Historic Furnishings Report

PRINCIPAL KEEPER’S QUARTERS
CAPE HATTERAS LIGHT STATION

CAPE HATTERAS NATIONAL SEASHORE
North Carolina

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HISTORIC FURNISHINGS REPORT

PRINCIPAL KEEPER'S QUARTERS
CAPE HATTERAS LIGHT STATION

Cape Hatteras National Seashore
North Carolina

by

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Harpers Ferry Center
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
1991

APPROVED BY MEMORANDUM
FROM REGION
DATE: 1990
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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This report on the furnishings of the Principal Keeper’s Quarters, Cape Hatteras Light Station, is based primarily on the collective memories of its last residents, the Jennette children who lived in the house in the 1920s and early 1930s. Mr. Rany Jennette and his sister, Mrs. Vivian Jennette Frontis, have been especially generous in sharing their very clear and full recollections of life at the light station, while other members of the family have also provided information through them. This report would be skimpy indeed without their contributions.

The staff of Cape Hatteras National Seashore has been most supportive in facilitating the author’s research by making historical files available to him, arranging interviews, and providing helpful insights into life on the Outer Banks. For their personal attention to his needs, he is especially grateful to Warren Wrenn, Marcia Lyons, and Joan Bartlett at the Hatteras Island visitor center, and to Bebe Woody at headquarters in Manteo.

The author also wishes to acknowledge his debt to Norma Smallwood for secretarial support and travel arrangements and to Cheryl Hill for editorial support and for guiding him through his initial effort in composition by computer as well as to Kam Sloan for final manuscript preparation.
ADMINISTRATIVE DATA

Authorized by Congress in 1937, Cape Hatteras National Seashore occupies most of an 80-mile stretch of North Carolina’s Outer Banks, including Bodie, Pea, Hatteras and Ocracoke Islands. Although primarily a recreational area, with visitation in the neighborhood of 2 million people a year, many visitors take in its cultural attractions as well. Prominent among these is the famed Cape Hatteras Light, near the south end of Hatteras Island. Although the lighthouse is not open to visitors, there is a visitor center and small museum close by, in the restored 1854 Assistant Keepers’ Quarters; beside this stands the Principal Keeper's Quarters, erected in 1870, the subject of this report. The 1984 “General Management Plan...” for Cape Hatteras National Seashore and the 1988 “Interpretive Prospectus” both recommend partial refurnishing of this structure to enhance interpretation of the lighthouse area.

To allow for the necessary coordination of activities such as structural and systems rehabilitation work, neither the acquisition of furnishings nor the implementation of the plan should proceed without the concurrence of both the Regional Director and the Superintendent. This will allow for the necessary preliminary work such as obtaining 106 clearances, identifying staffing needs, identifying environmental controls and security measures, and the coordination of activities, such as structural and systems rehabilitation work.

PRIOR PLANNING DOCUMENTS


HISTORICAL DATA

ANALYSIS OF HISTORIC OCCUPANCY

Evolution of the Structure

The single dwelling known as the Principal Keeper's Quarters was constructed in 1870/71 out of materials left over from the erection of the new Cape Hatteras light in 1870. Prior to that time the principal keeper and his assistant, with their families, shared the two-family Keepers' Quarters, erected in 1854, which now houses the Hatteras Island visitor center and museum. Although the new dwelling was intended for the use of a second assistant keeper, the principal keepers and their families occupied it from 1871 to 1933, while the two assistant keepers shared the older quarters. ¹

As originally constructed, the principal keeper's house was a two-story brick structure with a one-story kitchen ell. The main entrance from the south porch opened into a living room; beyond were a stair hall and a bedroom, and upstairs two more bedrooms. A side porch on the east opened into the stair hall and possibly into the kitchen. For original floor plan, see figure 1.

Outbuildings included a summer kitchen, a storehouse, and a privy. ²

No major change appears to have been made in the structure until 1927, when a "lighthouse working party from Portsmouth or Baltimore, under W. F. Lynch, foreman," put up a two-story frame addition on the east side, behind the kitchen, and a one-story frame utility room at the east end of the kitchen. The addition provided a much-needed extra bedroom upstairs and a dining room downstairs.³ For 1927 floor plan, see figure 2.

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1 F. Ross Holland, Jr., "Historic Structure Report, Part I: Historical Data Section. Principal Light Keeper's Quarters, Cape Hatteras Light Station, Cape Hatteras National Seashore" (National Park Service, 1968) [cited hereafter as Holland, HSR].


3 Ibid.
Flooded out in a September 1933 hurricane, the keeper had to move his family to safer quarters in Buxton, permanently, as it turned out. Four years later, the Civilian Conservation Corps made improvements to both vacated keepers' quarters, which the CCC used to house employees working on dune rehabilitation along the Outer Banks.

This job consisted of removing all plaster and inside finish from the dwellings, refinishing with cypress V-joint ceiling throughout, painting and varnishing walls and ceiling, sanding and finishing floors...installing fixtures in bathroom and kitchens, with necessary plumbing. Wired both buildings for electric light.4

The bathroom added at this time took six feet off the west end of the north bedroom. An outside stairway to the second floor on the west side of the house and panelling on the walls throughout the building dated from this time or later.5

The National Park Service has restored the structure to its pre-1937 configuration (figure 3) by removing the outside staircase, the panelling, the bathroom, and the electric light fixtures, and by adding a skylight over the stairs as remembered by the family and documented in 1893 photographs of the light station. Hardwood floors, installed in 1927, have been retained. Paint analysis in July 1986 revealed that the first finishes used in the addition were dark grey for the wood trim and light grey for the beaverboard and battens and that the same color scheme was applied throughout the house at that time. These colors have been used in the restored interior.6

The Keeper and His Family, 1919-1933

In 1919 Unaka B. Jennette (figure 4) became principal keeper of the Cape Hatteras Light Station under the United States Light-House Service. Born in

4 E.J. Byrum, “Summary of work done on Cape Hatteras Lighthouse area,” typed document, dated August 29, 1939, National Archives, Record Group 26 [copy at Cape Hatteras National Seashore]. Byrum was project superintendent, Cape Hatteras State Park. He also noted that the CCC had constructed “livable furniture” for the two structures.

5 Franzen, HSR.

6 Mrs. Vivian Jennette Frontis, interview, March 17, 1988 [cited hereafter as Frontis, interview, 1988]. The 1893 photographs are in the Cape Hatteras National Seashore files. Information on floors and interior finishes courtesy Regional Director, Southeast Region, memorandum to Manager, Harpers Ferry Center, August 8, 1990.
the village of Buxton on November 30, 1882, the son of Benjamin and Dorcas Grey Jennette, Unaka Jennette joined the Light-House Service in 1904. He served as quartermaster on the Diamond Shoals lightship from 1909 to 1911, as captain of a channel lightship and later of a lighthouse tender between 1911 and 1913, when he was transferred to the Diamond Shoals relief lightship. He served as principal keeper of the Cape Hatteras light for twenty years (1919-1939) and as keeper of the Roanoke Marshes screw-pile light from 1939 until he retired in 1943. After 22 years of retirement in Buxton, he died in 1965 at the age of 83.7

The principal keeper was responsible for seeing that the light was always in good operating condition and for basic maintenance of the lighthouse and grounds. He had two assistants. Each of the three keepers served a 24-hour tour of duty, followed by two days off. The keeper on duty lit the beacon at sunset, extinguished it at dawn, and wound the clock mechanism that controlled the speed of its revolutions. He had to stay awake for the full 24 hours, but he did not have to stay in the lighthouse the whole time. After he had carried out the prescribed procedures to assure that the light was in proper order and had performed other maintenance chores around the lighthouse, he was free to return to his dwelling.

