.

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11 Grant, U. S., Grant's Memoirs, Vol. 2, 1886, P. 488

GENERAL

No other additional wartime photographs exist to document fences other than the Court House, McLean House, and the Tavern. George T. Peers, wartime clerk of the court, said in 1890 that, "There was not a single fence rail left except a few boards around the Court House green, so I was not put to the trouble of opening any gate. Every piece of loose wood that could be found had been used to make fires over in the damps."[12] This report was not entirely accurate as the wartime photographs indicate. Captain R. M. Sims, C. S. A. reports only one fence existing along a lane (Happel reports that this was the Prince Edward Court House Road.)

Frankenstine, a wartime artist, in his original paintings of 1865 of Appomattox, shows the village without fences except west of the McLean House and the picket fence surrounding it.[13] It seems likely however, that fences in good repair probably existed throughout the village just prior to the invasion of the conflicting armies of the north and south, and it was only a matter of a few hours destruction until most fences in the area were destroyed.

A Plecker photograph of the Peers House, ca. 1892, shows a picket fence with a diamond-shaped detail at the top of each picket and another photograph, ca. 1901 print of the Bocock-Isbell House again showing a varied type of picket fence. These fences are probably of the late 19th century.

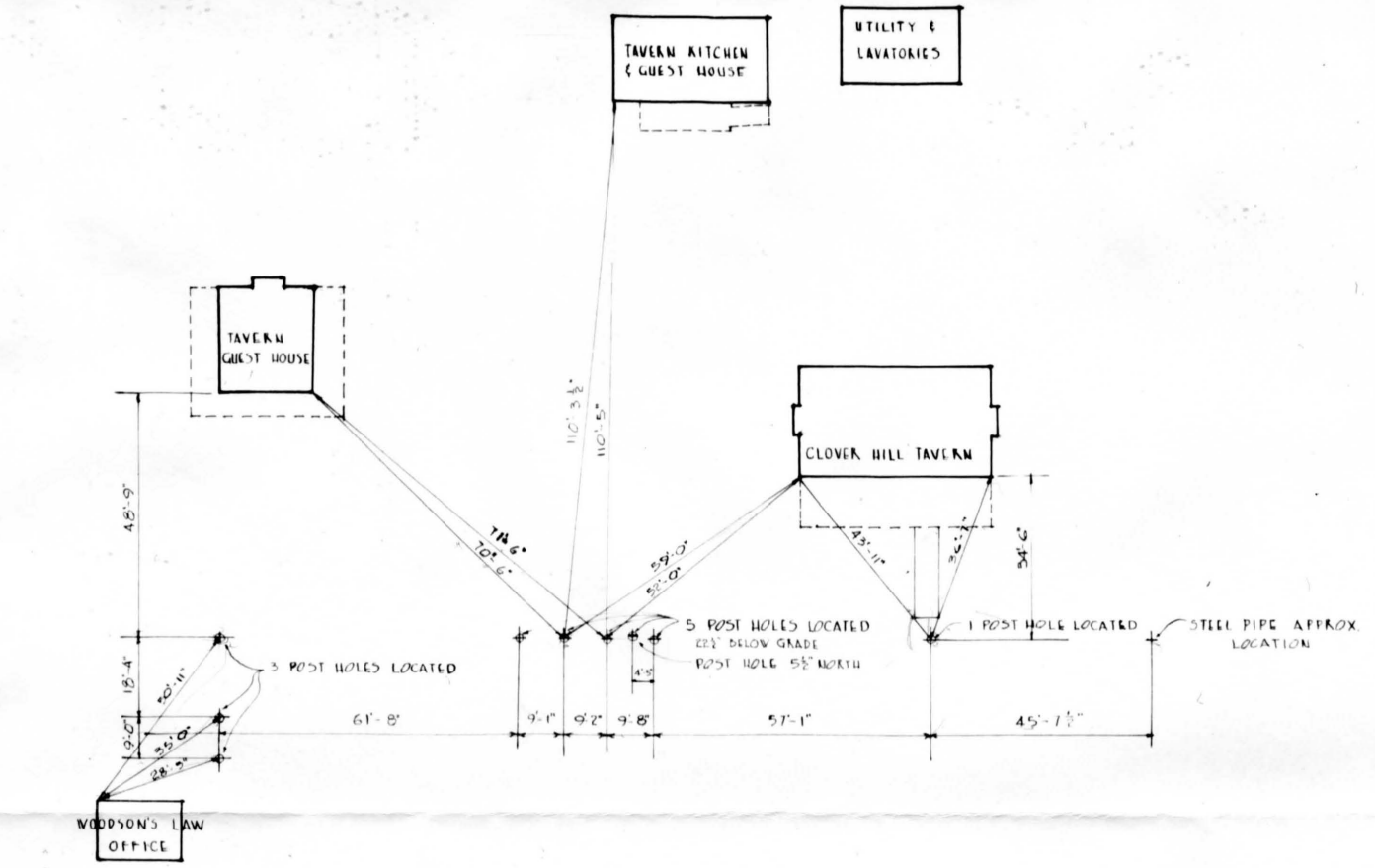
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12 Washington, D. C., EVENING STAR, Saturday, April 5, 1890; taken from the Ralph Happel Report, Research on Historic Fences, 1942.

