

Slave Housing Data Base

Building Name: Sanford-Burgess Log Building

Evidence Type: Extant

City or Vicinity: Fredericksburg

County: Stafford

State: Virginia

Investigators: Andrew Stempel; Doug Sanford; Gary Stanton

Institution: Center for Historic Preservation, University of Mary Washington

Project Start: 6/29/07

Project End: 6/29/07

Additional Investigators: Gardiner Hallock, Jobie Hill, Niya Bates

Institution: Monticello

Project Start: 5/22/14

Project End: 5/22/14

Additional Investigator: Dennis Pogue

Institution: University of Maryland

Project Start: 4-13-15

Project End: 5-13-15

Summary Description:

The Sanford-Burgess slave building is a 1½-story, single-celled, gable-roofed log cabin, supported upon a dry-laid stone foundation, measuring approximately 14 feet (E-W) by 12 feet (N-S). Physical evidence in the form of mature cut nails and circular-sawn lumber suggests a late antebellum date; the 1860 federal census lists nine slaves living on the property, residing in three separate houses.

In the 20th century the structure was converted into a workshop, with a frame shed supported by earthfast posts added running the length of the north wall. Other alterations included covering both the original, low-pitched gable roof and the shed in standing seam metal, which covers the former brick flue opening at the peak of the west gable. Three sides of the building exhibit remnants of either circular-sawn vertical or horizontal board siding that is contemporary with the shed; the exposed logs on the north wall covered by the shed are whitewashed. Elements reflecting the farm shop function survive on the interior, including low counters arranged along the south and west walls.

The current exterior doorway is located at the SE corner of the east end wall and is likely an addition. The doorway now connecting the cabin to the shed almost certainly originally served as the primary means of egress, with the façade therefore facing the Burgess dwelling. There is no indication of a fireplace, but a 7-inch-diameter hole in the ceiling correlates with a brick structure that served as a flue, raised on a wooden platform centered on the west gable wall in the garret; the chimney/flue that would have pierced the roof is not extant. Access to the garret was provided by an open staircase positioned along the east wall, rising from the NE corner and with an enclosed storage space below. One window is positioned in each of the south and west walls and in the east gable. The

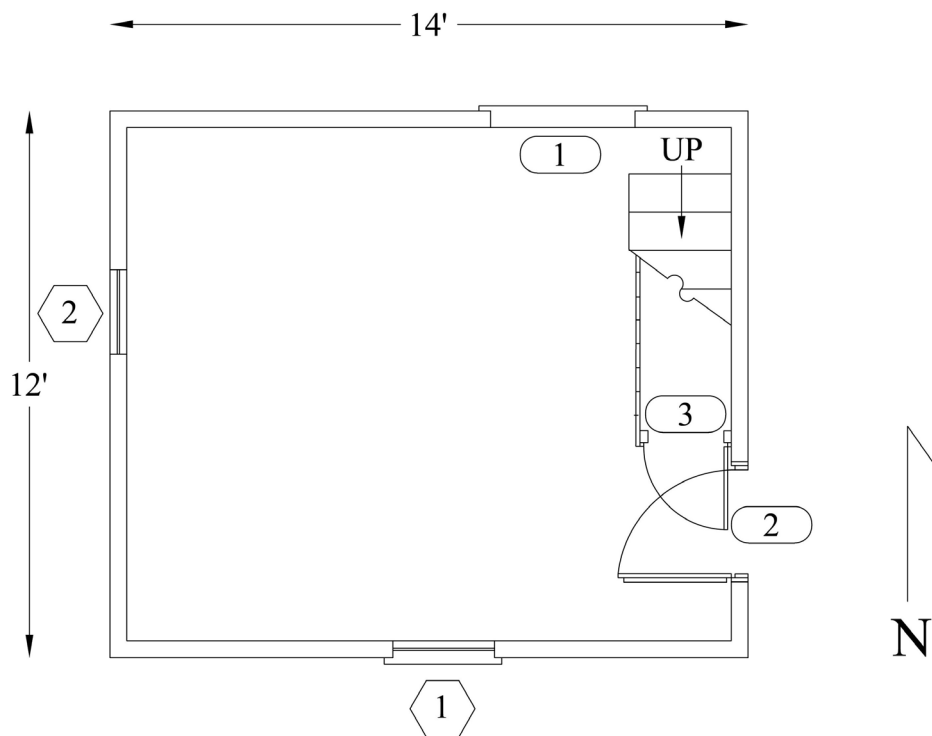
first floor ceiling is relatively low, measuring 5 ft.10³/₄ in. from the floor to the bottom of the ceiling joists. Both the downstairs room and the garret space have whitewashed interior surfaces.