With at least part of every day available for other activities, Keeper Jennette, like his predecessors, put in many hours providing for his family's needs, growing vegetables and managing his livestock, including hogs, a milk cow, a work horse, and as many as 17 ponies and 40 head of beef cattle. Each family had a large garden plot nearby in which they grew corn, tomatoes, collard greens, cucumbers, pole beans, butterbeans, and other vegetables.8

Unaka Jennette was highly respected on Hatteras Island, not so much because of his official position as for his willingness to give a helping hand whenever it was needed in the community. For instance, as one of the few people on Hatteras Island who owned an automobile at the time, he ran an ambulance service on occasion to take residents to the hospital in Elizabeth City.

Characterized by his son as “mild-mannered,” but “a man who didn’t have much fear,” Keeper Jennette was apparently a good manager who knew what to do

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7 This brief summary of Keeper Jennette's career is derived from an account by his younger son, Rany Jennette, taped on June 23, 1987 [cited hereafter as Jennette, interview, 1987].

when action was needed and how to handle people without making a lot of enemies.

I think the best piece of advice he ever gave me [recalls son Rany], when I left home he said, “Well,” he said, “you’re going to have to bite your tongue many a time,” he said, “but it’ll be worth it.” That’s what he did a lot.9

On one occasion remembered by his son, Unaka Jennette displayed in dramatic fashion the steel that underlay his velvet manner. The incident occurred after passage of a state law providing for confiscation of animals running loose.

I never knew my father had the ability to lose control or even show a sign of temper until they took the cow and calf that belonged to him. He had searched the woods day and night for this cow and calf. He couldn’t find them. He rode to the pen and spotted the animals already there and the state rider had a rope on them. He said, “That’s my cow and calf.” The rider, in an unfriendly tone, said, “Not any more, Cap’n; they belong to the state.” My father didn’t say a word, but got on old Jim and rode back home. He walked into the house, picked up his five-shot automatic, rode back to the pen area, got off horseback, took aim and fired two shots—one for the cow and one for the calf—got on his horse, and said, “Alright, Mister, you take care of’em,” turned and rode away. I’ve heard him say, “I’m just glad they didn’t try and stop me.”10

At the time of his appointment to Cape Hatteras light and his move into the Principal Keeper’s Quarters, Unaka Jennette was about 37 years old, married, with two small children. Five more children were born to Mr. and Mrs. Jennette between 1919 and 1929. Only one child, the older boy Almy, had left home by the time the family moved out in 1933.

Mrs. Jennette, born Jenny Scarborough in 1890, grew up in Buxton and married Unaka Jennette in 1911. Between 1913 and 1929 she bore seven children—two boys and five girls—all of whom survived the hazards of infancy and childhood. She herself, though characterized as “a frail woman, not very strong,” lived to the age of 70, dying in 1960, 27 years after the family moved out of the keeper’s quarters at Cape Hatteras Light Station.

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10 Ibid.
Mrs. Jennette's role as the principal keeper's wife was strictly domestic, involving no sharing of lighthouse duties. Her days, therefore, centered on housekeeping and child-rearing chores. Except for a month or so after each confinement, she had no one to help around the house until daughters Vivian and Myrtle were old enough to do some of the housework.

She did all the cooking, of course; taking care of the babies. She was not a strong woman. She had quite a bit of sickness when she was out there. I remember she used to have what they called a nervous spell sometimes. She had a lot of problems with her feet....

Although living out by the lighthouse had many drawbacks, particularly in regard to shopping, not to mention wind, water, sand, and mosquitoes, it was not a frontier existence by any means. By 1927, Mrs. Jennette had both a coal range and an oil stove for cooking, a modern coal-burning heater to heat the addition, a gasoline-powered washing machine, and such amenities as a piano, a Victrola, a radio, and a little home-made greenhouse for growing madonna lilies and other flowers. The family automobile also gave the Jennettes a freedom of movement not shared by many on Hatteras Island in the 1920s.

One unique feature of life in the keeper's quarters was the Light-House Service's periodic inspection, which covered the keepers' dwellings as well as the lighthouse. Daughter Vivian remembers that preparation for this involved polishing the brass hardware throughout the house and placing cloth covers over the doorknobs to protect them from tarnishing until the inspector was gone.

Mrs. Jennette, like many women of her day, was an accomplished needlewoman. As recalled by her children, the house was full of examples of her skill, including a bedspread embroidered with the names of family members, a crocheted bedspread, and numberless crocheted doilies, bureau scarves, and "anti-macassars," used to protect chair arms and backs from wear and soiling.

One of Mrs. Jennette's special pleasures was to play the piano and lead the family and friends in singing hymns around the piano in the parlor.

11 Ibid.

12 Frontis, interview, 1988. Rany Jennette felt that his mother dreaded these inspections, although he "never heard her complain about it" (interview, 1987).

13 Ibid.
Another pleasure was visiting with family and friends who came out on weekends from nearby villages to picnic on the beach, climb the lighthouse, and swim or paddle in the ocean. Mrs. Jennette wouldn’t swim, her son remembers, but she did “go and sit on the water’s edge...barefooted and an old dress on,” because “they didn’t have bathing suits much then.”

Children and their needs obviously figured prominently in daily life in the keeper’s quarters. There were seven of them all told, although the oldest left home the same year the youngest was born. In order of birth, the children were as follows:

Almy, born in 1913, left home in 1929 to join the Navy.
Vivian, born in 1916; at home in 1933, aged 17.
Myrtle, born in 1919; at home in 1933, aged 14.
Rany, born in 1921; at home in 1933, aged 12.
Olive, born in 1923; at home in 1933, aged 10.
Dorcas, born in 1927; at home in 1933, aged 6.
Ramona, born in 1929; at home in 1933, aged 4.

The two boys occupied the south bedroom upstairs; after Almy left in 1929, Rany had it to himself. The two older girls had the north bedroom upstairs; Olive joined them after Ramona’s birth in 1929. The two youngest children slept in their parents’ bedroom.

For children, life at the foot of the lighthouse was somewhat like living on a farm, with the ocean beach instead of a woodlot for a playground. They certainly did not lack for playmates, since the families of the other keepers lived next door and they went to school in the village of Buxton. Much of their self-made entertainment, of course, involved the out-of-doors. They did a lot of swimming and “belly surfing” (without a board); they chased the wild horses into the surf; they walked the winter beach in search of shells and old bottles. Adults and children alike took part in games of croquet, baseball, and pitching quoits (actually half-bricks).

We had plenty to do...we made our entertainment. Like the...4-wheeled carts that we made to push along the beach. Cut a pine tree down and get the wheels; the bark would be the tread of the tire. Cut open tomato cans and make fenders; bottle caps for hub caps and, you know, all the good things.

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The children also had indoor toys, some improvised, others bought out of the Sears, Roebuck or Spiegel catalogs. The girls had their dolls, of course, and, although they had no dollhouse, spent happy hours cutting up old catalogs to make cardboard doll furniture. For the boys there were lead soldiers for mock World War I battles, a mechanical horse race set, and a wind-up train that ran on an oval track in front of the Christmas tree. The little children had kiddie cars, the older ones scooters.

Games the family played at night included dominoes and checkers, but not cards in this Methodist household. One game the children particularly remember was called “comesy, comesy.”

That was just giving the initials of an item in the house. One person would say “Comesy, comesy,” and you’d say “What do you come with?” Say “D.K.”; that’s door knob. Then the others would try to guess what it was. 16

On Sundays toys had to be put aside, even paper dolls, in favor of more uplifting activities, like Bible study, singing hymns around the piano, and looking at World War I pictures through the stereopticon in the parlor.

During the school year, the older children attended school in the nearby village of Buxton. The boys used to roll hoops along the beach on the way to and from school. These were made out of the eight-inch diameter hoops the netters used as sinkers; pieces of bent wire served as sticks to roll the hoops. Doing homework at the dining room table was a must in this household; we “didn’t have any excuse for not studying,” Rany Jennette recalls.

