

## Slave Housing Data Base

**Building Name:** Walnut Valley Plantation outbuilding

**Evidence Type:** Extant

**Site ID:** 44YO262; DHR no. 090-0023

**Historical Site Name:** Walnut Valley

**City or Vicinity:** Chippokes State Park

**County:** Surry

**State:** Virginia

**Investigators:** Douglas W. Sanford, Dennis J. Pogue

**Institutions:** Center for Historic Preservation, UMW; Mount Vernon Ladies' Association

**Project Start:** 8/4/08                      **Project End:** 10/14/08

**Additional Investigators:** Dan Miles

**Institutions:** Oxford Dendrochronological Laboratory

**Project Start:** 10/14/08                      **Project End:** 10/14/08

### Summary Description:

The Walnut Valley Plantation outbuilding is a one-story frame structure with an unheated garret, covered by a side-gable roof (currently standing seam metal), clad in wooden weather boards, and supported by six brick piers (@16 by 14 ft. in dimension). The first floor consists of a single room, with an exterior chimney (3:1 bond with pencilled joints) serving a fireplace centered on the east wall, and with doorways and single windows in the two principal elevations. The north door is board and batten and appears to be original, thus making this wall the façade, while the south doorway (slightly larger and offline with the north door) is a later addition. A ladder stair currently is positioned in the northwest corner of the room, but evidence in the form of a surviving header indicates that the stair originally was placed in the opposite corner, rising along the east wall and overlapping slightly with the front of the fireplace. Probably at the same time that the stairway was repositioned, the partition in the garret was shifted from the east to the west. The door in the current partition is hung on a pair of large wooden hinges that are attached using machine cut and headed nails. The results of dendrochronological testing indicate that the building was erected circa 1816.

Early but likely not original corner boards are beaded and attached with machine-cut nails. Square, machine-cut nails survive in the original 4/4 window sash and frames, fascia, and crown moldings (including some hand-headed T-heads). On the east end wall, north of the chimney, the exterior siding is attached with machine-cut nails below the level of the soffit, but this also may be replaced, as a ghost in the chimney mortar does not match with the current siding profile. The ceiling joists extend beyond the plate, with what appears to be an original beaded fascia board nailed to the ends of the joists on the facade, with a beaded crown board above; the fascia on the rear wall has been replaced with an unbeaded board. The later interior siding boards are not beveled and are either gapped, with battens on the exterior side (such as on the west wall), or butted. On the north, east, and south walls, the circular sawn boards are confined to the top 2 to 3 feet and are 12-13 in. wide. The original framing on the first floor appears to be largely oak,

while the ceiling joists and the roof framing is largely poplar.

The structure has undergone significant alterations within the relatively recent past (20th century), as well as considerably earlier. Archaeological testing revealed that the building originally had a solid brick foundation along the east wall. Sometime after the Civil War, these were replaced by brick piers and piers supporting the other walls were reworked. Circular-sawn wall sills and floor joists replaced earlier timbers that would have been hewn or hand-sawn. An impression visible in the chimney mortar around the hearth indicates that the siding originally consisted of beaded weatherboard, replaced at the time of the postbellum renovation with plain weatherboards attached with wire nails.

The more recent changes include replacing the sills and many of the first floor joists with circular-sawn timber, inserting sistered joists and wooden blocks to reinforce the first floor, replacing the flooring, adding a second exterior doorway, and replacing/repairing the brick piers. In addition to changing the locations of both the ladder stair to the garret and the garret partition, an earlier campaign of alterations included rebuilding the upper portion of the chimney, changing out sections of the siding and the fascia (circular sawn with wire nails), and cladding the interior of the first floor with siding (wide horizontal boards attached with machine-cut nails, sash sawn, with whitewash and, in some areas, newspapers).

### **Bibliography:**

Daryl Cohen, *Field Notes: Small House at Walnut Valley Plantation* (2006).

James D. Kornwulf, *Guide to the Buildings of Surry and the American Revolution* (1976), pp. 127-128, for a brief history of the property and description of the main house.

David Lewes, *Walnut Valley National Register Nomination Form* (2013).

