

Historic Furnishings Plan Synopsis

Building 40

Harpers Ferry
National Historical Park

Harpers Ferry
West Virginia



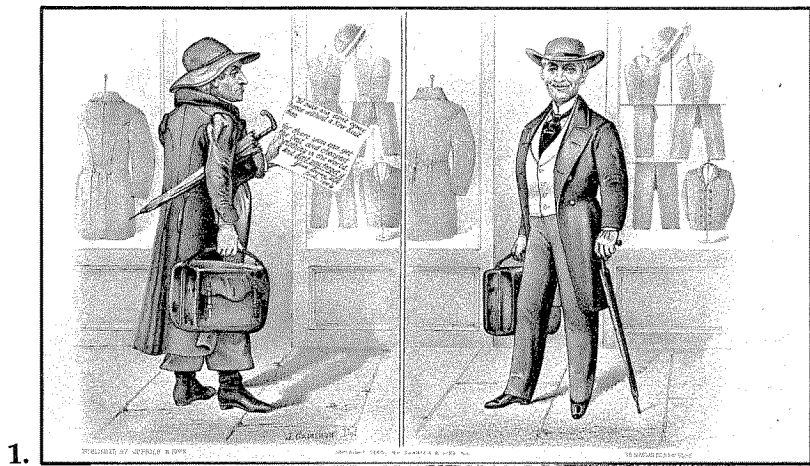
Harpers Ferry Center
National Park Service
1990

ON MICROFILM

Carol A. Petravage, Planner
Karen Gladding, Researcher

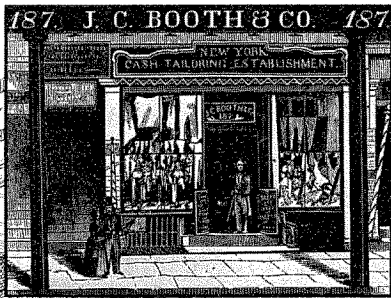
PLEASE RETURN TO:

TECHNICAL INFORMATION CENTER
DENVER SERVICE CENTER
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE



1.

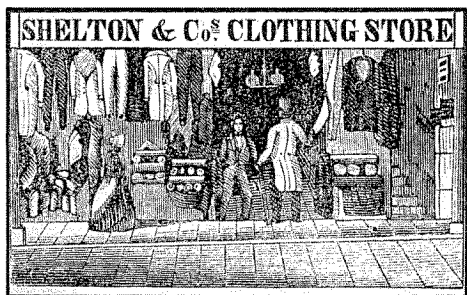
2. 187 J. C. BOOTH & CO 187



4.



3.

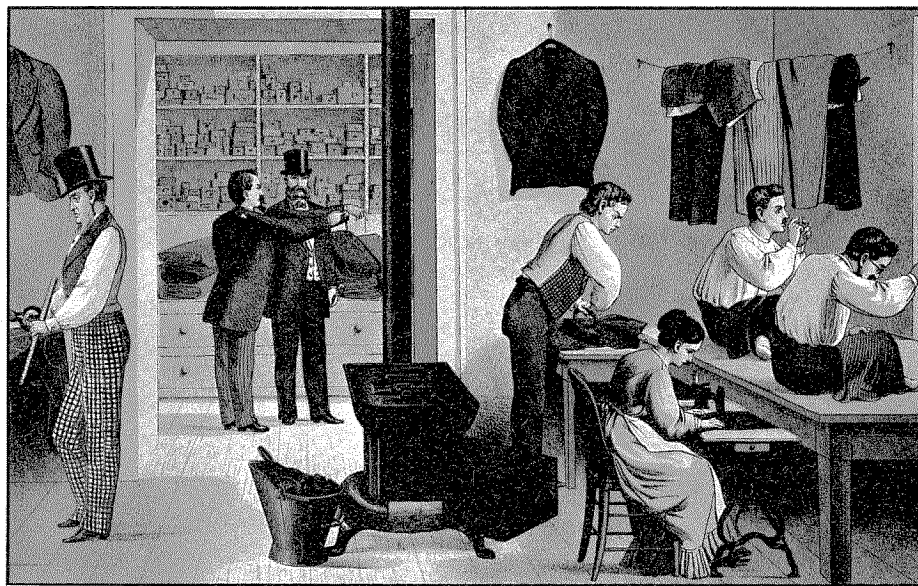


5.