The children had their assigned chores. The older girls helped their mother with washing dishes, cleaning, and other housework. The boys helped with outdoor work and on occasion helped their father polish the brass and clean the lens in the lighthouse. 17

“You have probably heard or read that the life of a lighthouse keeper was very lonely,” says Rany Jennette:

and I’m sure that in most cases this was true, but we did not have this experience. In fact it was just the opposite. Lighthouse and Coast Guard families were quite large in most cases and visits were frequent between neighbors. All the families

16 Ibid.

had very close ties. The lighthouse has always been a favorite place to visit by the village folks so we had plenty of company, especially on Sundays.

Occasionally, overnight visitors slept in the spare bedroom downstairs.

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EVIDENCE OF ROOM USE AND HISTORIC FURNISHINGS

It should be noted at the outset that the light keepers had to furnish their quarters themselves. In the Jennettes’ case, the only items of government issue in the house appear to have been the telephone, a spittoon, and a couple of Light-House Service kerosene lamps. Everything else Keeper Jennette either brought with him in 1919 or acquired at his own expense afterwards. Even the desk at which he did his official paperwork was his own property, purchased at a sale of furnishings salvaged from a shipwrecked vessel.

Front Porch

The front porch, on the south side of the principal keeper’s house, opens into the parlor and was used relatively little when the Jennettes lived there. During the warmer months it was furnished with a settee, two rocking chairs, and a fernery, all of unpainted reed or wicker, similar to those in figure 12. The fernery held Boston and lacy ferns. The floor was grey and the other woodwork white. Screening protected porch-sitters from mosquitoes and other insects.19

Side Porch

Originally the porch on the east side of the house led directly to the hall and possibly to the kitchen ell. After the 1927 improvements, the new side porch opened into the dining room. Screened in like the front porch, the side porch held a panelled oak icebox (fig. 12) and a couple of “straw-bottom” rockers, painted white. The floor was grey, the woodwork white.20

The side porch saw a lot more use than the front porch because, as Rany Jennette put it, “the door we used most to enter the house was the dining room door facing the ocean.”21

Dining Room

Added on in 1927, this is the largest room and the one most used by the Jennette family. Although they called it the dining room, it was what now might be called


20 Ibid.

a family room. Here the family took their meals, Mr. Jennette did his office work, Mrs. Jennette did her machine sewing, and the children did their homework in the evening at the big dining table. Here also the children played dominoes and checkers with their parents and listened to favorite programs on the radio and, when they were sick, spent their days on the lounge or "measles couch," as they called it.\textsuperscript{22}

During the big September hurricane of 1933 it was this room, facing the ocean, that took the brunt of the storm. In a vain effort to protect the house, Keeper Jennette had placed the big oak dining table against the outside door. "The seas busted the door down," recalls Rany Jennette, "and the table was up-ended, just bottom up. And after the storm, water waist deep to my dad in the dining room."\textsuperscript{23}

As remembered by Rany Jennette and his oldest sister, Vivian Frontis, the dining room contained the following furnishings:

The sewing machine sat in front of the window to the right as you entered. It was a treadle-operated Singer "New Home" model, bought new about 1919. The cabinet was oak, with two drawers on each side, as in figure 7.

Keeper Jennette's desk was in the northeast corner against the north wall. At first, this was an oak roll-top desk with a typewriter shelf that pulled out on the left side (similar to fig. 6, a "roll top typewriter desk" advertised by Fred Macey Company, Grand Rapids, ca. 1905). The keeper bought this desk at a sale of objects salvaged from a shipwreck. The desk stood open normally, with the station log ready for use. By 1933 this utilitarian desk had been replaced by a fancier barrel-top secretary/bookcase of burl walnut, probably dating from the 1870s or 1880s (fig. 6). This desk was ruined in the 1933 flood. The family does not recall what happened to the roll-top office desk it had displaced.

In front of the north window was a backless couch or lounge, upholstered in tufted black leather (fig. 7), which came to be known as the "measles couch" from its use as a sort of quarantine bed by children suffering from measles, mumps, and other contagious ailments. It did not survive the 1933 flood.

Across the northwest corner stood a battery-operated "Pioneer" radio, a floor model with the control knobs inside a cabinet at the top (fig. 8). It has not survived, nor has an earlier radio that sat on top of the keeper's desk.

\textsuperscript{22} Ibid.; Frontis, interview, 1988.

\textsuperscript{23} Jennette, interview, 1987.
The sideboard on the west wall was an antique piece, with marble top, high back, candle shelves, one long drawer, and cabinet below. Only the marble top survives, owned by Mrs. Vivian Frontis. Tableware stored in the sideboard included a set of blue willow china for every day use (not extant) and a pitcher and several glasses in carnival glass (owned by Mrs. Myrtle Jennette Gibbs). Mrs. Vivian Frontis has three doilies (one long and two round) crocheted by Mrs. Jennette and used on the sideboard.

A hall rack with round mirror stood against the south wall next to the hall door (fig. 8).

The dining table (fig. 5) was of oak, with round pedestal base and top, plain curved feet, and one extra leaf always in place, making it large enough to seat eight people. It did not survive the 1933 flood.

Mrs. Jennette had both white lace and linen tablecloths for use at meal times. Between meals she usually placed a large round crocheted doily on the table, with a bowl containing fruit, painted Easter eggs, pine cones tinted silver and red and gold, or red and green Christmas tree balls, as the season dictated.

In the evening, a big brass kerosene lamp on the table provided light for the children’s studying and for table games. This lamp was one of the few articles in the house provided by the Light-House Service.

There were eight oak dining room chairs, high-backed, with a single back splat, carved crest rail, wood seat, and a dark finish (fig. 5). There was also an oak high chair with turned spindles and a tray that went over the child’s head (fig. 5). Three plain wood rocking chairs, two with arms (fig. 5), were placed casually around the room.

In the southeast corner stood the heating stove, a coal-burning stove (heatrola type, as in fig. 8), which provided heat for the dining room and master bedroom. Next to it sat a coal bucket and stove shovel.

The Jennette children remember two wall decorations in this room. One was an unframed religious text over the door to the kitchen. In glitter letters on blue velvet, it read:

Christ is the head of this house,
The silent listener to every conversation,
And the unseen guest at every meal.

The other was a black-and-white photograph of Almy Jennette as a baby, about 1914, in an oval frame with convex glass. This is now owned by Mrs. Almy Jennette, Elizabeth City, North Carolina.
There was a brass spittoon somewhere in this room, with the initials of the United States Light-House Service, but Mrs. Frontis remembers it being used to hold a potted snakeplant (sansevieria).

Unaka Jennette smoked Prince Albert tobacco in a meerschaum pipe. He also smoked Chesterfield cigarettes or “rolled his own,” using a cigarette-rolling device on the dining room table.

The floor covering in this room was a linoleum rug, probably 12 by 15 feet, the largest size then available through Sears, Roebuck and Company. 24

Mrs. Frontis recalls drapes at the dining room windows, with a floral design in green or blue, and plain ivory window shades. She does not remember any curtains on the window panels flanking the porch door.

