

HSR - PART III

REHABILITATION OF THE TAVERN GUEST
HOUSE - CLOVER HILL TAVERN GROUP
(Building No. 4-B)

By H.A. Judd, O.W. Carroll (9/61)

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HISTORIC STRUCTURES REPORT

PART III

REHABILITATION OF THE TAVERN GUEST HOUSE

CLOVER HILL TAVERN GROUP

(Building No. 4-B)

APPOMATTOX COURT HOUSE NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK
Appomattox, Virginia

by
Henry A. Judd
Orville W. Carroll
Architects
September, 1961

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

I FOREWORD

The Tavern Guest House (Building 4B) was built as one of several dependencies to the Clover Hill Tavern by Alexander Patterson in ca. 1819 to provide a kitchen on the first floor and sleeping quarters on the upper floors.

By the time of the Civil War the kitchen had been moved to another building. The first floor of the Tavern Guest House subsequently served various purposes, first as a law office and later as a stable.

When the Tavern property, which included the subject building, came under the jurisdiction of the National Park Service in 1940, the building was in a ruinous condition. The brick walls were seriously cracked and large sections had fallen away. The roof covering was largely missing and that which remained was unserviceable. All traces of the exterior porches and stairways were gone. Many of the framing members were so badly rotted that they no longer served their original purpose.

In 1941 steps were taken to stabilize the structure by the C.C.C. from plans approved by the Region One Office of the National Park Service. No attempt was made toward a restoration and work done at that time could be easily identified. If this work had not been done ~~the~~ building could not have survived for its eventual restoration.

From the completion of the CCC project in February 1942 the building stood unattended until the summer of 1956 when a team was assigned to Appomattox Court House National Historical Park to make measured drawings of the existing conditions of the buildings scheduled to be restored to their Civil War appearance. Architect Robert L. Railey, the Supervisor of this team, continued after his two student assistants returned to school. He prepared the Architectural Survey Reports and Preliminary drawings for the restorations.

In September 1957 the writer was assigned to supervise the restorations at Appomattox. After becoming familiar with the area, its buildings, the various Historical and Architectural reports, working drawings were prepared. Final approval of drawing No. NHP-ACH 3003A, Rehabilitation, Tavern Guest House, was obtained from the Director of the National Park Service on February 3, 1958.

Architect Orville W. Carroll assisted in the supervision of this project after the writer was engaged on other projects.

Superintendent Hubert Gurney and the members of his staff assisted in the many administrative matters. Thanks is due Charles E. Peterson, Supervising Architect Historic Structures for the valuable advice and guidance throughout the

job, and to the members of his staff who typed and assembled this report and the correspondence required.

The great interest of the several workmen was appreciated. We were saddened by the death of our foreman Mr. A. Godsey during the restoration and the death of Mr. Eugene O'Brien soon after completion of this work. Mr. O'Brien a young and skilled carpenter had hoped to make restoration work his lifetime career.

Henry A. Judd
Architect
August 1961

II EXTERIOR RESTORATION

The Tavern Guest House is a two and a half story brick building measuring approximately 20' x 22' in plan with a single large brick chimney centered in the north wall. On the east is a two story wooden porch the full length of the building. Steps to the second floor lead to the mid point of this porch and steps at the south end lead to the third floor. The west gallery is of one floor also running the length of the building.

a. Masonry

The brick walls of the Tavern Guest House were found in ruinous condition preserved only by the stabilization accomplished in the early 1940's. Large sections of original wall were missing and that which remained was badly cracked or rotted. This condition was so advanced that the building could literally be rocked despite the 16 inch wall thickness at the first floor level with 12 inch above.

