

## Virginia Slave Housing Project

**Building Name:** Sandy Hill Kitchen-Quarter

**Evidence Type:** Extant

**Site ID:** 032-0379

**Historical Site Name:** Sandy Hill

**City (or town vicinity):** West Bottom (vicinity of Fork Union)

**County:** Fluvanna

**State:** Virginia

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

**Institutions:** Virginia Slave Housing Project

**Project Start:** 6/1/22; 7/20/22

### Summary Description:

The frame, one-story, two-bay outbuilding, with a large interior end chimney, is located just to the side and behind the Sandy Hill main house. The structure is roughly 18'3"-square, with a side-gable roof covered with slates, and walls enclosed with vertical board-and-batten siding, supported on a dry-laid field stone foundation. Individual 6/6 sash windows are symmetrically placed in the opposing east and west walls; a single casement window (nonextant) was centered in the north gable. The downstairs room is divided by a partial vertical board partition to enclose a straight-run stairway (roughly 3' wide) along the north wall leading to the unheated garret. The area west of the stairway was enclosed at a later day, likely to serve as a closet or a pantry. Both the main room and the garret have exposed framing, which is whitewashed along with the inner faces of the wall, ceiling, and roofing boards. The large cooking fireplace has collapsed, and the chimney stack is precariously suspended and supported by the joists and upper framing members. The structure functioned as a kitchen on the ground floor, with an unheated garret that likely served as a secondary domestic space and for storage.

The frame is of heavy timber construction, with mortis-and-tenon joints and pegged posts. The material is circular sawn, dimensional lumber, however, with mature machine-headed cut nails used throughout. The presence of circular sawn boards provides a Terminus Post Quem (date after which) of 1840 when the kitchen was erected. The combination of traditional joinery methods with innovative materials reflects the growing influence of industrialization that was felt in Virginia in the years leading up to the Civil War. The kitchen matches the materials and methods found at the duplex quarter that is located nearby, and likely dates to the same ca. 1850s period of construction. The construction date for the main house is attributed to 1853 based on documentary evidence.

The structure appears to be little altered but is in deteriorating condition. In addition to the collapsed fireplace and chimney, the foundation stones are displaced in several locations, the sills are deteriorating and already have been partially replaced along the east wall, and several rafters are in poor condition. The original exterior siding on the

east and west walls has been removed and replaced in kind, with slightly wider battens and attached with wire nails.

