

Slave Housing Data Base

Building Name: Sherwood Forest Kitchen/Laundry-Quarters

Evidence Type: Extant

Historical Site Name: Sherwood Forest Plantation

City or Vicinity: Fredericksburg

County: Stafford

State: VA

Investigators: Doug Sanford, Dennis Pogue

Institutions: University of Mary Washington, University of Maryland

Project Start: 7/11/13

Project End: 3/17/15

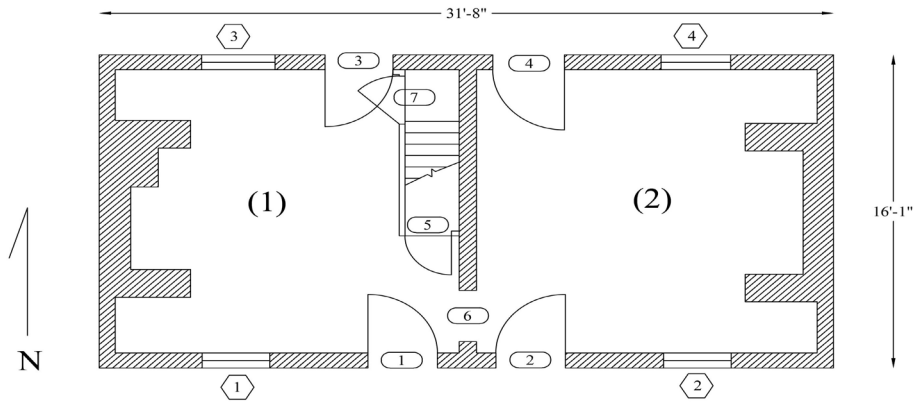
Summary Description:

The Sherwood Forest kitchen-laundry-quarter is a substantial brick building, four bays in form and 1½ stories high, roughly 32 by 16 feet in dimension, with interior end chimneys and a slate-covered side-gable roof with a corbelled cornice. The symmetrical façade is oriented toward the main house, and features two separate doorways, closely set on either side of the interior medial wall, each flanked by a double-sash window. The rear elevation is similar, with two centrally positioned doorways and flanking windows, but the western doorway is shifted slightly to accommodate the off-centered stairway positioned in the west room that provides access to the garret. The combination of documentary sources and a variety of physical evidence, such as carpentry techniques and nail types, indicates that this structure likely dates to the 1840s. It represents the combination of a kitchen and probable laundry downstairs, and domestic spaces for slaves in the half-story above. As such, it exemplifies the more architecturally ambitious, multiple-use structures that served as both work place and domestic space for the slaves serving the owner's household that were a regular feature found at elite plantations.

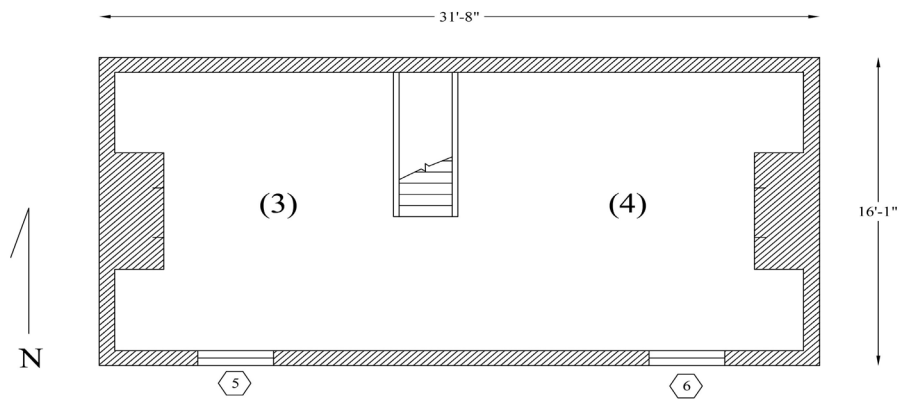
The first-floor rooms are equal in size, separated by the brick wall, but the placement of the stairway in the west room constricts that space; a large fireplace is centered on each end wall. The layout of the garret is identical, but with fireplaces of a more domestic scale centered on the end walls. Two horizontal windows in the façade (currently hinged to tilt inward) provide light to the spaces. The garret had been divided by a wood partition, which was removed during recent repairs to the roof structure. Considerable period fabric survives, and the structure retains its essential interior configuration, despite major renovations undertaken during the 1920s-30s when the entire Sherwood Forest estate and farm was revamped and updated. The work included installing new interior wall surfaces (plaster on wire mesh), new trim work around doors and windows, and cabinet-style shelving to the sides of the fireplaces, replacing the interior stairs, inserting a doorway in the medial wall, and lowering the ceiling in the garret. The building appears to have been kept as a combined kitchen and living space during the 20th century.