Kitchen

The kitchen ell dates to the construction of the keeper’s dwelling in 1870/71. Since there was also a “summer kitchen,” a small separate structure in the yard to the northeast of the main house, the house kitchen may have been used for other purposes. This was certainly the case during the first eight years of the Jennettes’ occupancy, since Vivian Frontis remembers this room as a spare bedroom, which was used by the midwife who attended Mrs. Jennette’s confinements and by the young woman who helped out during the first month or so after each of the babies arrived. From 1927, however, it was the sole kitchen, with a coal range for winter use and a kerosene stove for the warmer months. 25

Much altered over the years since the Jennettes moved out, the room lacks all its original plumbing and fixtures. The floor level, now the same as in the rest of the first floor, used to be one step down, according to Mrs. Frontis. The original flooring was dark-stained pine, the woodwork was also stained and varnished, and the walls and ceiling were painted white. 26

The Jennettes produced much of their own food, including milk, eggs, pork products, and several kinds of vegetables. Although Mr. Jennette raised steers,


25 Frontis, interview, 1988. Mrs. Frontis says that the family ate in the summer kitchen before the dining room was added to the house in 1927. Rany Jennette (interview, 1987) recalled that after they put the kerosene stove inside, his father turned the summer kitchen into a garage.

beef was not a staple item in their diet. "A local person would sometimes
slaughter a steer, most likely on the beach, skin it, cut it up, then peddle the
beef by horse and cart through the village." Staples and other items they bought
at one of the general stores in the village of Buxton; "grubbing up" once a month
Rany Jennette remembers as "a big event for the young folks." He also remem­
bers vividly the time when his father bought a lot of bananas from a ship wrecked
near Hatteras Inlet. "I ate green bananas until I was sick," says Rany, "and I
just don't care for bananas now."27

Other than as consumers, the males of the household had no role in the kitchen.
When asked if he had helped with the dishes, Rany Jennette replied: "The girls
did; I didn't. When you have four or five girls around, you know, I'd stay out of
the kitchen except to eat."28

From 1927 to 1933 the room contained the following furnishings, as recalled by
the Jennette children:

The big range, in the northeast corner against the north wall, was fired by wood
or coal. It was similar to the Honest Value Four-Hole Cast Iron Range pictured
in the 1915 Sears, Roebuck catalog, without the reservoir and high shelf (fig.
13). This range was used mainly in winter.

An oil stove occupied the southwest corner against south wall. This was a
three-burner with oven, kerosene-fired. Originally used in the summer kitchen,
it was moved into the main house about 1927.

The oak-finish kitchen cabinet on the west wall was like the Sears, Roebuck
model in the 1915 catalog (fig. 13). It had a dish cupboard with frosted glass
doors in the upper part, flour and sugar sifters, a spice rack, a sliding porcelain
table top, and several drawers below.

The sink and pump were on the south wall to the right of the window. The sink
was of porcelain enamelled cast iron, with an attached drainboard on the left
side. The hand-operated pump, painted grey, was to the right of the sink.

On the south side of the room toward the east end stood the kitchen table, a
fairly long one with a wood top. Around it were six high-backed side chairs, with
spindles and a plain crest rail, and on it a brass mantle lamp, with the initials
U.S.L.H.S. identifying it as government issue.


28 Ibid.
The kitchen floor was covered with linoleum. The windows had curtains.

The icebox was outside on the side porch. Non-perishable foods were stored in the utility room at the east end of the kitchen.

**Parlor**

Although its position at the front of the house, with an outside entrance from the front porch, indicates that this was originally the living room or parlor of the keeper’s dwelling, Mr. and Mrs. Jennette used it as their bedroom until the 1927 addition gave them a larger room upstairs. This room then reverted to its original function as the parlor. It saw relatively little use thereafter, since the dining room doubled as the family sitting room. The presence of a piano and a Victrola did ensure the parlor’s occasional use for hymn sings and other musical entertainments, but otherwise it was reserved for formal visits and for special occasions like Christmas, when the family gathered in front of the decorated tree to open their presents. Originally, the pine floors and other woodwork were stained and varnished, the walls and ceiling painted white; in 1927 a hardwood floor was laid over the original floor, the wood trim was painted dark grey and the walls and ceiling light grey.

The furnishings in the room when it was the parents’ bedroom (1919-27) were moved upstairs into the new east bedroom in 1927 and are described in the evidence for that room (below, pp. 23-24).

The Jennette children have provided the following information on the furnishings in this room from 1927 to 1933, when it was the parlor. 29

The piano on the north wall, bought new about 1925, was a Charles Stieff upright, with a raised vine motif on the wood front (fig. 9). It had a bench, probably without a hinged top, since music was stored on the adjacent table. The piano and bench were destroyed in the 1933 flood.

Mrs. Jennette played the piano, as did at least two of the daughters, Vivian and Myrtle. Hymn sings around the piano were a favorite Sunday entertainment, when secular pastimes were forbidden. Sheet music and instruction books occupied the shelf under the table beside the piano.

On top of the piano were a piano scarf of rose or wine-colored velvet, with fringed ends, and several small framed family snapshots.

29 Ibid.
The overstuffed parlor suite, purchased new for the parlor in 1927, consisted of a sofa and two chairs upholstered in buff-colored mohair (fig. 9). The low-backed sofa sat in front of the fireplace, the high-backed chair on the south side to the left of the porch door, the low-backed chair on the north side to the right of the piano. Crocheted doilies served as antimacassars on the arms and backs of all three pieces. This furniture did not survive the 1933 flood.

To the left of the piano was a square parlor table, with splayed legs and a shelf (fig. 10). This table held another Light-House Service mantle lamp, a crocheted doily, and, on the shelf, a pile of sheet music.

There was a plain wooden rocker to the right of the fireplace, with a small hooked rug under it.

Although it was rarely used, the fireplace was furnished with a pair of plain iron andirons, a coal grate, and a set of plain iron tools with matching stand. On the mantel stood an 8-day clock (fig. 10), a pair of glass candlesticks, and a number of framed snapshots.

A library table, in front of the window to the right of the porch door, had been purchased at an auction of articles salvaged from a shipwreck. It had a drawer in the long side, a drawer at each end, and a shelf below on which they kept the family Bible, a hand-held stereoscope (fig. 10), and a boxed set of stereographic views of World War I battle scenes. On top, a fancy kerosene lamp, its globe and reservoir decorated with roses (similar to fig. 10) rested on a crocheted doily. The table, missing one drawer, now belongs to Mrs. Yvonne Oden, daughter of Mrs. Frontis. On the table also were a number of books, held upright by a pair of plain wooden bookends.

The Victrola, in the southeast corner, was a Victor Talking Machine, with record cabinet below, dating from about 1910-1920 (fig. 9). The Jennettes' records included "Ramona," "Silver Threads among the Gold," and other popular favorites.

A framed photograph of Benjamin and Dorcas Jennette, the keeper's parents, hung on the east wall. Now owned by Vivian Frontis, she remembers it as rather frightening to a small child.

Of a tapestry that hung above the mantel Mrs. Frontis remembers only that the design included human figures.

Mrs. Frontis recalled two big vases with flared tops flanking the door to the porch. They usually held cattails and sea oats.
Unlike the other rooms, the parlor had a real rug, with a plain beige or rose ground, and flowers in the corners. There was a small hooked rug under the rocking chair.

The parlor windows had ivory shades with scalloped and fringed ends, lace curtains, and straight-hung brocade drapes of a dusty rose color. Over the door from the hall hung a rope-and-ball valance.

On the narrow window sills of this south-facing room, Mrs. Jennette set a number of houseplants in decorative ceramic pots. Her daughter Vivian remembers particularly that she grew coleus, begonias, and ferns.

“Christmas at the lighthouse was a happy time and was celebrated the same as most other places,” recalls Rany Jennette; “tree, fireplace, presents, and a big dinner.” The fun began in the parlor, where the locally cut Christmas tree—usually a cedar or pine tree, at least once a holly—sat in a bucket in the northwest corner of this room. Its decorations included cotton snow, clear plastic icicles, little candles in clip-on holders, angels with cellophane wings, and paper festoons. The rest of the room was decorated with a red paper bell and red and green paper festoons. In front of the tree or on the hearth beside it the boys would set up their oval toy train track. Father Jennette, dressed as Santa Claus, distributed the presents in front of the tree; afterwards Christmas dinner was served in the dining room.