13 Original watercolor paintings sketched by G. L. Frankenstine, 1865, on display at Appomattox Court House National Historical Park.

The only evidence of the fence enclosing Woodson's Law Office and Plunkett-Meeks Store and House is indicated in Webber's lithograph of 1865. Although very obscure, an indication of a picket fence is faintly inscribed in the background beyond the Court House. The erection of this fence would complete the enclosing of the Court House "green" in the north-west corner.

It is generally accepted that the practice was to enclose outlying fields with worm fences, to build post and rail fences around orchards and gardens, and picket fences around the house "yards". Thus the village was conceivably fenced with pickets on personal property lines in the front and side yards and post and rail and worm fences beyond the "front yards."



SCALE 1" = 20'-0"
LOCATIONS OF BUILDINGS ARE APPROXIMATE

ARCHEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS FOR FENCES

MAY 5-8, 1959

APPOMATTOX, VIRGINIA

APPOMATTOX COURT HOUSE NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

DRAWN TO SUPPLEMENT A WRITTEN REPORT ON FENCES FOR APPOMATTOX VILLAGE
SEE DRAWINGS NO ACH-NHP 3070 2 SHTS O.&.C. 5-22-59

ESTIMATE
APPOMATTOX COURT HOUSE
WOOD FENCING NHP-ACH 3070

1.	Clover Hill Tavern		194 ft.	@	$7.00/lin. ft.	1358
2.	McLean House	West & North	302 ft.	@	$5.00/lin. ft.	1510
3.	McLean House	East	246 ft.	@	$6.00/lin. ft.	1476
4.	McLean House	South	115 ft.	@	$4.00/lin. ft.	460
					TOTAL	$4804

ILLUSTRATION NO. 1

Webber lithograph of April 9, 1865, showing the village of Appomattox Court House from the South-west. Picket fences can be seen to enclose the McLean House (In circle, upper right) on the North and West with each fence terminating at a building. A small section of post and plank fence remains in the south west portion of the rear yard. Note the wide "front" gate to the McLean yard on the North side.



ILLUSTRATION NO. 2

Western approach to the village of Appomattox Court House showing post and plank fences on either side of the Richmond-Lynchburg Pike. Note variation in plank spacing, (to the right) from top to bottom of fence.

Photo: ca. 1892 (unknown)

was the



THE ROAD LEADING TO APPOMATTOX COURT-HOUSE. THE MCLEAN HOUSE ON THE RIGHT

ILLUSTRATION NO. 3

Western approach to the village of Appomattox Court House from the site of the confederate cemetery. Worm fences were apparently used beyond the village plot and post and plank fences along the Back Lane, Tibbs Lane and portion of the Richmone-Lynchburg Pike. In the original Plecker photograph, these fences show up very noticeably.

Photo: Plecker, ca. 1892



ILLUSTRATION NO. 4

A close-up view of a typical "worm" fence on the Eastern approach to the village of Appomattox Court House. Photograph taken about one-half mile East of the Village Area.

Photo: Plecker, ca. 1892



ILLUSTRATION NO. 5

View of the Court House from the West, showing surrounding octagonal post and rail fence. Note variation in the plank spacing from top to bottom of fence.

