

## Slave Housing Data Base

**Building Name:** Bacon's Castle Slave Quarter

**Evidence Type:** Extant

**Historical Site Name:** Bacon's Castle

**County:** Surry

**State:** Virginia

**Investigators:** Dennis Pogue, Andrew Stempel, Doug Sanford

**Institutions:** Mount Vernon Ladies' Association; University of Mary Washington – Center for Historic Preservation

**Project:** NEH

**Start:** 08/02/2007

**End:** 12/7/07

**Additional Investigators:** Dan Miles, Michael Worthington

**Institutions:** Oxford Dendrochronological Laboratory

**Project:** NEH/Dendro

**Start:** 12/7/07

**End:** 12/7/07

### Summary Description:

The Bacon's Castle quarter is a 1.5-story frame duplex, covered with a side-gable roof and horizontal siding, with two exterior end chimneys, measuring @36'7" by 14'3". The building rests on brick piers and has a porch centered on its west facing façade that covers the three exterior doorways; one each for the two downstairs rooms, and a third that opens onto the central staircase providing access to the two garret rooms. Each of the first-floor rooms also has a doorway opening into the closet below the staircase. On the rear wall one window in each bay is positioned directly opposite the front windows: the garret rooms each have two gable windows. Each of the two end chimneys serves a fireplace on the first floor and one in the garret. The quarter is located 123 feet from the SW corner to the NE corner of the two-story addition on the main house, at an angle of 136°.

Close examination of the upper plates and the roof frame indicates that the building is the result of two phases of construction. The primary physical evidence for this interpretation consists of the different (wider) spacing of the rafters that begins at a point within what is now the south garret room, along with corresponding lap joints in both the front and rear plates. The results of dendrochronological testing have confirmed the two construction phases, indicating that the original building (north end) was erected circa 1829, with the addition on the south dating circa 1848.

The presence of two posts centered in the west wall of the phase I structure indicates the probable location of the original doorway. The half-story configuration of the building was an original feature. Conclusive evidence for the placement of the original stair has yet to be revealed, but a patch found in the garret flooring is highly suggestive, and may indicate that the stair was positioned along the rear wall roughly opposite the period I doorway. While the central placement of the door posts suggests that the plan of the period I structure may have consisted of a single first-floor room, the relatively large footprint dimensions (@24 by 14 feet) could have

accommodated more than one space. The presence of empty mortises (half-lapped, angled downward) cut into the posts and studs along the west façade of the period I section suggests the previous location of a porch.

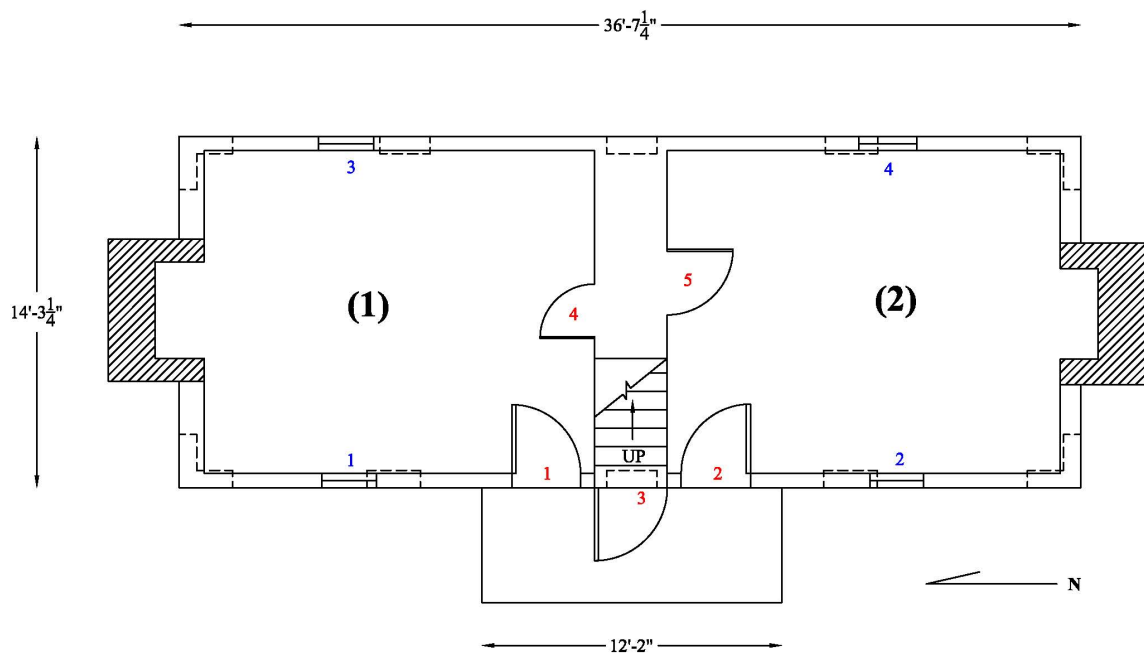
In the period I section of the building, there is no intermediate plate along the west (front) wall – the posts and studs run the full distance from the sill to the top plate – but there is an intermediate plate on the east wall. In period II, there is no intermediate plate in either the east or west walls. A rear kitchen addition that was constructed in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century was removed by the APVA. Window 3 was cut to make a doorway into the rear ell and was returned to a window once the addition was removed.