Principal Construction Type: Masonry (brick), 1½ stories

First Floor Footprint:



Second Floor: After partition removed (2014)



Number of Rooms: 2 downstairs (Rooms 1-2), 2 upstairs (Rooms 3-4)

Room Dimensions:

- (1) 15 ft. 6 in. (E-W) by 14 ft. 9 in. (N-S); height of bottom of joists above floor: 7 ft. 2 in. (contains staircase)
- (2) 15 ft. 6 in. (E-W) by 14 ft. 9 in. (N-S); height of bottom of joists above floor: 7 ft. 2 in.
- (3) 14 ft. 8.5 in. (E-W) by 14 ft. 9 in. (N-S); contains stairwell opening, which shortens the room length to 12 ft. 2.5 in. on the north wall
- (4) 15 ft. 2 in. (E-W) by 14 ft. 9 in. (N-S)

Doors: 8

	(1)	(2)	(3)
Type:	4 panels, unglazed	4 panels, unglazed	4x4 paneled door, unglazed
Dimensions:	Width: 2 ft. 11.25 in. Height: 6 ft. 6 in. Thickness: 1.25 in.	Width: 2 ft. 11.25 in. Height: 6 ft. 5.25 in. Thickness: 1.25 in.	Width: 2 ft. 11.75 in. Height: 6 ft. 5.25 in. Thickness: 1.25 in.
Hardware:	- Metal key lock panel - Modern butt hinges	- Metal key lock panel - Modern butt hinges	-Metal doorknob with key and lock plate - Butt hinges (modern)
Swing:	Into Room 1	Into Room 2	Into Room 1
Replacement:	Door frame with modern dimensional lumber		

	(4)	(5)	(6)
Type:	Not observed, blocked by stack of window shutters	5 paneled door (unglazed)	Frame still exists, but door removed
Dimensions:	Width: 3 ft. 1.25 in. (note as exterior measurement) Height: 6 ft. 6 in.	Width: 2 ft. Height: 6 ft. 6.25 in. Thickness: 1.25 in.	Width: 2 ft. 7 in. Height: 6 ft. 5.75 in.
Hardware:		-Metal doorknob with key and lock plate - Butt hinges (modern)	
Swing:	Into Room 2	Into Room 1	Originally door swung into Room 2
Replacement:			

	(7)	(8)
Type:	5 paneled door, unglazed	4 panels
Dimensions:	Width: 2 ft. 7.75 in. Height: 6 ft. 5.75 in. Thickness: 1.25 in.	Width: 2 ft. 6 in. Height: 6 ft. 5.5 in. Thickness: 1 in.

Hardware:	-Metal doorknob with lock and key plate - Butt hinges (modern)	- Vertical mortise lock, iron knob - 5 knuckle butt hinges with finials
Swing:	Into Room 1	Into Room 3
Replacement:		Removed 2014

Windows: 6

	(1)	(2)	(3)
Type:	6x6 pane double hung sash window	6x6 pane double hung sash window	6x6 pane double hung sash window
Dimensions:	Width: 2 ft. 10.75 in. Height: 4 ft. 5 in.	Width: 2 ft. 9.75 in. Height: 4 ft. 4.5 in.	Width: 2 ft. 9.5 in. Height: 4 ft. 4.75
Hardware:	- Lock with metal tab - Modern dimensional lumber frame	- Lock with metal tab - Modern dimensional lumber frame	-Lock, push/pull tab - Dimensional lumber, larger than window 1 - Redone molding within jambs
Shuttered/Slide/Swing:	None	None	None

	(4)	(5)	(6)
Type:	6x6 pane double hung sash window	6 pane sash, hinged at top	6 pane sash, hinged at top
Dimensions:	Width: 2 ft. 9.5 in. Height: 4 ft. 4.75 in.	Width: 2 ft. 10.5 in. Height: 2 ft. 5 in.	Width: 2 ft. 10.5 in. Height: 2 ft. 4.75 in.
Hardware:	- Lock with metal tab - Modern dimensional lumber frame	- 2 metal cross garnet hinges	- 2 metal cross garnet hinges
Shuttered/Slide/Swing:	None	None Sash swings up toward rafters	None Sash swings up toward rafters

The headers for the garret windows are set into the brickwork and beveled to allow the casement window to swing upward.

