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EXCERPTS

RE: ARMORY DWELLING
No. 4

IN
STORAGE

HISTORIC BUILDING SITE SURVEY REPORT

HISTORY OF BLOCK F, BLOCK G, AND THE

U. S. FERRY LOTS, SHENANDOAH STREET,

1796 - 1869.

Harpers Ferry National Monument

Shenandoah Street Studies Series

No. 4

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A. LOT NO. 1, BLOCK F, SHENANDOAH STREET

1. CONSTRUCTION AND ARCHITECTURAL DATA, HOUSES NO. 25 AND 26

Lot No. 1, Block F, was owned by the United States Government from 1796 to 1869. The 1803 map of Harpers Ferry (see Appendix I of this report) indicates that the Shenandoah Street area at that date was practically an unimproved area, containing only one or two log cabins and three stables. A glance at the 1834 and 1835 maps (see Appendixes II and III of this report) will also reveal that Block F and the remainder of Shenandoah Street had been densely built up by 1834. It is therefore apparent that these houses must have been erected between 1803 and 1834 and probably more precisely between 1811 and 1834.

The buildings situated on Block F were constructed by either the Government or by private individuals as dwelling houses. In the case of houses erected by private individuals, the Government purchased all of their claims¹ to these buildings between the years 1822 and 1838.

Judging by the 1834-35 maps, House No. 25 fronted approximately 26 feet on Shenandoah Street and was about 28 feet deep. The 1913 map (see Appendix VII) indicates that Lot No. 1 was occupied at that date by a "two story brick dwelling" that fronted on Shenandoah Street 38 feet and was about 21 feet deep. House No. 25 was described on the 1848-51 lists of Government Dwelling Houses as "Brick, two story, with shingle roof." It was valued in 1848 at \$800 and placed in Class 6. By 1850 the same house was valued at \$600 and

1. See Snell, Charles W., "A Comprehensive History of the Construction, Maintenance and Numbers of Armory Dwelling Houses, 1796-1869," Chapter I to VII, pp.1-82, for the detailed story.

²
placed in Class 7.

Also located on Block F, Shenandoah Street, was House No. 26. According to the 1834-35 maps this building fronted about 50 feet on Shenandoah Street and was approximately 40 feet deep. House No. 26 is described on the 1848-51 list of Government Dwelling Houses as "Brick, one story, with shingle roof." It was valued at \$500 and placed in Class 8 in 1848. By 1850 it was valued at \$400 and placed in Class 10, thus indicating that the house was in poor condition.³ (See lot on 1846 and 1852 maps, Appendix IV and V.)

In 1852 Houses No. 25 and 26, with Lot 1, Block F, were reserved from the public sale of Government lots, for the use of the United States. At some date after 1852 and before 1855, Government Dwelling House No. 26 was demolished as a substandard building.⁴

House No. 25 was retained for use as an Armory Dwelling House for Government employees. In July, 1865, Brigadier General Edward D. Ramsay made a detailed inspection and report of the buildings and stores at Harpers Ferry. House Old Number 25 was described in this report as follows: "Dwelling House No. 4, two story, brick, located on Shenandoah Street - In bad condition" and

2. "List of Dwelling Houses belonging to the United States at Harpers Ferry 30th June 1848," Reel 18, V.12, p.1185. "List of Dwelling Houses belonging to the United States at Harpers Ferry, December 31, 1850." Photostatic Collection, Map Case, Drawer No. 4, page 1. "List of Dwelling Houses at Harpers Ferry, Per Inventory 30 June 1851," Reel 18, V.12, p.1188.

3. Ibid.

4. In February, 1853, the numbering system of Armory Dwelling Houses was changed to a new set, which we have not located. It is apparent from what follows, that one story House No. 26 was demolished. See Snell, C. W., "Comprehensive History of Armory Dwelling Houses," pp.116-120.

apparently vacant at that date.

In 1869, when this same property was offered for sale, it was described as follows:

"BLOCK F, ON SHENANDOAH.