Spare Bedroom

In the house as originally built, the first floor north room was a bedroom, but the Jennettes apparently made it their parlor from 1919 until the 1927 remodeling, when the room again became a bedroom, for the use of overnight visitors, furnished with an imposing Victorian bedroom set bought at auction in Elizabeth City.30

In the early 1920s finishes included white paint on the walls and ceiling, dark stain and varnish on the pine floor and wood trim. The present hardwood flooring was laid in 1927; at that time the walls and ceiling were painted light grey, the wood trim dark grey.

The parlor furnishings have already been described (pp. 16-18, above). Rany Jennette and Vivian Frontis have identified the following furnishings in the spare bedroom after 1927.

30 All information on the spare bedroom comes from interviews with Rany Jennette (1987) and his sister, Mrs. Vivian Frontis (1987, with Katherine B. Menz and William L. Brown, and 1988, with David H. Wallace).
The golden oak bedroom suite, described by Rany Jennette as “heavy furniture,” probably dated from the late 19th century, although the Jennettes acquired it in 1927. The massive double bed had high head and foot boards, each with a wide ledge on top and applied beaded decoration, somewhat like the bed in figure 11. It was placed against the south wall. Bedding mentioned by Mrs. Frontis included a bolster and big pillows, embroidered pillowcases, and a white bedspread with red embroidery done by Mrs. Jennette.

The matching bureau, with large mirror, sat at an angle in the northeast corner. On it were a bureau scarf and a photograph of a young woman with a flower, in an oval stand-up frame.

The washstand, on the west wall to the right of the window, had a towel rack above, two drawers and a cabinet below. On the wall above it hung a round mirror. The washbowl and pitcher were white with a gold rim. Towels on the rack were white, with crocheted ends.

A small rocking chair (fig. 11) sat between the washstand and the fireplace.

Mrs. Frontis remembered in this fireplace only an iron grate and a small iron shovel. A pair of candlesticks were the only objects remembered on the mantel.

On the east wall there was a round photograph of a “beautiful girl,” now owned by Mrs. Olive Peek, third of the Jennette daughters.

Floor coverings in this room included a linoleum rug and small hooked rugs by the bed and under the rocking chair.

The windows had plain ivory shades and simple voile curtains.

Medicines for family use and for use in the lighthouse were kept locked up in the closet of the spare bedroom, along with the “portable library,” a boxed collection of books that circulated through the light station circuit, providing every six months a new selection of fiction and non-fiction reading for the keepers and their families.

**Hall and Stairs**

In the original house plan, one entered the hall directly from the side porch. Other doors led from the hall into the parlor and downstairs bedroom and a flight of stairs provided access to the second floor bedrooms. While its function remained constant, the hall lost its direct access to the porch with the addition of the dining room in 1927. A closet under the stairs provided a place for shoes and storm gear. On the landing at the turn of the stairs, under the skylight,
Vivian Jennette and her sisters used to play with their paper dolls.31

In the early 1920s the pine floor and wood trim, including the stair treads, risers, and banister, were darkly stained and varnished; the walls and ceiling were painted white. In 1927 the color scheme changed to dark grey trim and light grey walls and ceiling.

Mrs. Frontis remembered the following furnishing items:

The telephone, dating from before 1919, was mounted on the south wall to the right of the first batten. The panel to which the instrument was attached had a writing shelf at the bottom (as in fig. 8, Sears, Roebuck’s “bridging telephone with compact cabinet,” 1915 catalog, p. 718). The telephone was about 5-1/2 feet off the floor, high enough that the children had to stand on a caned stool to reach it.

A throw rug, possibly hooked, was the only floor covering in the hall. On the stairs, there was either a stair runner or tacked-down strips of brownish carpeting covering only the treads and landing.

There were no pictures on the walls of the hall or stairs.

Boys’ Bedroom

Before and after the 1927 remodeling, the two boys, Almy and Rany Jennette, occupied the south or front bedroom on the second floor. In 1927 Almy was about fifteen, Rany about six. When Almy left home to join the Navy in 1929, he left Rany in sole possession of this room from his eighth to his twelfth year. In Rany’s memory, the revolving beacon in the nearby lighthouse “seemed to throw off a constant series of flashes, creating a glow that filled his boyhood bedroom and lulled him to sleep at night.”32

The room finishes Mrs. Frontis remembered were dark stain and varnish on the pine floors and wood trim, white paint on the walls and ceiling (changed in 1927 to dark grey and light grey respectively).

31 Information on the hall and its furnishings is from interviews with Mrs. Vivian Frontis (1987 and 1988).

Rany Jennette and his sister Vivian remember these furnishings.\textsuperscript{33}

There were two white-enamelled iron double beds, with rounded head and foot boards (like fig. 14, Sears No. 1V5425, on p. 1061, 1915 catalog). They stood “foot to foot,” in Rany’s words, one on the east wall, the other on the west. In winter they used feather beds for extra warmth in this unheated room. Vivian Frontis remembered that the boys’ beds had blue and white striped seersucker spreads.

Although there is a chimney on the west wall, with a flue opening, there was no stove in the room while the Jennette boys lived here. In winter, Rany remembers, they used to run down to the kitchen in the morning to get warm.

A chest of drawers on the north wall was of a dark wood, possibly mahogany. Above it hung a mirror.

A washstand with mirror (like fig. 14, Sears No. 1V4849, p. 1054, 1915 catalog) was on the west wall near the northwest corner. On it were a washbowl and pitcher and in the cabinet below a covered chamber pot, all of plain white-enamelled metal.

There was at least one plain wood chair in the room, probably over by the window.

A brass-bound chest occupied the northeast corner, next to the closet. It was one of several articles of furniture bought by Keeper Jennette at a sale of salvage from a wrecked ship. Its present owner is Mrs. Yvonne Oden, his granddaughter.

Floor coverings in this room included a linoleum rug and a throw rug beside each bed.

The windows had ivory window shades and simple voile or “maybe print” curtains.

\textsuperscript{33} Jennette, interview, 1987; Frontis, interviews, 1987 and 1988.
Girls' Bedroom

The older Jennette girls had the north or back bedroom. Vivian and Myrtle shared it for a number of years, eventually joined by Olive, probably about 1929, when she was four, Myrtle ten, and Vivian thirteen.34

Finishes were the same as in the boys' bedroom.

Mrs. Frontis recalled the following furnishings in her bedroom.

Against the north wall, west of the door, was a white-enamelled iron double bed, similar to those in the boys' room. A smaller bed, possibly three-quarter size, was on the east wall. Both beds had pink spreads and ruffled pillow shams. Feather beds gave extra warmth in winter.

There was no stove in this room during the Jennettes' time, although there is a flue opening in the chimney on the north wall.

An oak bureau with a tilting mirror and three drawers (fig. 14) stood in the angle of the northeast corner of the room.

On the washstand in the northwest corner stood a washbowl and pitcher, white with fluted sides. The white enamel, covered chamber pot was kept in the cabinet below.

There was a single plain wooden chair in the room.

Floor coverings included a linoleum rug and throw rugs beside each bed.

The window shades were ivory and the curtains were of pink or white voile, with wide ruffles.

Parents' Bedroom

Part of the 1927 addition, this spacious bedroom facing the ocean was where Mr. and Mrs. Jennette slept "with the two little girls, the babies," presumably Olive and Dorcas until about 1929, Dorcas and Ramona thereafter.

A door on the south wall leads to a low closet or storage area under the roof, known to the family as the "banana closet," from the time when Mr. Jennette

34 Vivian Frontis is the sole source of information on this room (interviews, 1987 and 1988).
bought a large quantity of bananas salvaged from a ship wrecked near Hatteras Inlet and stored them here.\textsuperscript{35}

Finishes in this room were the same as in the other bedrooms.