An attempt was made to preserve all the exterior surface of the brick possible while removing the interior backing courses a small section at a time and rebuilding them. A special oversize brick was purchased from the Locker Brick Co. of Glasgow, Virginia to patch the exterior surface and rebuild the chimney completely. The back up brick were a stock oversize common brick. It became necessary to reconstruct over 75% of the masonry.

b. Porches

Nothing remained of the original porches except joist pockets and an outline on the wall indicating the floor and ceiling levels and the location of the stairway leading from the second to the third floor. (See Illustration No. 2). The reconstruction of these porches is largely conjectural. The post detail was patterned from a post on a building of similar age on Main Street in Amherst, Virginia. Porches of this type are very vulnerable to weather and only a limited life can be expected. To protect our investment for these porches, very rigid specifications for materials were prepared. Unfortunately such material was difficult to locate and permission was given to the suppliers to downgrade. When these porches are again rebuilt we should make no concession on material quality.

c. Roofing

Until the stabilization by the CCC when a paper roof was applied apparently the building had always had wood shingles. Wood shingles were on the building when it was acquired by the United States Government. As shingles have at best a limited life we are unsure what pattern and material was used in the Historic period. No contemporary photographs have been found however, a photograph of the neighboring Tavern by Mathew Brady made in April 1865 shows shingles about

3-1/2 - 4 inches wide with a rounded butt. We assume a similar shingle was used on the Guest House, a building in the Tavern Group and of the same age.

The shingles applied in this restoration are cypress 3-1/2" wide by 16 inches in length. The butts have been rounded similar to those shown in the Brady photograph. The shingles have been treated in pentachlorophenol.

d. Doors and Windows

Only one of the early doors was found and that not an original to the building. This was a board and batten door with nails through the battens formed into a decorative pattern. This door was rebuilt and rehung in the western entrance to the first floor room where found.

The balance of exterior doors were patterned from the originals still in place in the Tavern Building. The three interior doors, all in the quarters on the second floor unseen by the visiting public are modern flush type. No original window sash remain. New sash are patterned from typical sash in the area. Window frames were repaired where possible and replaced where necessary to match the original.

e. Other Exterior Woodwork

A small section of the gable finish and verge board remained for study and provided a definite pattern for their replacement. The cornice was all missing, however,

early photographs show evidence of the cornice and indicates that a crown moulding once existed. Restoration of these features was conjectural based on local patterns.

f. Painting - Exterior

Exterior woodwork was painted three coats of lead and oil tinted to a stone color as was typical of the period.

Mortar joints on the brick walls were penciled with 1/4 inch stripes of white lead cut to a creamy consistency and applied with a special brush called a brick stripper.

Areas under the east porches and above attic stairs to the south were whitewashed as they had been previously.

III. INTERIOR

1. First Floor

The first floor was retained as a single room as originally constructed. An attempt was made to preserve original woodwork and restore other features.

a. Fireplace

The original fireplace was in ruins and the area shored up by filling with stone. No clear outline remained above grade to indicate the opening size (See Illustration No. 22). While checking the condition of the foundation and footings we found an outline indicating the width and depth of the fireplace. Broken brick on the wall face gave an outline which may have been the location of the jack arch over the opening. A small section of flue remained giving a fair idea of the throat area. Drawing No. NHP-ACH 3068 shows details of the fireplace as reconstructed. The flue was not carried above the first floor ceiling level.

b. Walls and Ceiling

The interior three courses of brick were removed small sections at a time and relaid to provide a bond and to fill the voids caused by the many cracked or rotted areas. A chase was made to run the modern electric service, water and sewerage lines to the upper floors within the wall area.

Both wall and ceiling areas were lathed with 410 lb. 3/8 rib wire lath and plastered with 3 coats plaster with a standard white lime finish.

c. Floor

No conclusive evidence of the original flooring was uncovered. Mrs. Mary Ellen Hickok stated "It had a dirt floor with scattered brick inserts."¹ Such a floor was unsuitable for modern use as a display area. We have installed a brick floor over the entire area which can be removed if a future change is desired.

2. Second Floor

a. Plan

In converting the second floor into quarters for seasonal personnel, care was taken to preserve original woodwork and the original partition and inside door location. The room to the north was retained in its original form while the room to the south was divided into a closet, kitchenette, entry and bath. (See plan Drawing No. NHP-ACH 3003A Sheet 1).