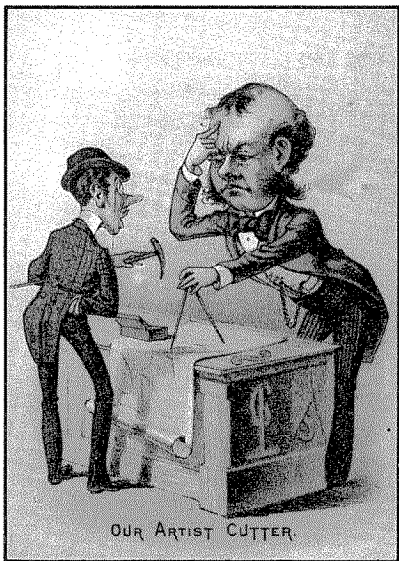
Captions:

1. Lithograph, Currier & Ives, New York, NY, 1880. Library of Congress. 2. Advertisement, J.C. Booth & Co., New York, NY, 1846. Smithsonian Institution. 3. Harpers Ferry Building 40 "Facade." 4. Advertisement, United States Furnishing Depot, Boston, MA, from *Stimpson's Boston Directory*, 1844. Smithsonian Institution. 5. Advertisement, Shelton & Co., 1847. Smithsonian Institution. 6. Trade card, "Our Artist Cutter," 1890-1910. Smithsonian Institution. 7. Lithograph, L. Prang & Co., 1874. Library of Congress. 8. Harpers Ferry Building 40 "Room 101b."

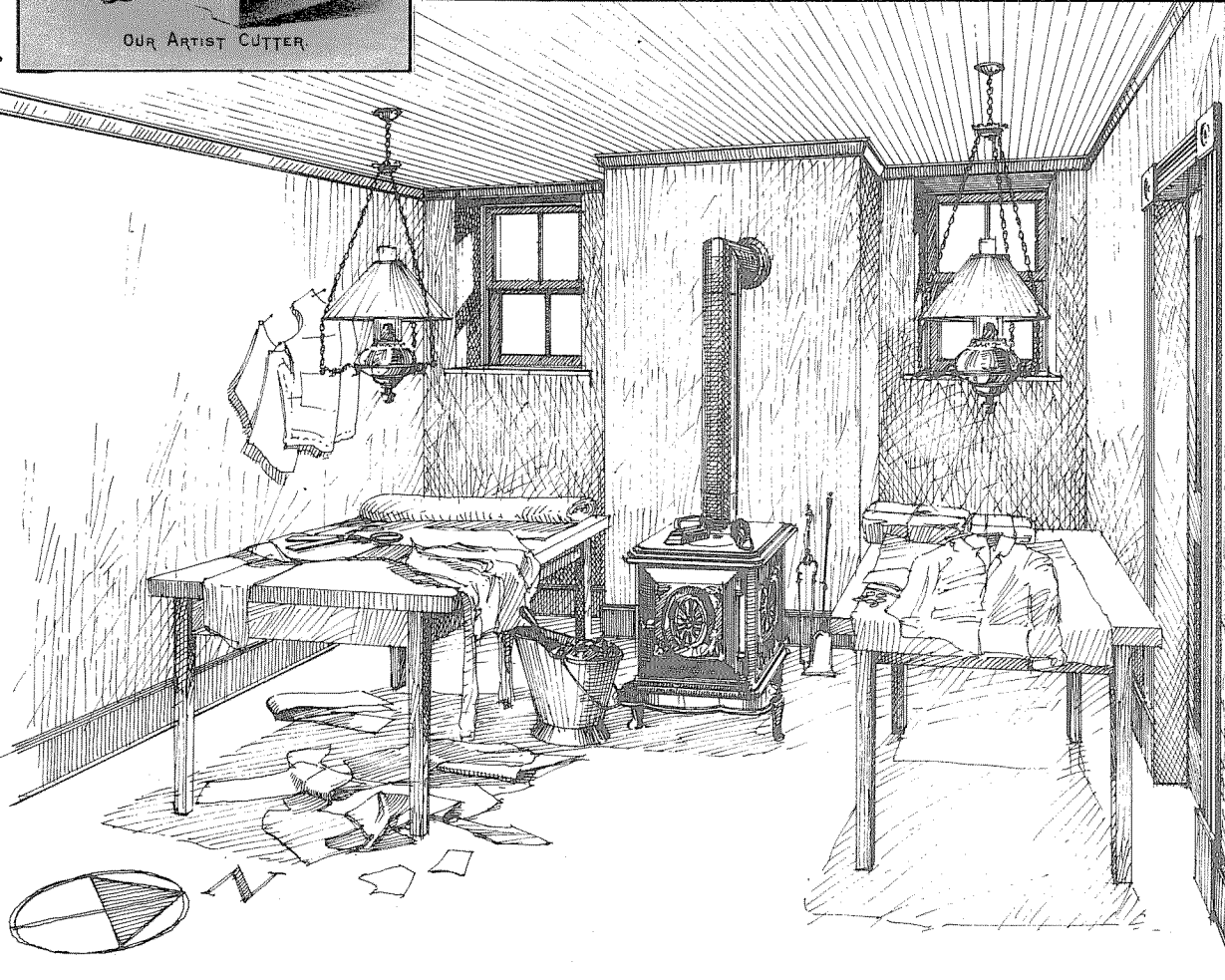
7.