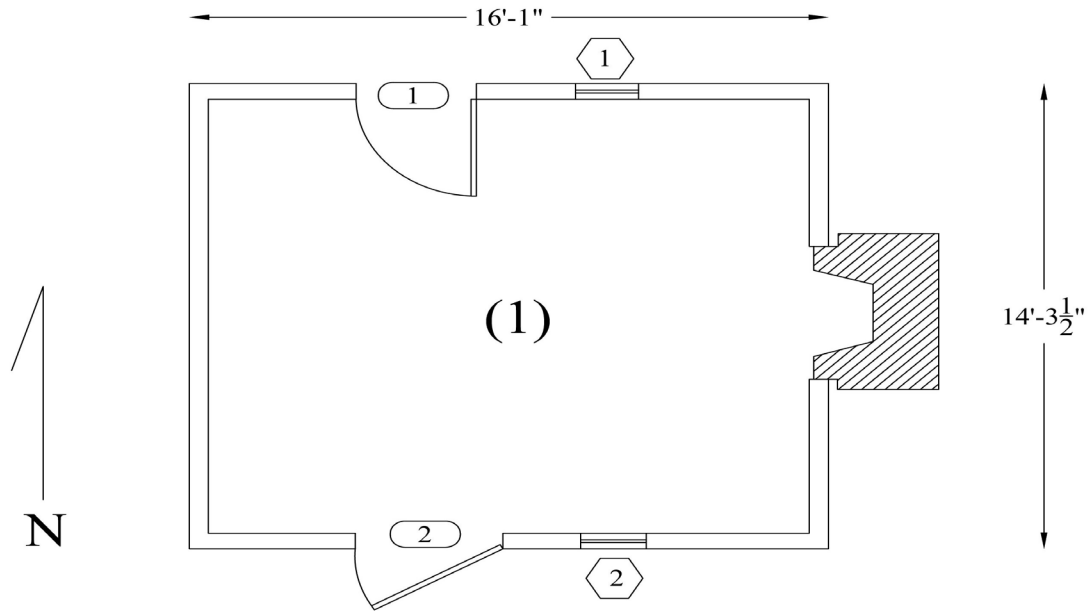
Dan Miles and Michael Worthington, *The Tree Ring Dating of Eight Virginia Slave Buildings* (2010).

Douglas Sanford, "Investigating the Slave Building at Walnut Valley Plantation (44YO262), Surry County, Virginia," *Quarterly Bulletin of the Archeological Society of Virginia* 67, no. 1 (2012):31-44.

**Principal Construction Type:** Frame

**One Story – With Garret**

**Footprint:**



**Number of Rooms:** 3 rooms; 1 down, 2 up (garret rooms have been altered by moving partition; stairs originally at western end vs. current eastern end location)

**Dimensions:** (1) 15 ft. 2.5 in. (E-W) x 13 ft. 1.5 in. (N-S); 6 ft. 11 in. from floor to bottom of joists.

(2) 11 ft. 8 in. (E-W) x ~13 ft. (N-S)

(3) 4 ft. 3 in. (E-W) x ~13 ft. (N-S)

**Period:** I

**Number of Rooms:** 3 (1 down, 2 up)

**Dimensions:** (1) 15 ft. 2.5 in. (E-W) x 13 ft. 1.5 in. (N-S)

(2) 10 ft. 2 in. (E-W) x @13 ft. (N-S)

(3) 5 ft. 9 in. (E-W) x @ 13 ft. (N-S)

**Doors: 3**

	<b>North (1)</b>	<b>South (2)</b>	<b>Garret (3)</b>
<b>Type:</b>	<b>Board &amp; batten; shiplapped</b>	<b>Board &amp; batten; circular sawn &amp; wire nails</b>	<b>Board &amp; batten</b>
<b>Dimensions:</b>	<b>3 ft. 2 in. (W) x 5 ft. 7.75 in. (H)</b>	<b>3 ft. 6.5 in. (W) x 6 ft. 0 in. (H)</b>	<b>2 ft. 8 in. (W) x 5 ft. 1.75 in. (H)</b>
<b>Hardware:</b>	<b>Modern butterfly hinges with wire nails; remnant of H-L hinge/wrought nail</b>	<b>Modern butterfly hinges</b>	<b>Wood hinges, pintles, straps; with machine cut nails</b>
<b>Swing:</b>	<b>In</b>	<b>Out</b>	<b>In</b>
<b>Replacement:</b>	<b>Original door opening</b>	<b>Yes; inserted as part of Phase II alterations</b>	<b>Part of Phase II alterations, partition construction</b>

**Windows: 3**

	<b>North (1)</b>	<b>South (2)</b>	<b>Garret (3)</b>
<b>Type:</b>	<b>4/4; double hung sash</b>	<b>4/4; double hung sash</b>	<b>Slide (no remaining evidence of sash)</b>
<b>Dimensions:</b>	<b>1 ft. 8 in. (W) x 3 ft. 8 in. (H)</b>	<b>1 ft. 8 in. (W) x 3 ft. 8 in. (H)</b>	<b>1 ft. 9 in. (W, stud to stud) x 1 ft. 11 in. (H)</b>
<b>Hardware:</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>None; upper sash with wood peg construction</b>	<b>None</b>
<b>Shuttered/ Slide/ Swing:</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>N/A; lower sash as later replacement</b>	<b>Slide (note angled sill with mortises)</b>

**EXTERIOR**

**Foundation:**

**Masonry Piers:** Brick (mixture of old and new bricks)

**Number:** 6 (4 at corners, 1 each in middle of north and south sides)

**Dimensions:** (see site plan; NW corner pier measures 17 in. (N-S) x 20 in. (E-W); middle pier on north side measures 9 in.