Mrs. Frontis remembered this room as having at one time two double beds and a crib, all of white-enamelled iron, and at another time one double bed and two cribs (fig. 14), probably reflecting the varying situations before and after the birth of Ramona, the last of the Jennette babies, in 1929. The double bed or beds were on the west wall; the cribs were in the northwest and northeast corners of the room. On the parents' bed was a white bedspread on which Mrs. Jennette had embroidered in red "all the names of the family and the close friends," as Rany Jennette described it. This spread is now in the possession of Vivian Jennette Frontis. Mrs. Jennette also made the ruffled pillow sham for this bed. In winter a feather bed provided extra warmth.

Angled across the southeast corner was a bureau with a mirror (fig. 14), similar to the one in the girls' bedroom. On the bureau were Keeper Jennette's shaving mug (now owned by Mrs. Frontis); Mrs. Jennette's silver dresser set (hand mirror, comb and brush, and powder box), bought at the auction of salvaged articles from a wrecked ship; and a kerosene lamp with clear glass chimney. Around the corner, on the south wall, was a washstand (fig. 14); on it were a washbowl and pitcher, white with fluted sides; in the cabinet underneath was a white-enamel, covered chamberpot.

The chairs included a plain wood side chair and a small armless rocking chair with seat cushion and tied-on back cushion, used by Mrs. Jennette as a nursing chair.

Floor coverings included a large linoleum rug and throw rugs on either side of the bed.

The windows had plain ivory window shades and pink or white voile curtains with wide ruffles.

Although there is a chimney in the southeast corner, with a flue opening, the Jennettes did not have a stove in this room.

RECOMMENDED FURNISHINGS

In accordance with the General Management Plan and Interpretive Prospectus, refurnishing of the Principal Keeper's Quarters will be limited to four rooms on the first floor: dining room, hall, spare bedroom, and parlor.

Keeper Jennette and his family occupied the Principal Keeper's Quarters at Cape Hatteras Light from 1919 to 1933. The interpretive focus, however, will be on the years from 1927 to 1933, after the structural changes of 1927 had added two rooms (dining room and parents' bedroom) and changed the use of others. For the most part, furnishings in use during the earlier years remained in the house after 1927, supplemented by such things as the radio and secretary in the dining room, and the Victorian bedroom set in the downstairs bedroom.

Despite losing much of their furniture in the September 1933 hurricane, the Jennettes did salvage some things. Of those that have survived the ensuing 55 years, several may be available for display in the restored building, as gifts or loans from members of the Jennette family. The bulk of the recommended furnishings, however, will have to be period look-alikes purchased on the open market, along with a few reproductions.

This report does not address the specifics of maintenance and protection of the furnishings. Maintenance guideliness should be prepared as an addendum to this report as soon as possible following the installation of furnishings. This report also does not address 106 clearances needed for structural modifications prior to implementation of the furnishings plan.

The local climate is extremely humid and wide temperature fluctuations are common. Since the restored building is not air-conditioned, special care will have to be taken to monitor and control relative humidity by other means, to protect organic and metallic artifacts from rust, mold and other consequences of excess humidity. If the lighthouse and keepers' quarters are moved away from their original, sea-threatened site, the installation of environmental controls in both structures should be considered.

Issues of environmental controls, and electrical, security, and insulation needs are identified in the Historic Structure Report (HSR) completed by the Denver Service Center in 1987. Neither this report nor the structure report, however,
identifies specifically designed systems to maintain acceptable levels of relative humidity, temperature, light, dust, pollution, insects, rodents, fire, and security. Additional planning, therefore, is required and an addendum to the HSR is recommended for this purpose.

Finally, this furnishings report does not address the staffing needs to operate and maintain this facility once the plan is implemented.

INTERPRETIVE OBJECTIVES

Constructed in 1870-71, the Principal Keeper’s Quarters was originally built as housing for the third keeper assigned to the Cape Hatteras Light Station. After construction, it was decided that this dwelling should be the home of the keeper in charge of the light, while his two assistants and their families would share the Double Keepers’ Quarters next door. The house was occupied almost continuously from 1871 to 1933, when the last keeper, Unaka Jennette, moved his family to the nearby village of Buxton, after two severe hurricanes devastated Cape Point.

The Principal Keeper’s Quarters will be refurnished to the period when the Jennette family lived there, specifically to 1927-33, after the addition of the dining room and master bedroom. Primarily by utilizing the recollections of two of the Jennette children, Rany and Vivian, it is possible to present a very accurate view of the house at the time they lived there. A walk through the house will provide visitors a glimpse of a vanished style of life about 60 years ago on the Outer Banks of North Carolina, showing how families were able to cope with living in an isolated and sometimes hostile environment without many of the amenities we now take for granted.

OPERATING PLAN

Although the visitor center at the Cape Hatteras Light Station is open year-round (except Christmas), it is anticipated that the Principal Keeper’s Quarters will be opened only for scheduled tours. The large number of period artifacts in the house, including some original Jennette family pieces, will necessitate controlled visitor access accomplished
through staffing and/or a movable barrier system. Current operational levels will restrict visitor use to scheduled summertime programs and special events.

Tours will be conducted daily or even several times a day if staffing can accommodate and visitor use justify it. Because of limited space and security considerations, tour groups should not exceed 10 people. Due to the highly visible location of the house, next to the visitor center, it will be necessary to implement a reservation or ticket system for tours in order to keep each group to a manageable size.

Ticketed visitors will be met outside the Principal Keeper's Quarters by the ranger conducting the tour, who will bring them into the unfurnished kitchen for an introductory talk before showing them the furnished rooms on the first floor. Present plans do not call for showing visitors the upper floor, which will be left unfurnished. The tour group will return to the kitchen for a final interpretive statement and questions and will exit, as they entered, through the store room.

The ranger will be responsible both for interpreting the house and for safeguarding the objects on display. Smaller objects may need to be secured and some movable barriers will be needed to keep visitors within desired bounds. A building security system, already in place, should provide adequate protection when the building is unoccupied, although this may require modification to protect furnished areas when the house is open to visitation.

To make the structure accessible to the physically handicapped, an outdoor ramp will be needed at the storeroom door, an indoor ramp between the storeroom and kitchen, and ramps at the door sills on the first floor.
VISITOR CIRCULATION DIAGRAM
DINING ROOM

After their orientation in the former kitchen, visitors will step into the dining room, which the Jennette family used for several purposes, all reflected in the furnishings. In one corner they will see the keeper's desk, where he did the paperwork that went with his job, and nearby the sewing machine at which Mrs. Jennette toiled to make clothes for a growing family. The sideboard and dining table speak to the dining function, while schoolbooks on the table hint at evening use for doing homework. The radio and a few games and toys suggest the family's leisure time activities.

Guided visitors will walk across the southwest corner of the dining room, between the dining table and the kitchen, and leave through the hall door. To minimize the likelihood of theft, small objects will not be placed on the hall rack or sideboard.