Photo: Brady Collection, 222, 1865

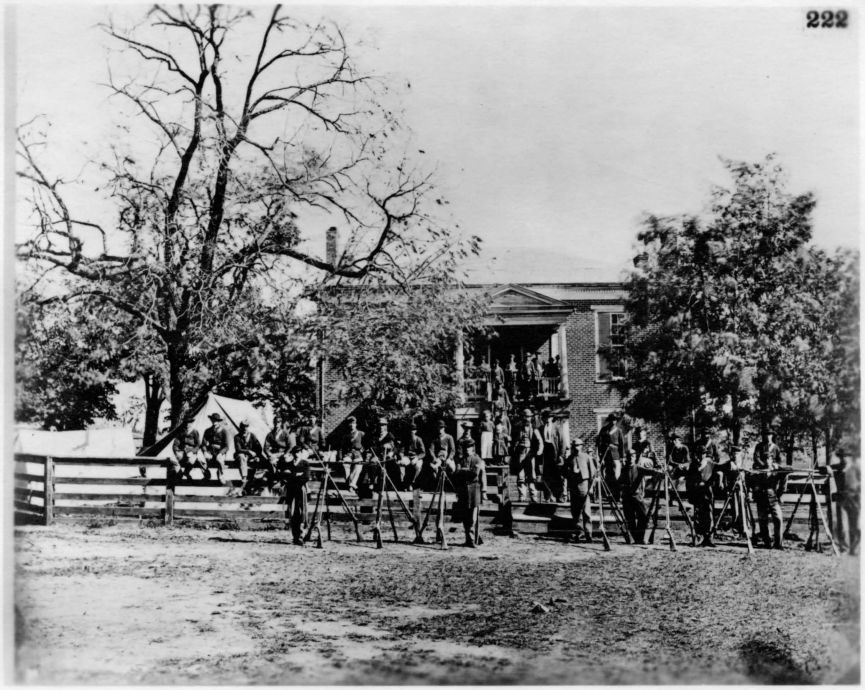

222

ILLUSTRATION NO. 6

View of Clover Hill Tavern from the "green", showing fence enclosing the Tavern yard on the South. Other features visible are the design of the gate and the lamp post.

Photo: Brady Collection 220, 1865


22

ILLUSTRATION NO. 7

This photo is an enlargement from Illustration No. 6 showing the gate and fence in more detail.

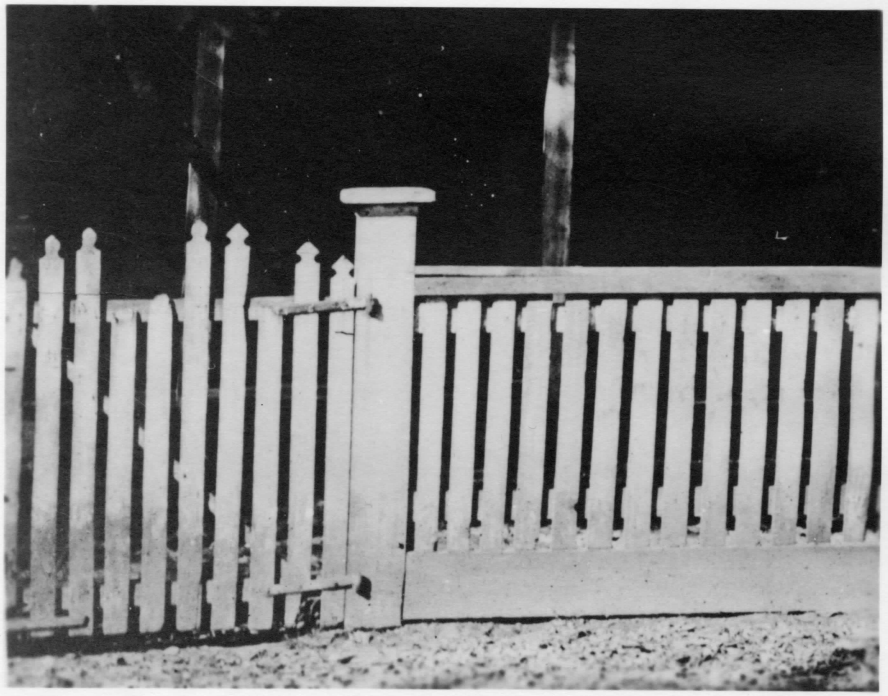


ILLUSTRATION NO. 8

View of the McLean House from the North-West. A short section of fence can be seen enclosing the yard to the right of the McLean House. An entirely different fence design seems to exist at the left of the McLean House.

Photo: Brady Collection 223, 1865.



ILLUSTRATION NO. 9

View of the McLean House from the North-East. Changes in fence design on either side of the McLean House can be noted in this 1865 photograph. Note the refined picket detail to the right.

Photo: 1865 (Photographer unknown)



ILLUSTRATION NO. 10

View of the McLean House from the West. Note picket design appears to be different from that in Illustration No. 7 and 8, however, no defined photograph other than this one exists showing the fence on the West property line. Note gate in fence.

Photo: Plecker, ca 1892



ILLUSTRATION NO. 11

View of the McLean House from the South-East showing fence detail similar to Illustration No. 9

Photo: Plecker, ca 1892.



ILLUSTRATION NO. 12

Later view of the McLean House showing many alterations to the grounds. The Well House has been removed and the fence to the right has been altered. Compare this photo with Illustration No. 7.

Photo: Plecker, ca. 1892



ILLUSTRATION NO. 13

View of the McLean House from the Northeast.

Photo: Brady Collection No. 221, 1865


22

ILLUSTRATION NO. 14

View of the McLean House from the North -East. Station point appears to be somewhere in the Richmond-Lynchburg Pike roadway. View shows fence on the East property line and the fence enclosing the adjoining lot to the east of the McLean House. Note cap on top of pickets and also short section with cap still intact on the fence dividing the McLean House from lot No. 22.