6.



8.



Sources

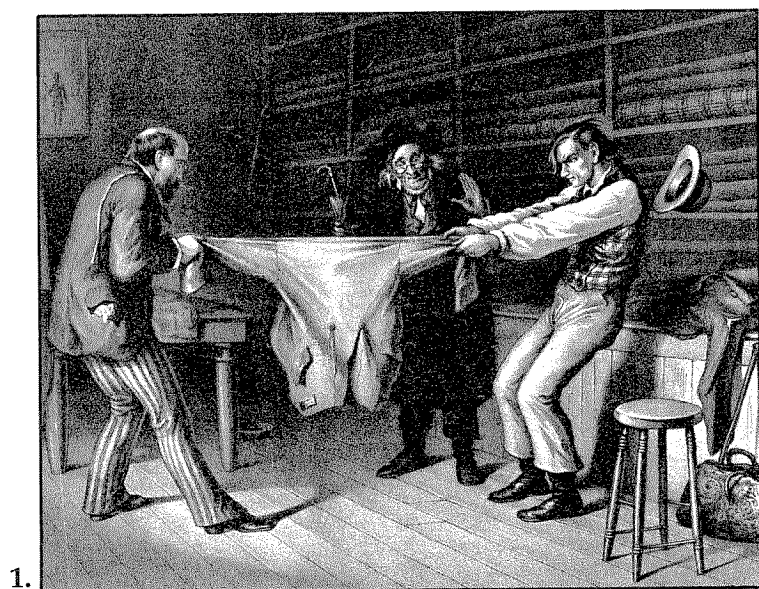
The following sources provide historical documentation for the furnishings plan:

1. Primary resources directly related to building 40 and Wager lot 49, including deeds, wills, census records, newspaper accounts, advertisements and photographs. Property and census records, as well as accounts published in local newspapers like the *Spirit of Jefferson*, the *Virginia Free Press*, the *Harpers Ferry Sentinel*, and the *Farmers' Advocate*, yield information concerning the occupants of building 40. Advertisements in the *Spirit of Jefferson* and the *Virginia Free Press* list many of the items sold in the ready-made clothing stores that operated in building 40 during the 19th century. Exterior photographs illustrate the changes made to the building when it was reconstructed in 1881.