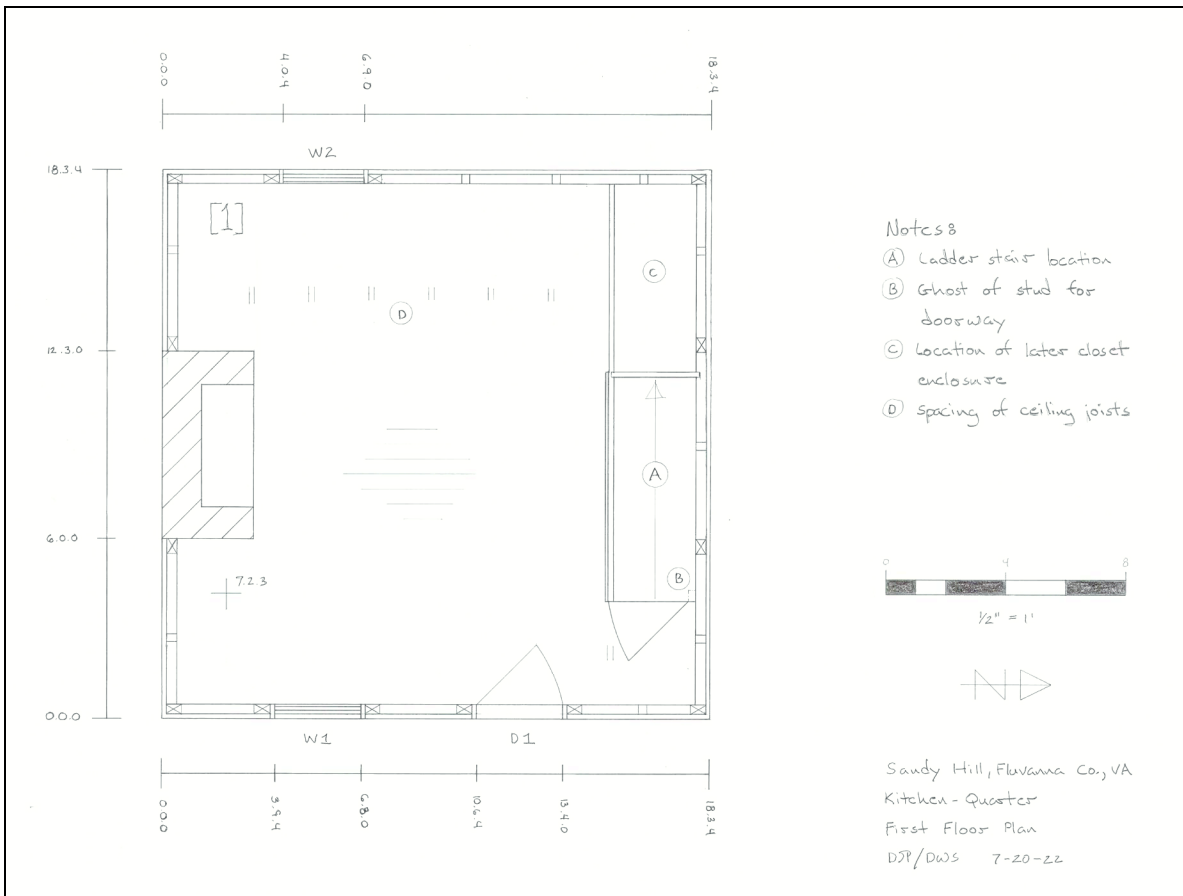
**Other Documentation:**

The U.S. Census of 1860 lists John H. Burgess, who acquired Sandy Hill in 1852, as owning three enslaved people and hiring 16 other enslaved workers. Burgess is also credited with three slave houses. Burgess may have been a principal in the company of Burgess & Anderson, who operated a nearby steam sawmill. The production of Burgess’s 588-acre property appears to have been focused on subsistence agriculture, with no tobacco crop listed. Therefore, many if not most of the 16 hired persons in 1860 may have been employed at the Burgess & Anderson sawmill. As the advent of steam power was a major factor stimulating the erection of mills producing lumber with circular saws, this enterprise may be directly related to the use of circular sawn materials in constructing the buildings at Sandy Hill. The saw mill was a major operation, as it is credited in 1860 with producing 700,000 board feet of lumber.

**Principal Construction Type: Frame**

**One Story – With Garret**

**Footprint:**



**Number of Rooms:** 2 (1 down, 1 up) not including partial stair hall and closet

**Dimensions:** (1) Downstairs: 18.1.0 (N-S) x 18.1.0 (E-W), 7.2.3 (H, from floor to bottom of ceiling joist)

(2) Upstairs: 18.1.0 (N-S) x 18.1.0 (E-W), 6.5.0 (H, from floor to bottom of collar)

**Doors:** 3

	<b>Rm. 1, E (1)</b>	<b>Rm. 1, Stairs (2)</b>	<b>Rm.1, Closet (3)</b>
<b>Type:</b>	Board and batten: 3 battens, 4 vertical boards	Unknown, removed	Board and batten (inaccessible for details)
<b>Dimensions:</b>	2.10.2 (W) x 6.1.2 (H), 0.0.3 thick	~ 3.0.0 (W) x ~ 7.0.0 (H)	2.1.0 (W) x 7.2.3 (H)
<b>Hardware:</b>	Battens with clinched wrought nails; 5-knuckle butt hinges (re-hung)	Unknown, removed (hinged on north side)	Oversize butterfly hinges on west side, at partition
<b>Swing:</b>	In	Out (into Room 1)	Out (into Room 1)
<b>Replacement:</b>	Probably original, but rehung, reworked (note doorway's replaced sill)	NA	Closet space partially beneath stairs and within partitioned corridor