Photo: Brady Collection 224, 1865

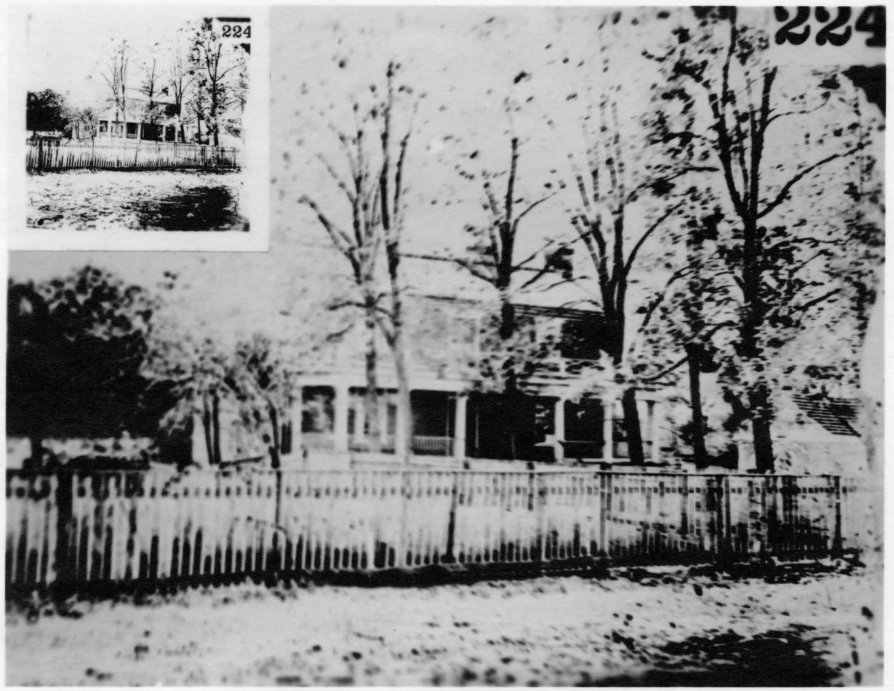

224
224

ILLUSTRATION NO. 15

Engraving showing the McLean House from the North-East. The fence in the foreground is also that one shown in Illustration No. 13. Cap is not shown but note square topped pickets which could possibly have been capped with a rail.



ILLUSTRATION NO. 16

View of the Peers House taken in the 1890's.

Photo: ca 1890 (Photographer unknown)



ILLUSTRATION No. 17

View of the Bocock-Isbell House taken around 1901.

Photo: 1901 (Unknown)



ILLUSTRATION NO. 18

View of the post hole excavations, located May 5, 1959, of the Clover Hill Tavern property line facing the Court House "green".

Photo: H. A. Judd, 1959

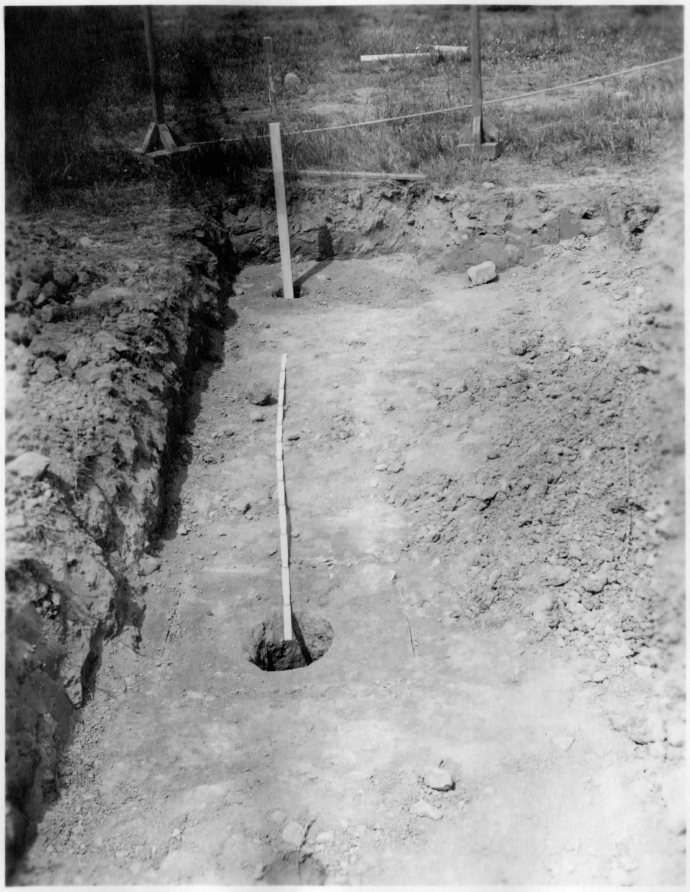
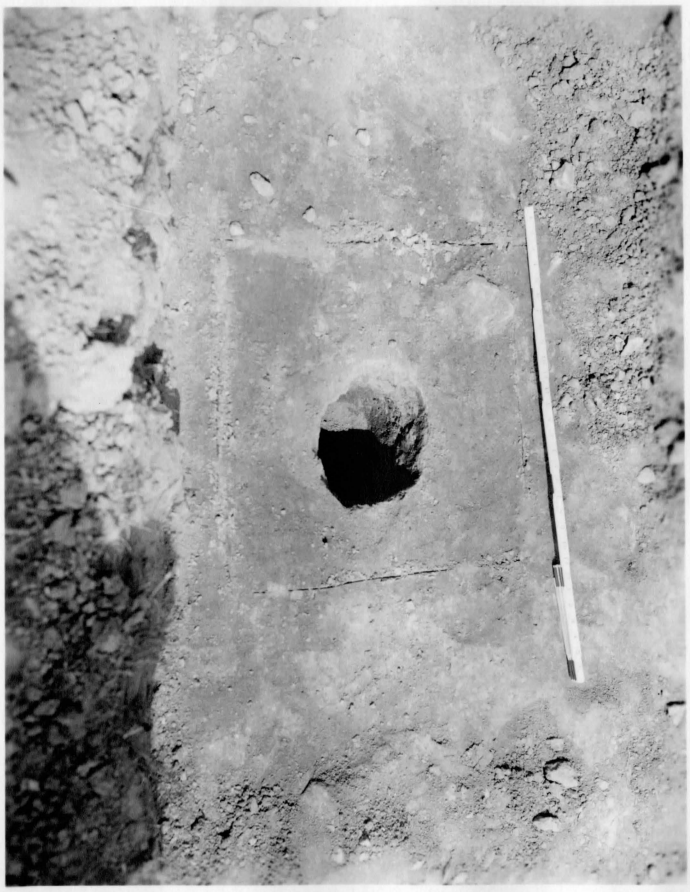