Lot 1. 66 feet front on Shenandoah street, and 166 feet on Wood Street, running back to Hamilton Street, with front of 35 feet on the same. Line with No. 2 parallel to Wood Street. Brick House, occupied by C. C. Johns." (See 1869 map, Appendix VII.)⁶

2. USES OF HOUSES ON LOT NO. 1, BLOCK F

Houses No. 25 and 26 were used as Government Dwelling Houses from the time of their construction until 1852. Records of the people renting these structures in the very early period have not been found. House No. 25, from the 1840 to 1848 period, however, was rented by Armistead M. Ball, who in 1859 became Master Armorer at the Armory, at an annual rent of \$70. From 1850 to 1852 the building was next rented by Durett Coates also for \$70. a year. In 1852, House No. 25 was then occupied by Henry Reed.

House No. 26 was rented from the 1840's to 1848 by Philip Engle at an annual rent of \$46. From 1850 to 1852 the building was next occupied by George Nunnamaker at a rent of \$46 a year.⁷

5. Ramsay to Brig. Genl. A. B. Dyer, Chief of Ordnance, July 27, 1865. National Archives R.G.156-Harpers Ferry Photostatic Collection. Map Case, Drawer No. 10.

6. 1869 Catalogue of Sales, p.2.

7. "List of Dwelling Houses, 30th June 1848," Reel 18, V.12, p.1185. "List of Dwelling Houses, Dec. 31, 1850," p.1. "List of Dwelling Houses, 30th June 1851," Reel 18, V.12, p.1177. Also Census of 1850, Reel 10, V.2, p.125.

At some date after 1852 and before 1855 House No. 26 was demolished by the Government as a substandard house. After the removal of similar structures, the surviving Armory Dwelling Houses were then renumbered and old House Number 25 became House No. 4 on the new lists. Unfortunately no rent rolls for the 1852 to 1861 period have been located so that it cannot be determined who next rented the house after Henry Reed in 1852. Judging by the Census of 1860, however, it appears likely the House No. 25 or Armory Dwelling No. 4 was occupied at that date by the following two families:

1. "Elizabeth Roderick, 54, female. Value of personal estate: \$50. Born in Md.

Lewis	"	31, male, Blacksmith.	Born in Va.
Susan	"	24, female,	Born in Md.
Isaac	"	20, telegraph operator.	Born in Va.
Francis R.	"	16, female,	Born in Va.
Jacob	"	18, wagoner,	" " " , male.
Charles	"	12, male,	" " "
2. Daniel Whalen, 31, male, Laborer. Value of personal estate: \$40. Born in Ireland.

Mary Whalen,	female.	Born in Ireland.	27
Ellin	"	, female,	Born in Va. 3
Martin	"	, 1, male,	Born in Va." 8

3. HISTORICAL PLANS OF BUILDINGS

No historical plans of Houses No. 25 and 26 have been found and it is highly unlikely that any will ever be located.

4. HISTORICAL PRINTS AND PHOTOGRAPHS

No historical prints or photographs of House No. 25 or Lot No. 1, made in the 1852 to 1913 period have been found.

5. SUMMARY OF HISTORICAL DATA

A. Ownership of the Land

3. Census of 1860, Reel 10, V.2, p.176.

Lot No. 1, Block F, was owned by the United States Government from 1796 to 1869.

B. Construction of House No. 25

Houses No. 25 and 26 were erected at some date between 1811 and 1834 by either the United States Government or by Armory workmen as dwelling houses. House No. 26, a one story brick building with a wood shingle roof, fronted about 50 feet on Shenandoah Street and was approximately 40 feet deep. House No. 26 was demolished in the period 1852-1855.

House No. 25, later known as Armory Dwelling No. 4, was a two story brick house with a wood shingle roof. It fronted on Shenandoah Street 38 feet and was 21 feet deep. The building was still standing in 1913.

C. Use of House No. 25

Both House No. 25 and 26 were utilized throughout the period before the Civil War as Government Dwelling Houses for Armory workmen. House No. 26 was demolished in 1852-1855. House No. 25 was probably rented by the Lewis Roderick family and the Daniel Whalen family in 1860.

6. LOT NO. 1, BLOCK F, TODAY

Lot No. 1, in 1959, is overgrown with young trees. Surface foundation ruins of old House No. 25 are still visible. The old Sidewalk is also still in place.