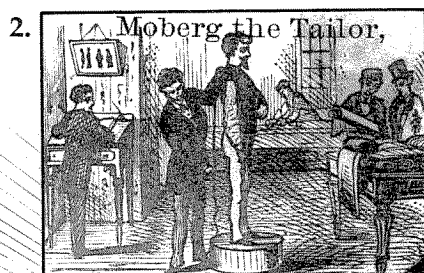
2. Primary resources related to other ready-made clothing stores located in Harpers Ferry and elsewhere, including advertising material, trade cards, illustrations in books and periodicals, letterheads, and photographs. Newspaper advertisements in the *Spirit of Jefferson* and the *Virginia Free Press* document the items sold in other ready-made clothing stores in Harpers Ferry. More than two dozen illustrations spanning the period from the 1810s through the early part of the 20th century depict the interiors of ready-made clothing stores in eastern cities and towns. These illustrations were obtained largely from collections at the Winterthur and Hagley Museums, the Library of Congress, and the Smithsonian Institution, particularly the Warshaw Collection housed in the Smithsonian Archives Center. The similarity of the interior arrangements, types of store fittings, and inventory display techniques enabled the preparation of a furnishings plan that accurately depicts the interior of a ready-made clothing store in a small town. Nearly two dozen additional illustrations portray the types of window displays used by clothing stores in the 19th century.

3. Primary and secondary resources dealing with tailoring, dressmaking, and the clothing industry in general. Since many mid-19th century ready-made clothing merchants began their careers as tailors and continued to offer custom tailored clothing as a sideline to the ready-made business, contemporary tailoring and dressmaking manuals were used to prepare the furnishings plan for the workroom.

4. Primary and secondary resources related to dry goods and general stores. Many dry goods and general stores also sold ready-made clothing, especially in smaller towns. These illustrations provide valuable information concerning the interiors of small retail establishments.



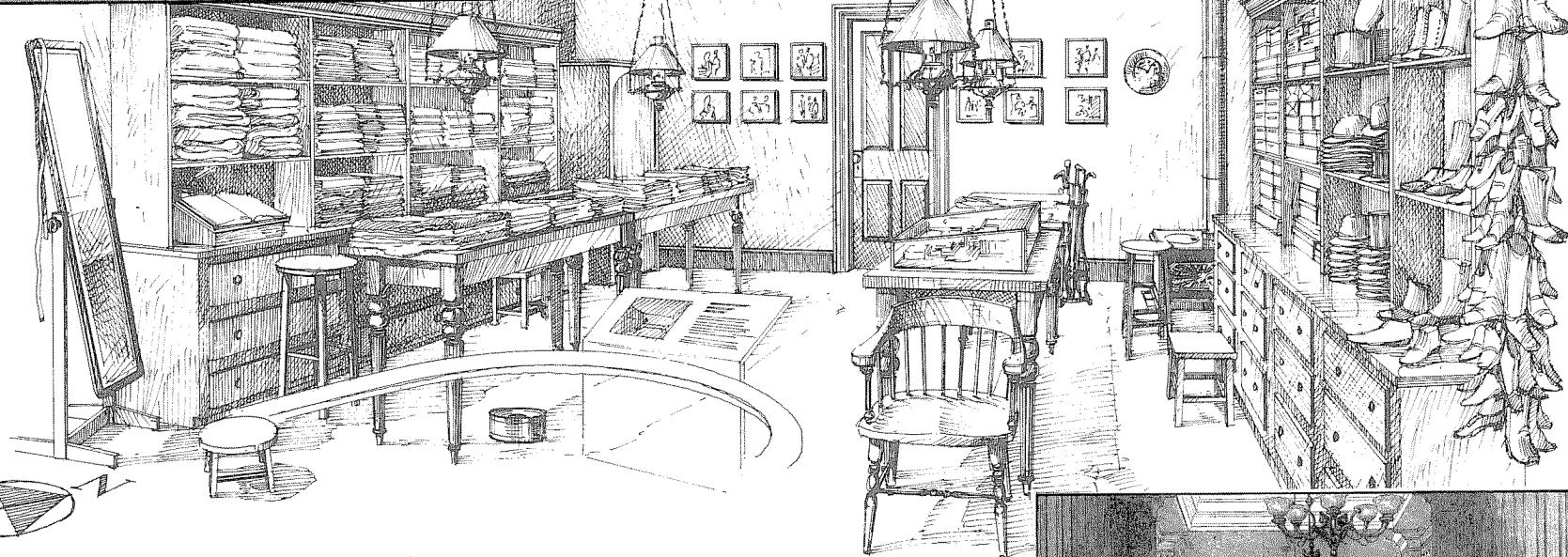
1.