ILLUSTRATION NO. 19

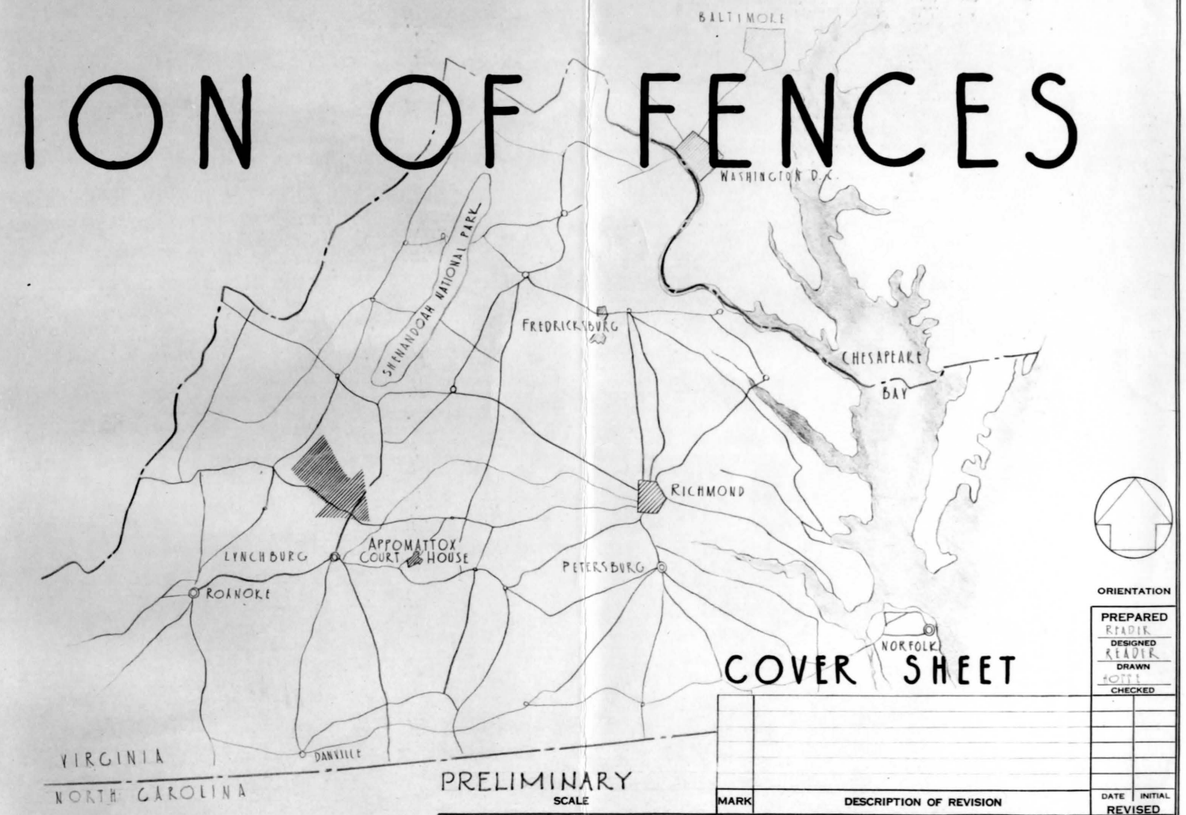
Close-up of the typical fence post hole located May 5, 1959.