(N-S) x 17 in. (E-W).

**Height:**

**Mortar Type:** Concrete (evidence of Period 2 alterations)

**Joint:** Flush

**Repaired:** Yes

**Shed/Porch:** No

**Roof:** Sheathing boards have machine-cut nails.

**Roof Form:** Gable

**Roof Covering:** Sheet metal (modern replacement)

**Roof Framing:**

**Exposed:** Yes

**Form:** Common Rafters

**Rafter Number:** 9 pairs

**Rafter Dimensions:** 4 in. x 2.75 in. (most common, 7 rafters); 4 in. x 4 in.;  
4 in. x 3.5 in.

**Collar Ties:** Yes

**Collar Dimensions:** 2.75 – 3 in. x 3.75 in.

**Method of Joining:** Half lap with two machine-cut (slope headed) nails at each rafter. Rafters joined with saddle notch and peg at peak.

**Height from Roof Peak:** 1 ft. 6 in. from peak to top of collar

**Height to Floor:** 6 ft. 1 in. from floor to bottom of collar; 7 ft. 10 in. from floor to peak of roof.

**Pitch:** rise/run @ 45<sup>0</sup>; 12:12

**Building Height:** at NW corner

**Bottom sill to Soffit:** 8 ft. 1.75 in.

**Bottom sill to Top of Eave:** 8 ft. 9 in.

**At West side, center to Top of Roof Peak:** 16 ft 8 in. from bottom of siding

**Walls:**

**Frame:**

**Cladding:** Weatherboard/lapped

**Beaded:** No

**Chimney(s):** Brick with oyster shell mortar; evidence of ruled joints; lower portion has 3:1 bond; shoulders (stepped) and stack are composed of darker red brick (likely replacement); note corbelled cap.

**Chimney (1):** East end

**Material:** Brick (measure 7.75 to 8.25 in. x 3.5 to 4 in. x 2 to 2.25 in.)

**Location:** Exterior – End

**Height:** 21 ft. 3.5 in. from ground to top of cap (8 ft. 7.5 in. from ground to bottom of shoulder (change in brick color/bond); 10 ft. 11 in. from ground to top of shoulder, base of stack); 20 ft. 10.5 in. from ground to top of stack).

## INTERIOR

**Wall Framing:** Partly exposed where interior, horizontal boards missing

**Wall Finish:** Horizontal, butted boards/planks, Phase II boards are circular sawn with whitewash and later newspaper covering; with machine-cut nails.

### **Fireplace (1):** End

**Fireplace Material:** Brick (partly destroyed)

**Fireplace Overall Dimensions:** approx. 4 ft. wide between posts

**Fireplace Opening Dimensions:** unknown height and width due to destruction, depth approx. 1 ft. 5 in.

**Hearth Material:** Has been removed during Period 2 alterations, with current floor boards extending into the fireplace opening.

**Hearth Dimensions:** NA

**Stairs:** Yes (note two periods of stair openings)

**Type:** Existing stair a 2 x 4-based ladder -- original stair does not survive

**Stairwell Dimensions:** 3 ft. 8 in. (E-W) x 4 ft. 7 in. (N-S)

**Number of Treads:** unknown

**Stair Tread Dimensions:** unknown

**Period I stairs:** Stairs do not survive, but evidence of stairwell exists at building's eastern end, adjacent to the fireplace (SE corner); with opening measuring 3 ft. 7.25 in. (E-W) x 6 ft. 2.25 in. (N-S). Note surviving header at north end, running between east end wall and 2<sup>nd</sup> ceiling joist from east wall.

**Subfloor Pit:** No

**Floor:** Wood (Period 2 replacement)

**Floorboards Dimension:** 8 to 10.5 in.

### **Dating:**

**Dendrochronology Date:** circa 1816

**Other Date:** Circa 1815-1830, based on presence of hand-headed cut nails, hewn and sash sawn timbers, remnant of an H-L hinge on front door (Cohen 2006)

#### **Dating Evidence:**

**Saw Marks:** Pit sawn and hewn original material – circular sawn replacements

**Nails:** Machine cut and hand-headed nails in original elements, possible wrought nail in H-L hinge for north door, wire nails in later phases

**Comments:** The Walnut Valley cabin has been listed on the National Register of Historic Places as a contributing building for Walnut Valley Plantation