EXTERIOR

Foundation:

Continuous Masonry: Brick (handmade bricks)

Bond: Common/American (5 course)

Mortar Type: Sand

Joint: Flush

Repaired: Yes

Shed/Porch: No

Roof:

Roof Form: Gable

Roof Covering: Slate

Roof Framing:

Exposed: Yes

Form: Common rafters (half lapped and spiked)

Rafter Number: 15 pairs

Rafter Dimensions: Nominally 2.75 to 3 in. (W) by 4 in. (H)

Collar Ties: Yes (both higher originals and lower, later set)

Collar Dimensions: 1 in. by 3.5-4.5 in.

Method of Joining: 2-3 machine-cut nails at each end

Height from Roof Peak: approx. 1 ft. 9 in. from top of collar

Height to Floor: 7 ft. 9.5 in. from top of collar

The roof frame was replaced in 2014, with the exception of two rafter pairs. The original rafters were composed of a mixture of hewn and sash sawn timbers. The original (upper) collars were half-lapped and spiked to the rafters with machine-cut nails. Remnants of whitewash survived on the collars, rafters, and the roofing boards, indicating that originally this interior space had exposed framing. The roofing boards were sash sawn and varied in width, but with a modal dimension of 15 to 16 inches. Rise over run for the rafters: 8.25 in. over 12 in.

Later collars had been inserted below the originals, composed of dimensional lumber that was band sawn and affixed with wire nails. These collars helped to frame a lowered, gypsum board-type ceiling; they were removed in 2014.

Building Height: @ SE corner

Ground to bottom of brick cornice: 12 ft. 8.25 in.

Ground to top of brick cornice: 13 ft. 7 in.

Ground to bottom course of chimneystack (roof peak): 17 ft. 5.75 in.

Ground to top of chimney: 23 ft. 3.25 in.

Walls:**Masonry:** Brick**Bond:** Common**Mortar Type:** Sand and Shell**Joint:** Flush & overhand struck**Repaired:** Yes, with areas of modern cement patches**Chimney(s):****Chimney (1):** East end**Material:** Brick**Location:** Interior/End**Height:** To top of stack, 23 ft. 3.25 in.**Chimney (2):** West end**Material:** Brick**Location:** Interior/End**Height:** (not measured)

INTERIOR

Walls: Exposed brick

Wall Finish: The current finish on the brick walls is plaster on wire mesh, probably installed ca. 1930s; the earlier finish consisted of whitewash, later covered with paint. The brick walls in Room 2 exhibit scoring in preparation for applying the wire mesh. In the garret, the exposed knee wall (17 course of brick) was whitewashed.

What appears to have been the original vertical-board partition for the upstairs space survived on the north side of the stairwell. The boards measured 8.5 to 11 in. wide, with a 0.25-in. bead, nailed to the rafter above. Nail holes on the center rafter pair suggest the partition continued across to the south wall, indicating the division of the upstairs space into two rooms, each with a fireplace. The partition was removed in 2014.

Fireplaces: Both first-floor fireplaces retain evidence of earlier cooking/heating arrangements. Pockets in the walls on either side of the arch may have served as warming niches. The pockets begin at heights of 4 ft. 3 in. and 4 ft. 6 in. above the floor, reaching to 5 ft. 2 in. and 5 ft. 3 in. respectively. In Room 1, these pockets have been patched with mortar and could have received a timber measuring 5 in. by 5.5 in. Both fireplaces have arched openings, supported by flat iron lintels (2 in. by 0,75 in.). Fireplace 1 has been modified by installing a much later (1930s) cooking feature.