Photo: H. A. Judd, 1959.



APPOMATTOX COURT HOUSE NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

RESTORATION OF FENCES



INDEX

SHEET NO.	TITLE
1.	COVER SHEET
2.	FENCE LOCATION
3.	FENCING TYPES

EASTERN OFFICE - DIVISION OF DESIGN & CONSTRUCTION

PHILADELPHIA , PENNSYLVANIA

BASIC DATA

ORIENTATION

PREPARED READER
DESIGNED READER
DRAWN HOTZ
CHECKED

COVER SHEET

PRELIMINARY
SCALE

MARK	DESCRIPTION OF REVISION	DATE	INITIAL

REVISED

RECOMMENDED
CHIEF EXOD C — DATE
SUPERINTENDENT
REGIONAL DIRECTOR, REG. I
CHIEF DIV. DESIGN & CONSTRUCTION

APPROVED
DIRECTOR

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

REGION ORT
PCP NO.
SHEET 1 OF 3
DRAWING NO. NHP-EACH 3070
DATE 5/27/59

COVER SHEET
TITLE OF DRAWING
VILLAGE AREA
LOCATION WITHIN PARK
APPOMATTOX COURT HOUSE NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK
NAME OF PARK

TABLE

TAVERN GUEST HOUSE

TAVERN KITCHEN

REST RMS

DINING ROOM

TAVERN

BAR

CONC. MON.

PIPE

LIGHT POST

POST HOLES LOCATED

COURT HOUSE SQUARE BOUNDARY
ARMY QUARTERMASTER SURVEY 1931

WOODSHED LEAN OFF.

ROOM 10 F

PLUNKETT MEEKS STORE

COURT HOUSE SQUARE BOUNDARY

APPROX. COURT HOUSE SITE
NOT CHECKED BY EXCAVATIONS

COURT HOUSE FENCING NOT INCLUDED FOR F. Y. 1959

EXISTING ROAD MUST BE REGRADED

JAIL

APPROX. BUILDING LOCATION NOT CHECKED BY EXCAVATION

WELL

McLEAN HOUSE

ICE HOUSE SITE

APPROXIMATE BUILDING LOCATIONS NOT CHECKED BY EXCAVATIONS

A — TAVERN

B — COURT HOUSE

C — McLEAN HOUSE

D — PROPERTY EAST OF McLEAN HOUSE

E — WEST ENTRANCE TO VILLAGE

BASIC DATA EARLY PHOTOGRAPHS & DRAWINGS. ARMY & PARK SERVICE MAPS.

ORIENTATION

PREPARED

DESIGNED H. A. JUDD

DRAWN

CHECKED

SCALE 1/4" = 30 FT

MARK	DESCRIPTION OF REVISION	DATE	INITIAL
		REVISED	

RECOMMENDED

CHIEF, EODC — DATE

SUPERINTENDENT

REGIONAL DIRECTOR REG. 1

CHIEF, DIV. DESIGN & CONSTR

APPROVED DIRECTOR

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

FENCE LOCATION FOR F. Y. 1959
TITLE OF DRAWING
VILLAGE AREA
LOCATION WITHIN PARK
APPOMATTOX COURT HOUSE NATIONAL HISTORICAL PK
NAME OF PARK

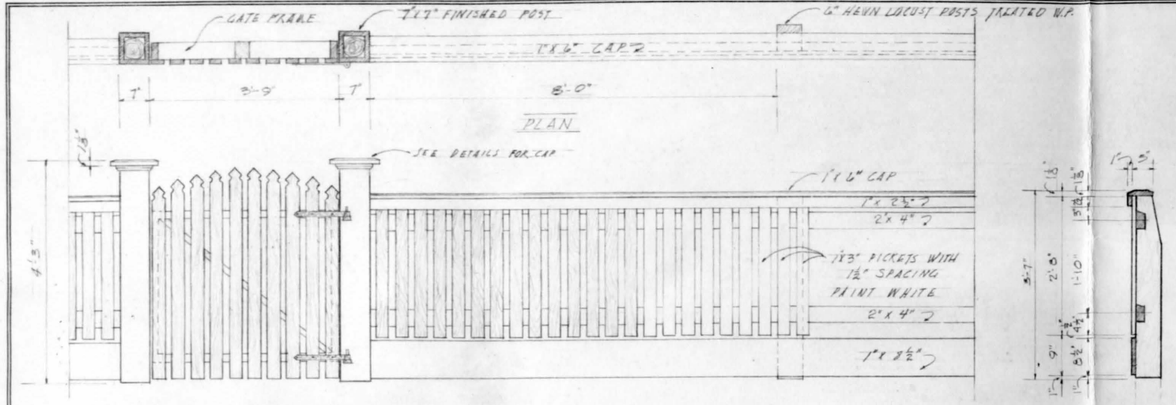
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PCP NO.