The upstairs partition boards to the east are sash sawn, while those to the west are circular sawn. It is likely that there was a closet at the east end of the stair hall on the second floor. In the south upstairs room, the doorway in the north end has board and batten construction with wire nails, whereas the doorway from the south room into the stairwell is original.

**Bibliography:**

*Early Architecture of Tidewater Virginia* (2002); Miles and Worthington *The Tree-Ring Dating of Eight Virginia Slave Houses* (2009)

**Footprint:**



**Number of Rooms:** 4 (2 up, 2 down)

- Dimensions:**
- (1) 15'-10" (N-S) x 13'-4 1/4" (7'-4" height)
  - (2) 15'-11 1/2" (N-S) x 13'-4" (8'-0" height)
  - (3) 15'-7" (N-S) x 14'-0 1/2" (8'-2 1/2" to roof apex)
  - (4) 16'-1" (N-S) x 14'-1" (9'-2 1/2" to roof apex)

(closet) **(5)** 3'-5 ½" (N-S) x 12'-5" (from stair bottom) or 8'-1" (from top of stair)

**Principal Construction Type:** Frame

**Period I**

One and One-half Story, possibly with porch

**Footprint:** Undetermined, but likely 2 rooms (1 up, 1 down)

**Dendro Date:** 1829

**Period II**

One and One-half Story, with porch and central stair

**Number of Rooms:** 4 (2 up, 2 down)

**Dimensions:** **(1)** 15'-10" (N-S) x 13'-4 ¼" (7'-4" height)

**(2)** 15'-11 ½" (N-S) x 13'-4" (8'-0" height)

**(3)** 15'-7" (N-S) x 14'-0 ½" (8'-2 ½" to roof apex)

**(4)** 16'-1" (N-S) x 14'-1" (9'-2 ½" to roof apex)

(closet) **(5)** 3'-5 ½" (N-S) x 12'-5" (from stair bottom) or 8'-1" (from top of stair)

**Dendro Date:** 1848

**Foundation:**

**Masonry Piers:** Brick

**Number:** 10 total

**Dimensions:** 0'-8 ½" (W) x 2'-2" (L) x 1'-1 ¼" (H)

**Shed/Porch:** Yes

**Location:** front, center on west façade (presumably added in the late 19<sup>th</sup> C); see footprint

**Roof:**

**Roof Form:** Gable

**Roof Covering:** Standing seam metal

**Roof Framing:**

**Exposed:** Yes

**Form:** common rafters

**Rafter No:** 18 pairs

**Rafter dimensions:** 2 ¾" x 3 ¾"; 23-26" on center

Mortise and tenon joints; most rafters are sash sawn with some pit sawn; circular sawn in south portion; some whitewash on roof framing; collars with lap joints and machine cut nails; roofing boards look sash sawn with machine cut nails (6 ½" -1'-0" wide); there is some evidence of lath.