A runner will protect the floor and linoleum from visitor traffic and help keep visitors from straying. If all tours are conducted by park staff, no barrier is needed. If visitors are ever allowed to tour the house on a self-guided basis, it is recommended that a barrier be placed in the doorway, allowing visitors to look into but not enter the dining room.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Object</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 HEATING STOVE, coal-burning heatrola (southeast corner)</td>
<td>Rany Jennette 1984 interview [cited hereafter as RJ]; figure 8</td>
<td>acquire period stove, modern stove pipe and zinc pad.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 HALL RACK with round mirror (south wall, near hall door)</td>
<td>VF; fig. 8</td>
<td>acquire period rack.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 DINING TABLE, oak, with round top and pedestal, plain curved feet, with one extra leaf (north of center)</td>
<td>RJ, VF; fig. 5</td>
<td>acquire period table.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 BOWL, white ceramic, 6-9 containing ARTIFICIAL FRUIT, DECORATED EASTER EGGS, PINE CONES, or CHRISTMAS TREE BALLS (center of table)</td>
<td>VF</td>
<td>acquire period bowl, artificial fruit, and Christmas tree ornaments, modern decorated eggs, and pine cones.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 DOILY, crocheted (center of table)</td>
<td>VF</td>
<td>acquire period doily.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Dining Room, Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Object</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11 KEROSENE LAMP, brass, marked U.S. L.H.S (north side of table)</td>
<td>VF</td>
<td>acquire period lamp.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12-15 SCHOOLBOOKS (4) used in Avon school ca.1930; 16-18 COMPOSITION BOOK or TABLET; PENCIL CASE and PENCIL (north side of table)</td>
<td>Common usage.</td>
<td>acquire period items.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 CIGARETTE-ROLLING MACHINE (north side of table)</td>
<td>VF</td>
<td>acquire period item.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-27 DINING CHAIRS (8), with wood seats, plain back splat, decorated crest rail, oak finish (place five at dining table, two flanking sideboard, one at desk)</td>
<td>VF; fig. 5</td>
<td>acquire 8 matching period chairs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28 HIGH CHAIR, turned spindles, tray that goes over child's head, dark finish (at table)</td>
<td>VF; fig. 8.</td>
<td>acquire period chair.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29 SIDEBOARD, late 19th century, with marble top, high back, candle shelves, one long drawer and double-door cabinet below (west wall)</td>
<td>VF. The original marble top is owned by Mrs. Vivian Frontis.</td>
<td>acquire similar period sideboard; acquire three crocheted doilies similar to those owned by Mrs. Frantis.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Dining Room, Continued

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>30</strong> RADIO, Pioneer, floor model, battery powered, with controls inside top cabinet, behind doors (across northwest corner)</td>
<td>RJ; VF; fig. 8</td>
<td>acquire ca. 1927 Pioneer radio.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SMOKING ACCESSORIES</strong>, including a MEERSCHAUM PIPE, a PRINCE ALBERT TOBACCO CAN, and a MATCH BOX, all ca. 1930 (on top of radio)</td>
<td>VF</td>
<td>acquire period items.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>34</strong> COUCH, upholstered in tufted black leather (under north window)</td>
<td>VF; fig. 7</td>
<td>acquire period couch.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>35</strong> DESK, oak, roll-top office desk, ca. 1910-20, with pull-out typewriter shelf on left side (northeast corner, against north wall)</td>
<td>VF; RJ; fig. 6</td>
<td>acquire period roll-top office desk. The roll-top desk is preferred to the more striking Victorian secretary, because the latter was acquired after 1927 and is less indicative of the keeper’s official record-keeping duties.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>36</strong> STATION LOG (on desk)</td>
<td>RJ</td>
<td>reproduce, with handwritten entries on several pages; display open to an entry from the 1927-33 years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>TYPEWRITER, Underwood (ca. 1920) (on desk)</td>
<td>VF</td>
<td>acquire period typewriter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STEEL PEN and wood PENHOLDER (on desk)</td>
<td>common usage</td>
<td>acquire period objects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GLASS INK BOTTLE (on desk)</td>
<td>common usage</td>
<td>acquire period object.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BLOTTER (on desk)</td>
<td>common usage</td>
<td>acquire period object.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STATIONERY and ENVELOPES (on desk)</td>
<td>common usage</td>
<td>reproduce U.S. L.H.S. stationery and envelopes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OFFICIAL PUBLICATIONS (4) relating to the Light House Service in the 1920s and early 1930s (on desk)</td>
<td>RJ</td>
<td>acquire period publication.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PACK OF CHESTERFIELD CIGARETTES, ca.1930 (on desk)</td>
<td>VF</td>
<td>acquire period object.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASHTRAY, 1920s (on desk)</td>
<td>common usage</td>
<td>acquire period object.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WASTEBASKET, woven wire (northeast corner)</td>
<td>common usage</td>
<td>acquire period basket, partially fill with crumpled paper.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEWING MACHINE, treadle-operated Singer “New Home” model, ca. 1919 (east wall, in front of window)</td>
<td>VF; fig. 7</td>
<td>acquire period “New Home” sewing machine; display open, with a piece of TOWELING under the needle, partially hemmed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>51-53 ROCKING CHAIRS (3), plain, wooden-seat rockers, two with arms (two near stove, one near radio)</td>
<td>VF; fig. 5</td>
<td>acquire 3 period rockers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54 PHOTOGRAPH of Almy Jennette as a baby, ca. 1913, in oval frame (west wall, right of sideboard)</td>
<td>VF</td>
<td>reproduce the original photograph owned by Mrs. Almy Jennette, Elizabeth City, North Carolina; acquire original or similar period frame.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55 SPITTOON, brass, with initials of Light House Service, holding a redware PLANT POT and ARTIFICIAL SNAKE PLANT (sansevieria) (in front of southeast window)</td>
<td>VF</td>
<td>acquire period L.H.S. spittoon, modern redware pot and artificial plant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58 LINOLEUM RUG, 12 X 15 feet, predominantly blue or green pattern, in ca. 1927 style (centered)</td>
<td>VF</td>
<td>acquire modern vinyl rug of appropriate pattern.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59-61 WINDOW SHADES (3), ivory, with ring pulls (east and north windows)</td>
<td>VF</td>
<td>acquire modern shades.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Object</td>
<td>Documentation</td>
<td>Recommendation</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>62-64 CURTAINS (3 pairs), floral design in blue or green, to be coordinated with rug color (east and north windows)</strong></td>
<td>VF</td>
<td>acquire modern curtains of compatible design; hang straight on rings and plain rod.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>65-67 CHILDREN'S TOYS: DOLL, TOY SOLDIERS, KIDDIE CAR (on floor and couch, north side of room)</strong></td>
<td>VF</td>
<td>place a doll on the couch; lead or tin soldiers and accessories (World War I) on the floor near the sewing machine; kiddie car on the floor by the porch door.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
HALL AND STAIRS

From the dining room, visitors will walk into the hallway, turn to the right to view the spare bedroom, then retrace their steps across the hall to go into the parlor. While in the hall they will hear a brief description of the three bedrooms upstairs, which will be left unfurnished, and of the girls' use of the stair landing as a sort of rainy day playroom.

The floor will be protected by a runner. A cord across the foot of the stairs will suffice to keep guided visitors off the stairs. In a self-guiding situation, a more substantial barrier may be needed, with a wayside panel interpreting the hall and upper floor.
HALLWAY AND STAIRS
### Hall and Stairs, Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Object</th>
<th>Documentation</th>
<th>Recommendation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 TELEPHONE, c.1910-15</td>
<td>VF; fig. 8</td>
<td>acquire period-style, modern, working telephone; possible gift from telephone company.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(mounted on the south wall to the right of the first batten)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 STOOL, cane seat (under the telephone)</td>
<td>VF</td>
<td>acquire period stool.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 HOOKED RUG, small (beside stairs)</td>
<td>VF</td>
<td>acquire modern hooked rug of compatible design.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 STAIR RUNNER, brownish tone (on stairs and landing, tacked down, without stair rods)</td>
<td>VF</td>
<td>acquire reproduction stair runners, 27” wide, brown or tan with contrasting border.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 PAPER DOLLS AND FURNITURE (on stairs and landing)</td>
<td>VF</td>
<td>reproduce period paper dolls; construct dollhouse furniture from furniture advertisements in 1927 Sears, Roebuck catalogue (reprint).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SPARE BEDROOM

Originally the Jennettes' parlor, this room became a spare bedroom when the house was enlarged in 1927. Visitors will therefore see it furnished as a guest bedroom, dominated by a massive late Victorian bedroom suite bought at auction about 1927, specifically for this room. The presence of fancy linens on the bed and bureau offer a chance to speak of Mrs. Jennette's skill with needle and crochet hook. Unless otherwise specified, the recommended furnishings should date from about 1915-25.