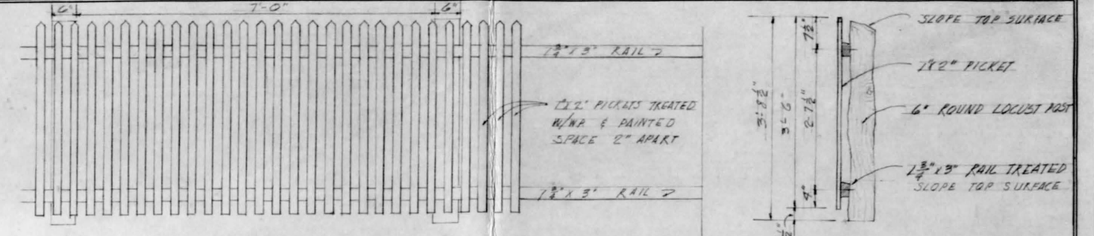
SHEET 2 OF 3

DRAWING NO. NHP-ACH 3070

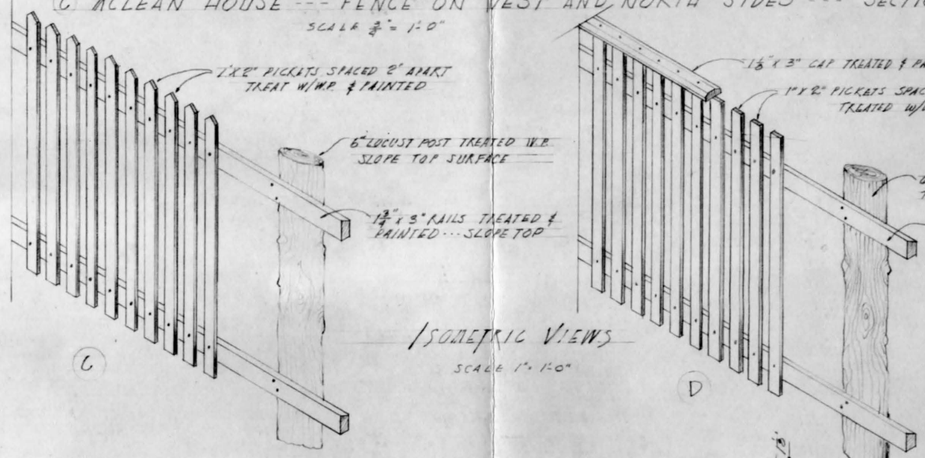
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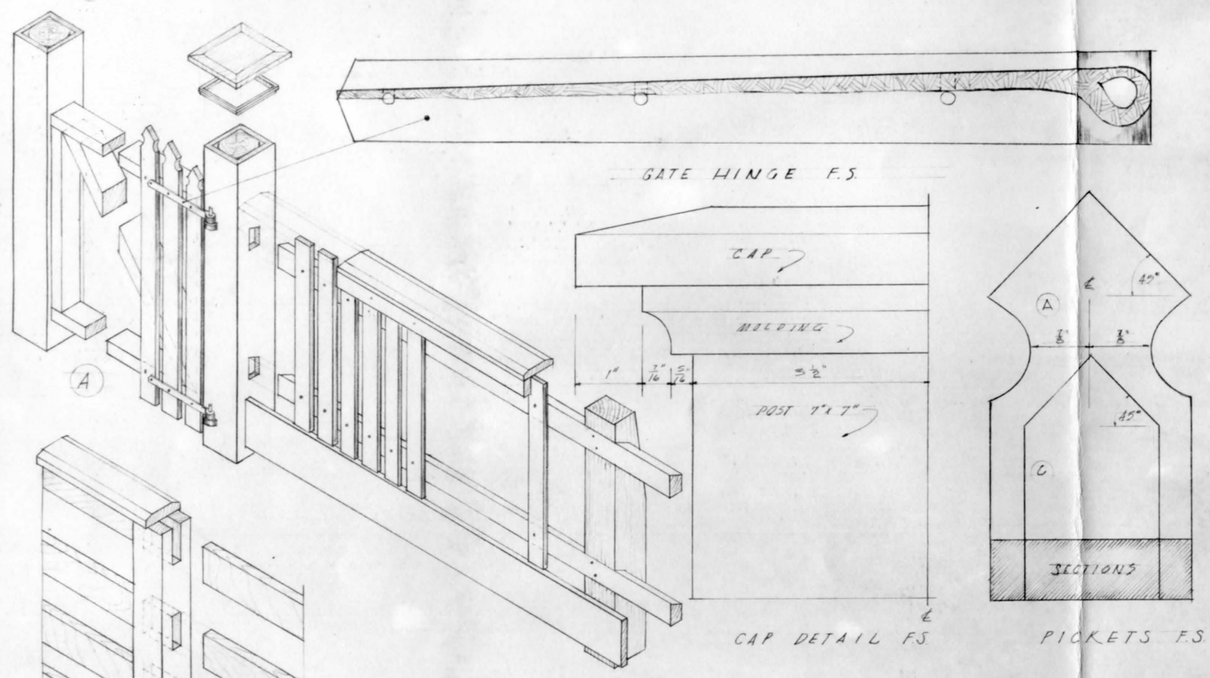