¹Letter: Mary Ellen Hickok, 2910 Meade Ave., San Diego, California, dated October 6, 1941 to Mr. Hubert A. Garney, Superintendent, Appomattox Court House, NHP, See Appendix I of Historic Structures Report Tavern Guest House by Robert L. Raley, dated April 18, 1957.

b. Fireplace

The fireplace was restored to the same opening dimensions, however, with the addition of a modern damper the throat area and smoke shelf was increased in area for better efficiency. This is not visible from the room. The original mantel was repaired and put back in place.

c. Walls and Ceiling

The masonry walls, like those on the first floor were rebuilt small sections at a time to rebond broken and rotted areas and still preserve as much of the exterior face as possible. Walls where modern utilities were to be installed were furred to correct them for plumb and to straighten the interior face. The south wall was over two inches out of plumb in eight feet of height.

3/8" rib wire lath with three coats of plaster with a white lime finish was applied to all wall and ceiling areas.

d. Flooring

The original flooring was so rotted and worn that none could be salvaged and replaced.

Joists were replaced or reinforced as necessary and covered with a 5/8 inch plywood sub floor. A vinyl-rubber tile floor was installed in this area used as modern quarters.

e. Kitchen

The kitchen unit is a General Chef Model E-648 with integral ends and porcelain top. This 48" unit consists of a small twin basin sink, a three burner range with oven and a 6 cu. ft. refrigerator.

3. Third Floor

A large percentage of original finish trim was found in place. This was carefully repaired and missing sections replaced.

This room was finished plastered but no finish floor was laid. This room can now be used as a storage area.

ILLUSTRATION NO. 1

VIEW OF TAVERN AND TAVERN GUEST HOUSE

FROM SOUTHEAST

Early view showing the relationship of Clover Hill
Tavern (right) and the Tavern Guest House (left). Both
structures are assumed to have been built in 1819. Note
serious deterioration of the building.

Ph.: Unknown, c. 1940
Neg. ACH-NHP



ILLUSTRATION NO. 2

VIEW FROM SOUTHEAST

Structural evidence existing in masonry work that helped in determining porch locations can be seen by the beam pockets on the east wall just below the door openings on the 2nd floor. Also, a beam pocket that once supported the stairway to the 3rd floor is visible at the junction of the whitewash line and the wall corner near the center of the photograph. The deteriorated condition of the structural members is evident from this view.

Ph.: Unknown, c. 1940
Neg. ACH-NHP



ILLUSTRATION NO. 3

VIEW FROM NORTHWEST

View prior to stabilization by CCC Job
No. 37. Structural failure in the masonry work
can be seen clearly above the door and windows
and at ground level. The chimney stack is partially
missing and its base was failing rapidly.

Ph.: Green, HABS, 1940
Neg. ACH-NHP



ILLUSTRATION NO. 4

VIEW FROM SOUTHEAST

Photograph taken February 1942, during
stabilization supervised by Earl Carner, CCC Job
No. 37.

Ph.: Unknown, 1942
Neg. ACH-NHP



ILLUSTRATION NO. 5

VIEW LOOKING WEST, ROOM 101

Condition of interior room on ground floor.

The masonry work was found to be in such poor condition that the entire inner wall was removed and replaced with new work. A new brick floor was installed when evidence uncovered proved it superceded the wooden floor found in place.

Ph.: Unknown, c. 1940
Neg. ACH-NHP



ILLUSTRATION NO. 6

VIEW LOOKING WEST, ROOM 202 & ROOM 201

Interior photograph showing 2nd floor rooms as found in 1940. These two rooms were converted into living quarters and required all new interior work. Interior partition and door were left in their original locations.

Ph.: Unknown, c. 1940

Neg. ACH-NHP



ILLUSTRATION NO. 7

VIEW LOOKING NORTHEAST, ROOM 201

Condition of room 210 is evident from this photograph giving some indication of the problems encountered in its rehabilitation. A large portion of the wall areas required removal and replacement with new material. Original woodwork including the mantel were retained where possible.