The wall logs are hewn flat on two sides, chinked with a mixture of saplings and stones and daubed with mud, and are joined by half-dovetail notches at the corners. The gables are enclosed with horizontal siding and rake boards. The top log in each end wall extends 7 in. beyond the eave (N and S), which support a half-lapped false plate; the rafters are set to the outside edge of the plate, and are covered with sheathing boards.

Principal Construction Type: Log

1½- Story

Footprint: 20th-Century Porch Not Shown



Number of Rooms: 2 (1 down, 1 up)

Dimensions: (1) 11 ft. 2 in. (N-S) x 13 ft. 1 in. (E-W)

(2) Garret: 11 ft. 1 in. (N-S) x 13 ft. 1 in. (E-W)

Doors: 3 (2 exterior, 1 beneath stair)

	(1)	(2)	(3) Stair closet
Type:	Missing	Board & batten	Missing
Dimensions:	Door opening: 2 ft. 10 in. (W) x 5 ft. 1.5 in. (H)	2 ft. 8.5 in (W) x 5ft. 0 in. (H)	1 ft. 9 in. (W) x 5 ft. 3 in. (H)
Hardware:	Butt hinges	Rim lock; butt hinges	Evidence of butt hinges
Swing:	Out	In	Out
Replacement:			

Windows: 3 (2 down; 1 up, garret)

	(1)	(2)	(3) Garret
Type:	Panes missing; double-hung sash	4 panes missing; fixed sash	6/6 double-hung sash
Dimensions:	2 ft. 2.5 in. (W) x 3 ft. 9 in. (H)	1 ft. 11 in. (W) x 2 ft. 0 in. (H)	2 ft. 3 in. (W) x 3 ft. 9 in. (H)
Hardware:	None	None	None
Shuttered/Slide/Swing:	N/A	N/A	N/A

EXTERIOR

Foundation:

Continuous Masonry: Stone: mixture of continuous masonry and stones (not raised piers) at SW and SE corners. Mixed use of round and square cut stones, containing quartz, greenstone, and micaceous schist.

Thickness: 6 to 12 in.

Height: 2 to 8 in.

Bond: Random

Mortar Type: None (dry laid)
Joint: None
Repaired: No

Shed: Yes: on north side of building covered with standing seam metal roof, open to west side; three earthfast cedar posts. Roof framing uses dimensional lumber. Exterior vertical siding on east side affixed with wire nails. Three rails apparently reused material, likely rafters; pitted with notches likely to accommodate collars.

Roof:

Roof Form: Gable

Roof Covering: Standing seam metal (replacement)

Roof Framing:

Exposed: Yes

Form: Common rafters

Rafter Number: 8 pairs, cedar poles cut flat on roof side, butted and nailed; clay packed in eaves where rafters meet the log plate

Rafter Dimensions: 3-4 in. diameter (approx. 8 ft. long)

Height from floor to roof peak: 8 ft. 5.5 in.

In garret 5-6 logs in walls above the floor level, reaching 2 ft. 8 in to 3 ft. 1 in; at north and south end walls top logs project 7 in. to carry notched false plate.

Collar Ties: No

Building Height: From top of foundation to plate at NW corner: 10 ft.

Walls:

Log: Largely pine, but base logs appear to be mixed oak and poplar;

Dimensions: 5 to 9 in. (H) x 6 in.

Finish: Hewn flat on two sides; debarked

Notching: Half dovetail

Chinking: Composite (stones, mud, and saplings – some nailed in place)

Chimney(s): Building may only have had an opening in the roof acting as a flue for one or two wood stoves; the base of a brick flue rests on board supports within the centered on the west wall of the garret.

INTERIOR

Wall Framing: Log

Wall Finish: Chinking and whitewash

Fireplace (1): No fireplaces present, see comment above as to wood stoves serviced by a brick flue in the garret.

Stairs: Yes (in NE corner); circular sawn lumber joined by machine-cut nails.

Type: Open stringer, with vertical circular sawn boards below steps.

Stairwell Dimensions: 2 ft. 5 in. (W) x 5 ft. 11 in. (L)

Number of Treads: 7

Subfloor Pit: No

Floor: Wood (floor largely missing)

Floorboards Dimension: Approx. 9 to 12 in. wide on first floor; 14 inches in garret; rabbeted in garret.

The first-floor joists run in an E-W direction, and are supported by a sill at each end inside and independent of the wall logs.

Dating: Antebellum period, ca. 1830s-50s

Dating Evidence:

Saw Marks: Circular sawn

Nails: Fully formed machine-cut nails

Comments:

The structure is abandoned and in stable but poor condition; it had deteriorated significantly between 2007 and 2015. It is located on a rise overlooking the Rocky Pen Reservoir and the associated structures, driveways, and parking areas, surrounded by tall grass and encroaching shrubs, vines, and pine trees. Other surviving but deteriorated structures associated with the farm owner first by the Sanford and later the Burgess families are distributed nearby.

The site was visited in March and May 2015 as part of the Stafford County slave building survey.