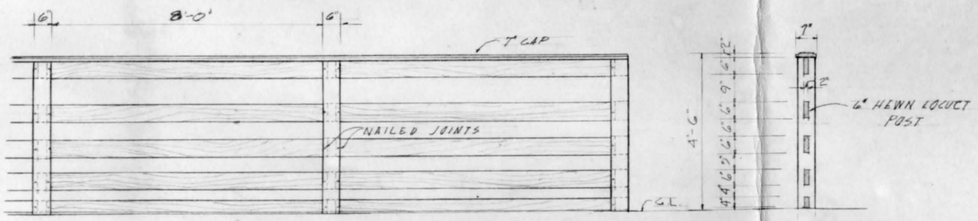
(A) CLOVER HILL TAVERN GATE AND FENCE ELEVATION --- SCALE ¾" = 1'-0" --- SECTION



(C) MCLEAN HOUSE --- FENCE ON WEST AND NORTH SIDES --- SECTION
SCALE ¾" = 1'-0"

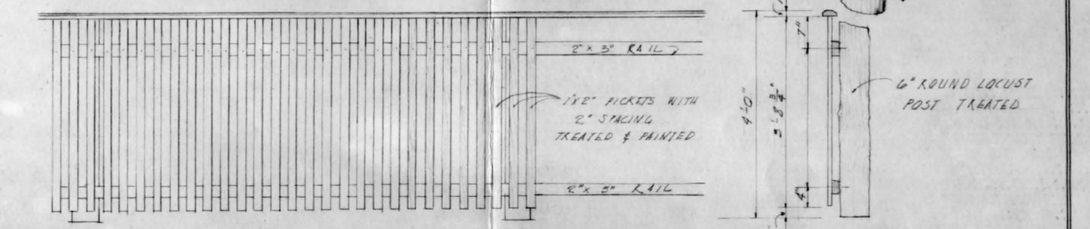




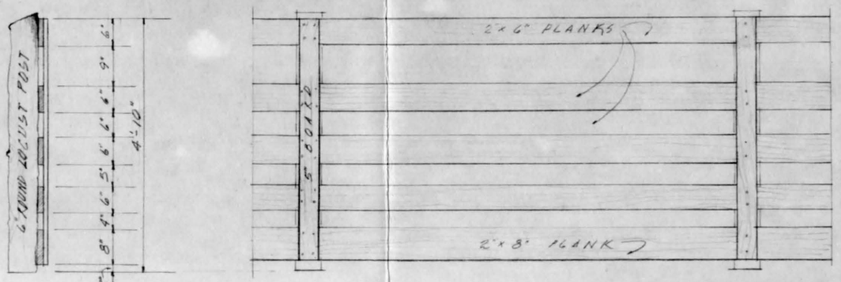


(D) POST AND RAIL FENCE AROUND COURT HOUSE
SCALE ½" = 1'-0"

SECTION



(D) LOT NO. 22 FENCE EAST OF MCLEAN HOUSE SCALE ¾" = 1'-0" SECTION



(E) SECTION AND ELEVATION--POST AND PLANK FENCE--WEST VILLAGE ENTRANCE
SCALE ¾" = 1'-0"

ORIENTATION

BASIC DATA LIBRARY OF CONGRESS BRADY COLLECTION PRINTS NOS. 219-220-222 SEE OTHER PHOTOGRAPHS NHP ACH FILES --ALSO EXISTING EVIDENCE

PREPARED	OWC
DESIGNED	OWC
DRAWN	
CHECKED	

SCALE AS SHOWN

MARK	DESCRIPTION OF REVISION	DATE	INITIAL
		REVISED	

RECOMMENDED

	DATE
CHIEF EODC	
SUPERINTENDENT	
REGIONAL DIRECTOR, REG 1	
CHIEF: DIV: DES & CONST.	

APPROVED
DIRECTOR

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

FENCING TYPES
TITLE OF DRAWING
APPOMATTOX COURT HOUSE VILLAGE AREA
LOCATION WITHIN PARK
APPOMATTOX COURT HOUSE NAT. HIST. PARK
NAME OF PARK

REGION	ONE
PCP NO.	
SHEET	3 OF 3
DRAWING NO.	NHP-ACH 3070
DATE	4-27-57