Ph.: Unknown, c. 1940
Neg. ACH-NHP



ILLUSTRATION NO. 8

VIEW LOOKING NORTH, ROOM 301

The physical extent of deterioration is best shown in this photograph taken in the single loft room on the 3rd floor. Many of the joists and rafters no longer were able to do their work and required reenforcing or replacement.

Ph.: Unknown, c. 1940
Neg. ACH-NHP



ILLUSTRATION NO. 9

VIEW FROM SOUTHWEST

Condition of building in 1956 prior to rehabilitation work. Tie rods were placed through the building on both floors in 1942.

Ph.: Robertson, 1956

Neg. No. EODC 301



ILLUSTRATION NO. 10

VIEW FROM NORTHEAST

Condition of building in 1956 prior
to rehabilitation work.

Ph.: Robertson, 1956
Neg. No. EODC 272



ILLUSTRATION NO. 11

EXPLORATORY EXCAVATIONS, WEST SIDE

Widths of porches were established by these
excavations begun June 28, 1956, by J. D. Harrington.

Ph.: J. C. Harrington, 1956
Neg. ACH-NHP



ILLUSTRATION NO. 12

REMAINS OF WOODEN POST ON WEST SIDE

Remains of a 4" by 6" wooden post uncovered
by J. C. Harrington, 1956. Evidence such as this
determined porch widths and position of posts.

Ph.: J. C. Harrington, 1956
Neg. ACH-NHP



ILLUSTRATION NO. 13

VIEW FROM SOUTHWEST

Photograph taken during the early part of 1958 showing progress on the Tavern Guest House during restoration work. Original rafters and joists were reinforced and roof sheathing repaired.

Ph.: H.A. Judd, 1958
Neg. No. EODC 3000



ILLUSTRATION NO. 14

VIEW FROM SOUTHEAST

View showing progress made within a few months after photo illustration No. 13. The chimney has been reconstructed and all faulty masonry work has been replaced or repaired and repointed.

Ph.: H.A. Judd, 1958
Neg. No. EODC 3001



ILLUSTRATION NO. 15

VIEW FROM NORTHWEST

Progress photograph of restoration
construction taken during the summer of 1958
showing north (chimney) and west (porch)
elevations.

Ph.: H.A. Judd, 1958
Neg. No. EODC 3002



ILLUSTRATION NO. 16

VIEW OF ROOM 210

View looking northwest on 2nd floor during process of plaster work. The 2nd floor of the Guest House was converted into living quarters with an operatable fireplace. A plywood subfloor was laid as a base for a vinyl-rubber tile finish floor.

Ph.: H.A. Judd, 1958
Neg. No. EODC 3003



ILLUSTRATION NO. 17

NORTH VIEW, ROOM 310

View of plastering job about half finished. The third floor was plastered for easier maintenance and fire safety. The plywood subfloor remains unfinished.

Ph.: H. A. Judd, 1958
Neg. No. EODC 3004



ILLUSTRATION NO. 18

PENCILING MORTAR JOINTS

The technique of penciling brick mortar joints is illustrated by H. V. Martin, BRS, EODC, on the walls of the Tavern Guest House. A special striping brush is made for this purpose.

Ph.: H. A. Judd, 1958
Neg. No. EODC 3005



ILLUSTRATION NO. 19 VIEW FROM NORTHEAST

The Tavern Guest House is about
95% completed in this view.

Ph.: H. A. Judd, 1959
Neg. No. EODC 3006



ILLUSTRATION NO. 20

View of gable end of roof during
removal of soffit.

Ph.: Raley, Sept. 12, 1956
Neg. No. EODC 238



ILLUSTRATION NO. 21

Interior second floor, looking northeast.

Ph.: Robertson, Sept. 1956
Neg. No. EODC 288



ILLUSTRATION NO. 22

Condition of first floor fireplace
as found prior to the restoration.

Ph.: Robertson, 1956
Neg. No. EODC 284