**Windows:** 3

	<b>Rm. 1, E (1)</b>	<b>Rm. 1, W (2)</b>	<b>Rm. 2, N (3)</b>
<b>Type:</b>	Unknown, removed (see Window 2)	Single-hung sash, likely 6/6	Hinged casement sash (removed)
<b>Dimensions:</b>	Framed opening; 3.1.0 (W) x 4.8.2 (H)	2.11.2 (W) x 4.7.2 (H)	Framed opening: 2.8.0 (W) x 3.2.2 (H)
<b>Hardware:</b>	None, removed	None	5-knuckle butt hinges (on west side of frame)
<b>Shuttered/Slide/Swing:</b>	Likely single-hung sash, like Window 2	NA	Swung in (into Room 2)

## EXTERIOR

### Foundation:

**Continuous Masonry:** Stone – Rubble (schist and quartzite)

**Thickness:** approx. 1.0.0

**Height:** 0.6.2 (NE corner), 0.10.0 (NW corner)

**Bond:** Random – irregular coursing

**Mortar Type:** None, dry laid

**Joint:** NA

**Repaired:** Yes, with Portland cement

**Shed/Porch:** No

### Roof:

**Roof Form:** Gable

**Roof Covering:** Slate shingles

**Roof Framing:**

**Exposed:** Yes

**Form:** Common rafters

**Rafter Number:** 9 pairs, butted

**Rafter Dimensions:** 0.3.0 x 0.4.0; circular sawn

**Collar Ties:** Yes (except at north gable end)

**Collar Dimensions:** 0.3.1 (W) x 0.3.3 (H)

**Method of Joining:** Butted and spiked to rafters (toenailed with mature, machine-cut nails)

**Height from Roof Peak:** 8.5.0 (to floor)

**Height to Floor:** 6.5.0 (from bottom of collar, 6.8.3 from top of collar)

The rafter pairs are butted at the peak and rest on a flat false plate. The gable end wall studs are butted to the rafters with mature, machine-cut nails. The roofing boards are also circular sawn and measure 0.1.0 thick, and from 0.8.0 to 0.10.2 to 0.11.0 wide, with narrow gaps in between.

Framing plan for the rafters, starting at the garret's south gable end wall: 1<sup>st</sup> rafter – 2.4.0/2.7.0; 2<sup>nd</sup> rafter – 4.6.2/4.9.2; 3<sup>rd</sup> rafter – 6.5.6/6.8.6; 4<sup>th</sup> rafter – 8.5.6/8.8.6; 5<sup>th</sup> rafter – 10.7.2/10.10.2; 6<sup>th</sup> rafter – 12.7.4/12.10.2; 7<sup>th</sup> rafter – 14.11.4/15.2.2; 8<sup>th</sup> rafter (last), 18.1.0 (inside face).

**Building Height:** @ NW corner

**Ground to Soffit:** 8.8.0

**Ground to Top of Eave:** 9.6.3

**Ground to Apex:** 17.9.0 (@ north gable end)

**Walls:****Frame:****Material:** Wood**Cladding:** Vertical – Board and batten**Beaded:** No**Chimney(s):****Chimney (1):** South end, largely collapsed**Material:** Brick**Location:** Interior – End**Height:** Inaccessible

The surviving chimney stack measures 1.8.0 wide (N-S) as it rises into the garret above, where it measures 2.5.0 wide (E-W) and corbels to the top (where it exits the roof) on both sides.

**INTERIOR****Wall Framing:** Exposed

The frame is irregularly arranged around the substantial braced corner posts, with wall posts that are similar in size framing the fireplace opening, the doorway, and the windows; individual studs are inserted in the north and south walls between the wall posts and the corners, and several studs frame the west wall north of the window. A horizontal rail runs around the walls except at the fireplace opening, which is mortised to the sides of the posts and studs, to serve as the nailing surface for the vertical board-and-batten sheathing.