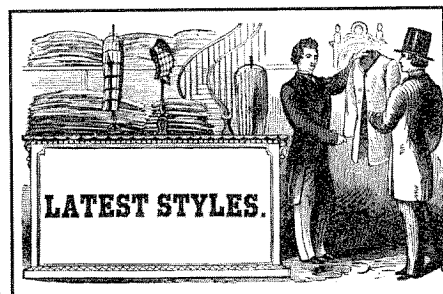
2.



3.



4.



5.

Captions:

1. Lithograph, John H. Bufford's Sons, lith., copyright by the Double Thread Sewing Co., 1877. Library of Congress. 2. Advertisement, Moberg the Tailor, Anoka, Minn., 1870-90. Smithsonian Institution. 3. Advertisement, Oak Hall Clothing House, Boston, MA, Smithsonian Institution. 4. Harpers Ferry Building 40 "Room 101a." 5. Advertisement, George McKendree Teal, 1850-60. Smithsonian Institution. 6. Trade Catalog, Charles Stokes & Co., 1864. Hagley Museum and Library.



6.

The Furnishings for Building 40

The ready-made clothing store of Philip Frankel & Co. occupied building 40 in the late 1850s, during Harpers Ferry's industrial heyday. Newspaper advertisements indicate that Philip Frankel & Co. sold a wide variety of men's and boys' clothing, shirts, underwear, boots and shoes, hats and caps, handkerchiefs, hosiery, suspenders, and gloves. Frankel also stocked a variety of fancy goods like pocket books, combs, brushes, jewelry, and men's perfume.

The organization of the men's clothing industry had changed dramatically since the early 1800s, when lower income men's clothing was either purchased second-hand or sewn at home by family members. Tailors, who fitted each garment to the customer, generally catered only to the upper classes. Men who needed clothing in a hurry could purchase garments at "slop shops," stores which manufactured clothing in standard sizes to be sold to sailors, travelers, and others who were willing to sacrifice a good fit for quick service. However, by mid-century, ready-made clothing stores stocked all ranges of quality, from the cheapest slops to garments as well-made as those sewn by custom tailors. Large stores in eastern cities manufactured clothing for their own stores and for wholesaling to retail stores

across the country. Customers, attracted by the convenience and low prices of ready-made clothing, flocked to the stores, which were able to offer a huge variety and selection. This large volume, together with reductions in production costs and an increasing emphasis on cash sales, allowed retailers to cut prices, enabling a wider class of people to dress reasonably well.

The 1824 lease agreement indicates that building 40 was constructed with three rooms on the ground floor. A small retail ready-made clothing store with custom service usually consisted of a salesroom in front, an adjoining cutting room, and a space for storage either above or in the rear. A typical cutting room contained one or more tables for sponging the fabric (to control shrinkage), cutting the garment, bundling up the pieces to distribute to seamstresses, and ironing the final product. Professional cutters, employed to measure, design, and cut the garments, required very few tools to carry out their trade: shears, a tape measure, a square, a straight ruler, chalk, a curve rule, and a scales. Ready-made clothing stores reduced manufacturing costs by employing local women to sew the garments for a fraction of the wage that tailors earned. Bundles containing the pieces of cut

fabric, lining, buttons, and trim were distributed to local women who sewed the garments at home, then returned them to the store for inspection.

The effects of the industrial revolution can be seen in subtle ways in Frankel's ready-made clothing store. Although today everyone buys clothing "off the rack", buying ready-made clothing in the 19th century was as revolutionary a concept as manufacturing guns with interchangeable parts. Even traditional tailor's work like custom sewing was distributed as outwork to save labor costs, a practice which became notorious in the immigrant sweat shops of late 19th century New York City. The Civil War provided statistics on body measurements for millions of soldiers. These became the basis for the first reliable system of standardized sizes. After the war, returning soldiers created a huge demand for quality clothing and encouraged the popular acceptance of ready-made garments. The availability of affordable, well-made clothing to the majority of American men created a visual broadening of the middle class. The average man could purchase, ready-made, more clothing of better quality than ever before.