On the following two pages are presented historical base maps showing Blocks F, G and the U. S. Ferry Lot on Shenandoah Street in 1859. The maps have been traced from the 1913 map in Appendix VII of this report and the lots and buildings plotted in to scale on the basis of evidence presented in this report.

1. SUMMARY - 1859 HISTORICAL BASE MAPS

A. Block F

1. Lot No. 1. Owned in 1859 by the United States Government. Armory Dwelling House No. 4, a two story brick dwelling house, wood shingle roof, 31 by 38 feet in size. Erected 1811-34 and used as a Government Dwelling House for Armory employees. Probably rented in 1859 by Lewis Roderick and Daniel Whalen, both Armory employees, from the United States.

2. Lot No. 2. Owned in 1859 by the United States Government. Armory stable, $1\frac{1}{2}$ story brick building, $35\frac{1}{2}$ by $35\frac{1}{2}$ feet in size, slate roof. It had a cut stone water table, coping and cornice. Erected 1847-48 at a cost of approximately \$2,000; probably designed by Major John Symington, Superintendent of the Armory. Stables for at least six horses. Stone retaining walls on the lot erected by the United States in 1856-57.

B. Block G

Owned by the United States Government in 1859. Used as site of Armory lumber yard and stables from about 1822 to 1848. From 1848 to 1852 used as a lumber yard. These works were entirely destroyed by flood in 1852. Block G, was henceforth left vacant by the United States. Vacant in 1859.

Island of
St. Thomas

-  Brick
-  Stone
-  Frame

Shenandoah Canal

BLOCKS F AND G,
SHENANDOAH STREET
Based on 1913 B & O Map.

1859 HISTORICAL BASE MAP
Scale: 50 feet equals 1 inch.

Arrow & Dwelling
24
45
51

Arrow & State

Arrow & Dwelling

street

Shenandoah Street Block E

Block G Hamilton Street

Wood

N. 8 P.

24 23 22

Trucks

[Frame House]

[Stone House]



C. U. S. Ferry Lot

Owned in 1859 by United States Government. Site of small 1½ story frame toll house of the Shenandoah Bridge Company. Lot otherwise vacant.

D. Shenandoah Bridge

Originally constructed 1843-44. The bridge superstructure was destroyed by a hurricane in June, 1859. This was rebuilt by September 15, 1859, by Mr. French of Alexandria, Va., at a cost of \$4,500. The bridge had two stone abutments and two stone piers. The piers were each 28 feet high, 30 feet long, 10 feet thick at base and 6 feet thick at the top. The wooden superstructure was 375 feet long and had a double wagon track, each track being approximately 10 feet wide. Due to shortage of funds, the reconstructed bridge was not covered with a roof in 1859. The bridge burned by Confederate forces on June 28, 1861, and was never reconstructed on the original site.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Block F. [Lot No. 1 contains the surface foundation ruins of old Armory Dwelling House No. 4. [Lot No. 2 contains the old 1856-57 stone retaining walls as well as surface ruins of structures erected after 1869.] It is suggested that the ruins on both lots be left untouched and that the area not be developed.

B. Block C. This block is vacant today and has no historic surface ruins except for a strip of old river retaining wall along the bank of the former Shenandoah Canal. It is suggested that if a future overflow parking area is required that Block C be utilized for this purpose.

APPENDIX III

"MAP OF HARPER'S FERRY, Shewing the Location of the WINCHESTER and POTOMAC RAIL ROAD, Drawn by Lieuts. White, Allen, and R. S. Smith, U. S. Army, Under the direction of James Kearney, Lt. Col. and T.E., 1835-No.2. Approved by President Andrew Jackson, January 27, 1835."

National Archives R.G.77. Records of the Office of the Chief of Engineers. Fortification Map File, part of map: Dr. 150-Sheet 82-2.

Scale: 100 feet to 1 inch.

Dwelling Houses on the map have been numbered in ink according to the 1848-52 lists of Government Dwelling Houses and the records pertaining to the 1852 sale of Government Houses and Lots in the Shenandoah Street area.

MAP OF HARPER'S FERRY
 MAP NO. 2 - 1835
 Scale: 100' = 1"

 Brick
 Stone
 Frame

Steep cliffs
 No Houses shown