**Building Height:** 12'-3" (southwest corner) – from ground surface to bottom of eave

**Chimney Height:** 23'-1"

**Walls:**

**Frame:**

**Material:** wood

**Cladding:** horizontal; weatherboard/lapped with machine cut nails (6-6 1/2" wide)

**Beaded:** No

**Doors:**

**Number:** 7 (3 exterior, 4 interior)

(1)

(2)

(3)

<b>Type:</b>	<b>2 panel</b>	<b>2 panel</b>	<b>2 panel</b>
<b>Dimensions:</b>	<b>2'10" by 5'10 1/2"</b>	<b>2'9 1/2" by 5'10 1/2"</b>	<b>2'11 1/2" by 6'0"</b>
<b>Hardware:</b>	<b>Modern butt hinges</b>	<b>Modern butt hinges</b>	<b>Modern butt hinges</b>
<b>Swing:</b>	<b>In (room 1)</b>	<b>In (room 2)</b>	<b>Out</b>

(4)

(5)

(6)

<b>Type:</b>	<b>Board &amp; Batten</b>	<b>Board &amp; Batten</b>	<b>Board &amp; Batten</b>
<b>Dimensions:</b>	<b>2'0 1/4 by 5'8 1/4"</b>	<b>2'8" by 5'10"</b>	<b>3'0 1/2" by 5'9 1/2"</b>
<b>Hardware:</b>	<b>Modern Butterfly Hinges</b>	<b>T-shaped Hinge</b>	<b>T-shaped Hinge</b>
<b>Swing:</b>	<b>In (room 1)</b>	<b>In (room 2)</b>	<b>In</b>

(7)

<b>Type:</b>	<b>No Door</b>
<b>Dimensions:</b>	<b>3'1" by 5'8 1/2"</b>
<b>Hardware:</b>	<b>None</b>
<b>Swing:</b>	<b>In</b>

**Windows:**  
**Number: 8**

(1)

(2)

(3)

<b>Type:</b>	<b>6/6 single hung sash</b>	<b>6/6 single hung sash</b>	<b>6/6 single hung sash</b>
<b>Dimensions:</b>	<b>2'4" by 3'8 ½"</b>	<b>2'2 ¾" by 3'8 ½"</b>	<b>2'3" by 3'9 ½"</b>
<b>Hardware:</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>None</b>

(4)

(5)

(6)

<b>Type:</b>	<b>6/6 single hung sash</b>	<b>4-pane, fixed</b>	<b>4-pane, fixed</b>
<b>Dimensions:</b>	<b>2'3" by 4'4"</b>	<b>1'8 ½" by 1'11 ½"</b>	<b>1'8 ½" by 2'0 ½"</b>
<b>Hardware:</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>None</b>

(7)

(8)

<b>Type:</b>	<b>4-pane, fixed</b>	<b>4-pane, fixed</b>
<b>Dimensions:</b>	<b>1'8 ½" by 1'11 ½"</b>	<b>1'8 ½" by 1'11 ½"</b>
<b>Hardware:</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>None</b>

**Chimney(s):**

**Chimney (1):** Brick, End (south end), Exterior; 3:1 bond with shell mortar with two shoulders and simple molded cap

**Chimney (2):** Brick, End (north end), Exterior; 3:1 bond with shell mortar with two shoulders and simple molded cap

**Interior:**

**Wall Framing:** Timber frame

**Wall Finish:** Room 1 walls have 2 ½" tongue and groove horizontal paneling and also has 3" wide bead board. Room 2 has 12-14" horizontal boards with flush joints.

**Fireplace:** Brick

**Fireplace Location(s):**

**Fireplace (1):** End, Center (room 1), altered from round arch

**Hearth material:** brick

**Hearth dimensions:** 3'-11" (W) x 3'-7" (original height, 3'-1" at present)  
x 2'-0" (D)

**Fireplace (2):** End, Center (room 2)

**Hearth material:** brick

**Hearth dimensions:** 3'-4 1/2" (H) x 3'-8" (W) x 1'-6 1/2" (D)

**Fireplace (3):** End, Center (north attic room)

**Hearth material:** brick

**Hearth dimensions:** 2'-8" (H) x 2'-5 1/2" (W) x 1'-4" (D)

**Fireplace (4):** End, Center (south attic room)

**Hearth material:** brick

**Hearth dimension:** 3'-0" (H) x 2'-7" (W) x 1'-2" (D)

**Stair:** Yes

**Type:** Enclosed stringer

**Subfloor Pit:** No

**Floor:** wood

**Dating:** Dendrochronology

Period I -- 1829

Period II – 1848

**Comments:**

Period II roof frame circular sawn.