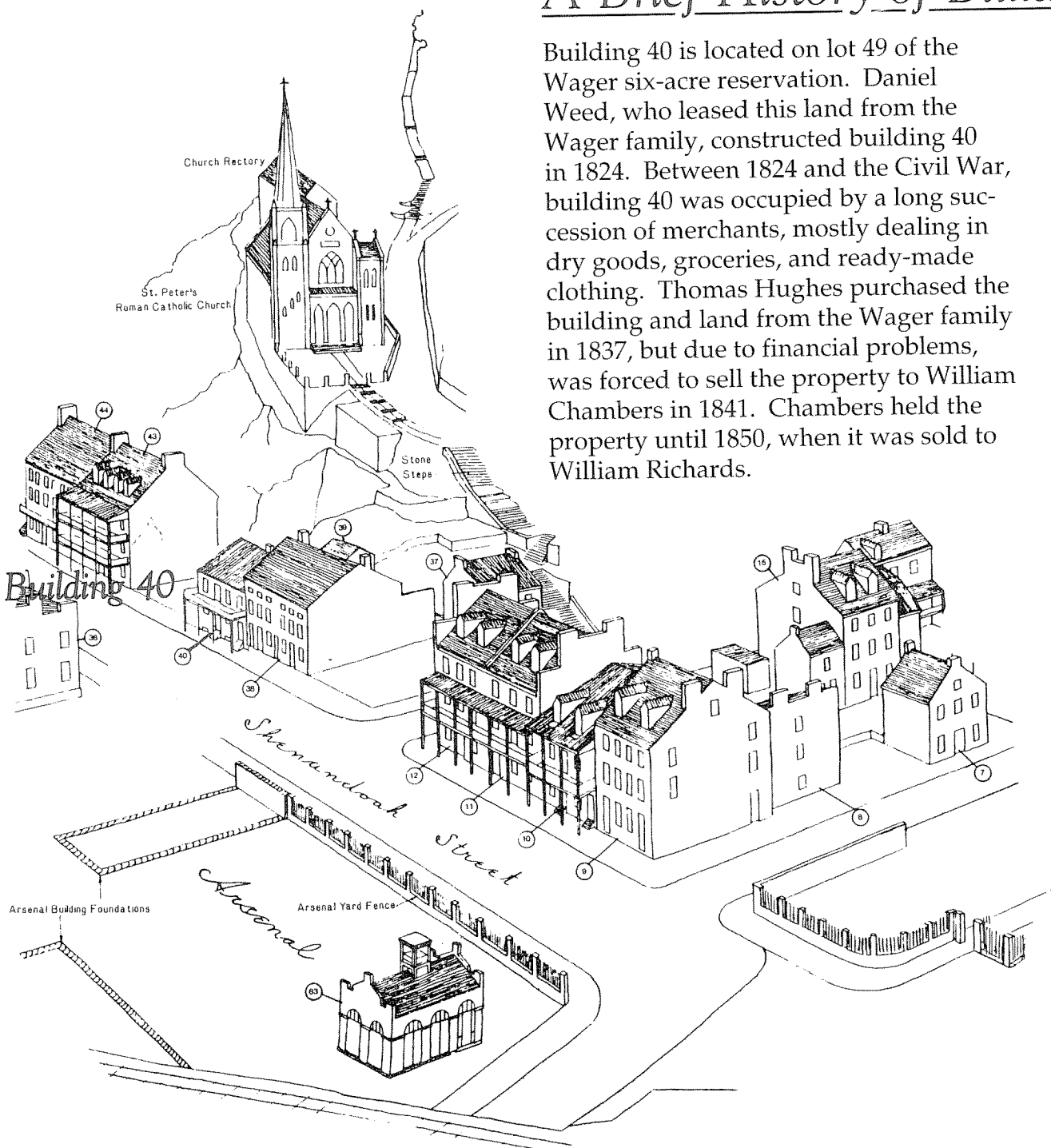
A Brief History of Building 40

Building 40 is located on lot 49 of the Wager six-acre reservation. Daniel Weed, who leased this land from the Wager family, constructed building 40 in 1824. Between 1824 and the Civil War, building 40 was occupied by a long succession of merchants, mostly dealing in dry goods, groceries, and ready-made clothing. Thomas Hughes purchased the building and land from the Wager family in 1837, but due to financial problems, was forced to sell the property to William Chambers in 1841. Chambers held the property until 1850, when it was sold to William Richards.