Fireplace (1): End (Room 1)**Fireplace Material:** Brick**Fireplace Overall Dimensions: Width:** 9 ft. 2.25 in., **Height:** 7 ft. 11.25 in.**Fireplace Opening Dimensions: Width:** 6 ft. 4 in. (wide) x 2 ft. 6.5 in. (deep) x 3 ft. 6 in. (at side) to 4 ft. 3 in. (at center) high

Hearth Material: Brick (extension of the fireplace floor)
Hearth Dimensions: 1 ft. 4.75 in. wide by 9 ft. 2.25 in. long

Fireplace (2): End (Room 2)

Fireplace Material: Brick
Fireplace Overall Dimensions: **Width:** 9 ft. 1 in., **Height:** 7 ft. 11 in.
Fireplace Opening Dimensions: 6 ft. 3 in. (wide) x 2 ft. 6.5 in. (deep) x 3 ft. 5 in. (at side) to 4 ft. 2 in. (at center) high
Hearth Material: Brick (essentially extension of the fireplace floor)
Hearth Dimensions: 1 ft. 4.75 in. wide by 9 ft. 1 in. long

Fireplace (3): End (Room 3, 2nd story)

Fireplace Material: Brick
Fireplace Overall Dimensions: **Length:** 6 ft. 0.75 in., **Width:** 1 ft. 10 in.
Fireplace Opening Dimensions: **Width:** 2 ft. 11.5 in., **Depth:** 1 ft. 5.5 in.,
Height: 2 ft. 2.25 in.
Hearth Material: Brick
Hearth Dimensions: 1 ft. 5 in. wide by 6 ft. 0.75 in. long

Fireplace (4): End (Room 4, 2nd story)

Fireplace Material: Brick
Fireplace Overall Dimensions: **Length:** 6 ft. 1 in., **Width:** 1 ft. 10 in.
Fireplace Opening Dimensions: **Width:** 2 ft. 6.5 in., **Depth:** 1 ft. 5.5 in.,
Height: 2 ft. 2.25 in.
Hearth Material: Brick
Hearth Dimensions: 1 ft. 10 in. wide by 6 ft. 1 in. long

Stairs: Yes

Type: Enclosed (modern reworking of original location)
Stairwell Dimensions: 7 ft. 8 in. long by 2 ft. 4.5 in. wide
Number of Treads: One step to landing and then 7 steps to the second story floor
Stair Tread Dimensions: **Length:** 2 ft. 4.5 in., **Height:** 10 ft. 0.25 in.,
Width: 8.5 in. (1 in. thick).

The current stair enclosure is not original and likely dates to the 1920s-30s-era renovation; it is composed of dimensional lumber and wire nails; the stringer is circular sawn and is also a replacement; the stair treads are attached with round/wire nails.

Subfloor Pit: No

Floor: Wood, not original, reflects replacement with modern dimensional lumber, tongue-and-grooved, 3 in. wide.

Joists: Dimensional boards have been used to encase the ceiling joists, likely during the 1920s-30s renovation. The original joists measure 3 in. wide; the encased joists measure

4.75 to 5 in. wide. The joists are 9 to 9.5 in. high and, from center to center, are from 2 ft. 6 in. to 2 ft. 10 in. apart.

Dating: Post-1820/30 based on fully formed, machine-cut nails; later renovation likely 1920s-30s based on wire nails, circular sawn dimensional lumber, and wire mesh plaster.

Dendrochronology Date: N/A

Dating Evidence:

Saw Marks: Sash sawn

Nails: Machine cut

Comments:

After the recent (2014) repairs the structure is in relatively secure condition. The roof frame was rebuilt and the existing slate shingles were reinstalled. The doors and windows are weather tight. The first-floor ceiling is destabilized, however, and is held in place by wooden braces. Sections of the garret sub-floor are in poor condition.

The kitchen-laundry-quarter is located within what had been the core plantation complex. The main house, a substantial brick structure, two stories in height, is located a few hundred feet to the south; the frame duplex quarter is a few hundred feet to the north, and the frame smoke house is a similar distance to the east. Other farm buildings – barns of various kinds, ages, and construction types – and more secondary structures, such as workshops and chicken houses, are distributed nearby. All of these buildings are currently unused; the main house recently underwent a variety of repairs and is in relatively good condition.

This structure was recorded as part of the Stafford County survey of slave related buildings (2015).