The posts are attached to the plates or end girt (for the chimney) with mortise-and-tenon joints, with large protruding pegs. The wall studs measure 0.2.3 x 0.4.0 and attach to the girts/plates with mortise-and-tenon joints. The end girts measure 0.4.0 x 0.7.2, while the wall plates measure 0.4.0 x 0.8.0. The down braces in the corners are lapped and nailed to the posts.

There are 7 ceiling joists and 2 end girts. Except to accommodate the chimney and the stairway, the joists (2" x 8 1/8") are set at a regular interval of 1'10" bays. The joists project roughly 6" beyond the wall to carry the fascia and soffit for the boxed eaves. From the south girt to the 1<sup>st</sup> joist measures 2.3.0, with this joist having been sawn off across the middle two-thirds, with the gap replaced by a rough-cut 2" x 4" in. timber. This timber runs across the upper, former face of the kitchen fireplace.

The north gable has only 2 wall studs, on either side of the window (Window 3). Horizontal rails run from the studs to the rafters, serving as nailers for the exterior, vertical plank siding. At the south gable end wall, a waist-high rail serves as the only

framing member on either side of the chimneystack. The rails measure 0.4.2 (W) x 0.3.2 (H).

**Wall Finish:** Whitewash

**Fireplace (1):** End -- collapsed

**Fireplace Material:** Brick

**Fireplace Overall Dimensions:** ~ 2.7.0 (N-S) x 6.4.0 (E-W)

**Fireplace Opening Dimensions:** ~ 4.2.0 (W) x unknown (H) x 1.9.0 (D)

**Hearth Material:** Brick (NA)

**Hearth Dimensions:** Hearth largely removed, inaccessible

**Stairs:** Yes (NE corner, along north wall), collapsed and partially removed

**Type:** Ladder – enclosed

**Stairwell Dimensions:** 3.0.0 (N-S) x 7.0.2 (E-W)

**Number of Treads:** 10

**Stair Tread Dimensions:** unknown, removed

While largely removed or collapsed, there is considerable evidence of the former stairs in the SE corner, which ran upward from east to west between the north wall and a partial partition along the first joist out from the north wall girt. The stairwell was 3.0.0 wide (N-S) and began 3.11.0 out from the east wall's exterior siding, with a doorway formerly existing at this point, which is where the stair treads began. From the east wall plate to the inside face of the stair header to the west measures 10.11.2. The enclosed stair has vertical board siding on the south side, to which the southern stair stringer was nailed.

From the east wall plate to a ghost for a vertical framing member on the north girt measures 3.5.0. Within the ghost area are three nail holes. This member served as the post for the stair door, which was hinged on its north side and swung out from the stairs toward the east wall. A pivoting wooden stop is attached on the first board (starting at the east end) of the enclosure to secure the door.

The enclosure for the closet/pantry consists of a wall of 5-6 vertical planks, with battens, nailed to the first ceiling joist out from the north wall girt. A narrow doorway is incorporated into the partition where it connects with the angled boards of the stair well.

**Subfloor Pit:** No

**Floor:** Wood

**Floorboards Dimension:** 1<sup>st</sup> floor: 0.6.0 – 0.8.0 – 0.9.2 wide

Garret: 0.7.2 – 0.8.0 – 0.9.2 wide

**Dating:**

**Dendrochronology:** NA

**Other:** ca. 1850s

**Dating Evidence:**

**Saw Marks:** Circular sawn

**Nails:** Mature machine cut

**Comments:**

The main house is dated ca. 1853 based on documentary evidence.

Note hybrid construction of heavy timber framing, with oversized sills and plates, braced corner posts, and mortise & tenon and pegged joints for main posts, carried out with circular sawn lumber mature and mature cut nails.

A compass measurement taken at the SE corner and looking towards the SW corner produced a bear of  $238^{\circ}$ .