Frankel Bro. & Co. operated a ready-made clothing store in the building between 1858 and 1860. Frankel was succeeded by a former partner, Bernhard Hirsh, who continued the ready-made clothing business. At some time between 1862 and 1865, building 40 burned, then stood as an unoccupied ruin for nearly 20 years.

Although Edward Tearney purchased building 40 in 1873, he did not begin renovations until 1881. Tearney raised the building from two to three stories, changed the fenestration, and probably filled in the basement at that time. Evidence indicates that after the renovation, ready-made clothing stores again occupied building 40 until the turn of the century.

Upon his death in 1902, Edward Tearney's children inherited the property and building, which probably stood vacant for most of the first decade of the 20th century. By 1914, building 40 may have been occupied by a general store run by the Demory brothers. William W. Demory purchased the property in 1920. Contemporary maps indicate that various stores operated out of building 40 during the 1920s and 1930s, but do not indicate the names of the proprietors. W.W. Demory sold the property to Briscoe Smith in 1946. The State of West Virginia purchased the property from Smith in 1952 and conveyed it to the United States Government in 1953 for inclusion in Harpers Ferry National Monument.



Chronology of Building Use

1824

Catherine Wager and John B. Wager, owners, leased the land that would become Wager lot 49 to Daniel A. Weed. Weed agreed to erect a stone building 33 feet wide by 35 feet deep, 2 stories high, fitted for a store house, with three rooms on each floor. Daniel Weed operated a dry goods and grocery store out of this building.

1827

Isaac Newton Carter operated a dry goods and grocery store.

1831

Henry Crampton operated a dry goods store.

1835

Wager property divided into 56 lots. Lot 49 was awarded to Gerard B. Wager. Bushrod S. Pine operated a dry goods store on the first floor and William Avis and Joseph Lemox operated a shoemaker's shop on the second floor.

1836

Charles Staley operated a dry goods and clothing store while his wife Martha A. Staley ran a millinery and fancy shop.

1837

Thomas Hughes purchased lot 49 with the stone house for \$3,000. Hughes operated a dry goods, grocery, and ready-made clothing store out of building 40.

1841

Lot 49 and building 40 sold at public auction to William Chambers for \$2,350. Joseph L. Russell and Company operated a dry goods and clothing store.

1843

May have functioned as the dry goods and grocery store of Righter Levering.

1844

May have functioned as the dry goods and grocery store of David Koonce.

1846

William Chambers operated a dry goods and grocery store.

1850

William Richards purchased the building and lot for \$3,000. Richards and his family lived on the second floor until 1861. May have functioned as the dry goods, grocery, and ready-made clothing store of John G. Ridenour.

1853

R. Walter and Brother (also called Walter, Bro. and Company) operated a ready-made clothing store.

1858

Frankel, Bro., Levitoch, and Bernhard D. Hirsh operated a ready-made clothing store.

1860

Bernhard Hirsh operated a ready-made clothing store.

1862-65

At some point during this period fire destroyed the interior of building 40. The building stood as a vacant ruin until 1881.

1873

Edward Tearney purchased lot 49 and building 40 for \$800.

1881

Edward Tearney renovated building 40 by putting on a partial brick front and raising the structure to three stories. He also altered the fenestration of the first and second floors. G.L. Myers operated a ready-made clothing store.

ca. 1885

J.H. Myers, G.L. Myers' brother, probably operated a ready-made clothing store.

1890

Probably occupied by V. Kaplon & Bro. as a clothing store.

1900

V. Kaplon & Bro. probably vacated building 40. Building 40 probably remained vacant until ca. 1914.

1902

Mary Jane Tearney inherited lot 49 and building 40 from her father Edward Tearney.

ca. 1914

Demory Bros. operated a general store.

1920

William W. Demory purchased the property for \$3,249.99.

ca. 1932

Kellison (first name unknown) probably operated a business.

1946

Briscoe Smith purchased lot 49 and building 40.

1952

The State of West Virginia purchased the property.

1953

The State of West Virginia donated lot 49 and building 40 to the United States Government for inclusion in Harpers Ferry National Monument.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
HARPERS FERRY CENTER
HARPERS FERRY, WV 25425

OFFICIAL BUSINESS
PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE, \$300