Visitors will view this room from the doorway, behind a low barrier.
SPARE ROOM
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Object</th>
<th>Documentation</th>
<th>Recommendation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BED AND BEDDING, as VF; RJ; fig. 11 follows: DOUBLE BED, ca.1890, oak, high head and foot boards with ledge-like tops, applied beaded decoration, 2-8 exposed metal springs; MATTRESS, polyester-filled; SHEETS (2); BOLSTER and BOLSTER COVER; PILLOWS (2), polyester-filled; PILLOW CASES (2), embroidered; BEDSPREAD, white, with a design embroidered in red (south wall)</td>
<td>VF; RJ; fig. 11</td>
<td>acquire period bed of similar design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 DRESSER, with mirror, oak (angled in northeast corner)</td>
<td>VF; RJ; fig. 11</td>
<td>acquire period dresser matching bed and washstand.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 DRESSER SCARF, crocheted or embroidered (on dresser)</td>
<td>VF</td>
<td>acquire period scarf.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 PHOTOGRAPH of a young woman with a flower, in oval stand-up frame (on dresser)</td>
<td>VF</td>
<td>reproduce photograph; acquire period frame.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Object Description</td>
<td>Documentation</td>
<td>Recommendation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 WASHSTAND, oak, with towel bar above, two drawers and cabinet below (west wall, right of window)</td>
<td>VF; RJ; fig. 11</td>
<td>acquire period washstand matching bed and dresser.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 BUREAU SCARF, crocheted or embroidered (on top of the washstand)</td>
<td>common usage</td>
<td>acquire period scarf.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 WASHBOWL and PITCHER, white ironstone china with gold rim (on top of the washstand)</td>
<td>VF</td>
<td>acquire period washstand set.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 TOWELS (2), white, with crocheted ends (on top of the washstand)</td>
<td>VF</td>
<td>acquire period towels.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 MIRROR, round, dark frame (west wall, over washstand)</td>
<td>VF</td>
<td>acquire period mirror.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 ROCKING CHAIR, small (between washstand and fireplace)</td>
<td>VF; RJ; fig. 11</td>
<td>acquire period rocker.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 GRATE, iron (in fireplace)</td>
<td>VF</td>
<td>acquire period grate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Object</td>
<td>Documentation</td>
<td>Recommendation</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 SHOVEL, small iron (leaning against fireplace)</td>
<td>VF</td>
<td>acquire period shovel.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 CANDLESTICKS (2), clear or tinted glass (on mantel)</td>
<td>VF</td>
<td>acquire period candlesticks and modern white candles.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 PHOTOGRAPH of girl, in round frame (east wall)</td>
<td>VF</td>
<td>reproduce photograph from original owned by Mrs. Olive J. Peek; acquire original frame or similar period frame.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 LINOLEUM RUG, about 9 x 12, pattern in red tones, ca. 1927 (centered)</td>
<td>VF</td>
<td>acquire period or compatible modern vinyl rug.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23 HOOKED RUGS (3) (two beside bed, the other under rocking chair)</td>
<td>VF</td>
<td>acquire period rugs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 WINDOW SHADES (3), ivory, with round pulls</td>
<td>VF</td>
<td>acquire modern shades.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 CURTAINS, plain white voile</td>
<td>VF</td>
<td>acquire modern curtains; hang straight.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PARLOR

After it became the parlor in 1927, this room saw relatively little use, the family preferring the new, larger dining room for use as a family room. Reserved mainly for formal occasions, the room has a less lived-in look, dominated as it is by a three-piece overstuffed parlor suite. The piano and Victrola hint at musical entertainment for visiting relatives and friends. At Christmas the decorated tree affords an opportunity to talk about how the keeper’s family celebrated the traditional holidays.

Visitors will enter from the hall, walk through the northeast corner of this room and exit through the kitchen. In order to discourage visitors from straying into the center of the room, a barrier should be placed across the northeast corner from the edge of the hall door to the edge of the kitchen door. A runner will protect the floor in this area.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Object</th>
<th>Documentation</th>
<th>Recommendation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PARLOR SUITE, overstuffed, dating from ca. 1927, consisting of a</td>
<td>VF; RJ; fig. 9</td>
<td>acquire period parlor suite; upholster in buff-colored mohair.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 SOFA (south side, near fireplace)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 high-backed WING CHAIR (toward the southeast corner)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 low-backed ARMCHAIR (toward the northeast corner)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 DOILIES, crocheted, serve as anti-macassars to protect the backs and arms from soiling and excess wear</td>
<td>VF</td>
<td>acquire period doilies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 PIANO (north wall), a Charles Stieff upright, ca. 1925, with applied vine motif on front panel</td>
<td>VF; RJ; fig. 9</td>
<td>acquire period Stieff piano and matching bench.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 PIANO BENCH, plain dark wood</td>
<td>VF</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 PIANO SCARF of a reddish tone, with fringed ends (on top of piano)</td>
<td>VF</td>
<td>acquire period scarf; reproduce photographs and place in period frames.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Object</td>
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<td>Recommendation</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 PHOTOGRAPHS (up to 4) of Jennette family members (on top of piano)</td>
<td>VF</td>
<td>acquire period items.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 9 HYMNAL, Methodist, and a secular SONGBOOK (on piano music rack) | common usage; Jennette's Methodist affiliation | |}
<p>| 10 PARLOR TABLE, square, with shelf and splayed legs, dark finish (north wall, left of piano) | VF; fig. 10 | acquire period table. |
| 11 DOILY, crocheted (on table) | VF | acquire period doily. |
| 12 KEROSENE LAMP, brass (on table) |VF | acquire period lamp. |
| 13-14 SHEET MUSIC and PIANO INSTRUCTION BOOK (on table shelf) | VF | acquire period items. |
| 15 ROCKING CHAIR, wood, without arms (northwest corner) | VF; fig. 5 | acquire period rocker. |
| 16 ANDIRONS, iron, very plain (in fireplace) |VF | acquire period andirons. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Object</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17 FIRE TOOLS and STAND, iron (in fireplace)</td>
<td>VF</td>
<td>acquire period items.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 COAL GRATE, iron (in fireplace)</td>
<td>VF</td>
<td>acquire period grate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 CLOCK, 8-day, c.1900-15 (on mantel)</td>
<td>VF; fig. 10 (clock)</td>
<td>acquire period clock.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 GLASS CANDLESTICKS (pair) (on mantel)</td>
<td>VF</td>
<td>acquire period candlesticks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 PHOTOGRAPHS (up to 3), framed (on mantel)</td>
<td>VF</td>
<td>reproduce photographs, acquire period frames.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 LIBRARY TABLE, rectangular, with one drawer on long side and a drawer at each end, and a shelf (in front of northwest window)</td>
<td>VF</td>
<td>reproduce the original table owned by Mrs. Yvonne Oden.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23 BANQUET LAMP, kerosene, with floral-decorated reservoir and globe (fig. 10) (on top of table)</td>
<td>VF</td>
<td>acquire period lamp.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Parlor, Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Object</th>
<th>Documentation</th>
<th>Recommendation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>24 <strong>DOILY</strong>, crocheted (on top of table)</td>
<td>VF</td>
<td>acquire period doily.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 <strong>BOOKENDS</strong>, plain wooden (on top of table)</td>
<td>VF</td>
<td>acquire period bookends.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 <strong>BOOKS</strong> (up to 6), including a Methodist hymnal, a small Bible, a Bible story book, and 2 or 3 other religious works (on top of table)</td>
<td>VF</td>
<td>acquire period books.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 <strong>LARGE BIBLE</strong>, 1880-1890 (on table's lower shelf)</td>
<td>VF</td>
<td>acquire period Bible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28 <strong>STEREOSCOPE</strong>, hand-held (fig. 10) (on table’s lower shelf)</td>
<td>VF</td>
<td>acquire period stereoscope.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29 <strong>STEREOGRAPHIC VIEWS</strong> of World War I battle scenes (on table’s lower shelf)</td>
<td>VF</td>
<td>acquire period items.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 <strong>VICTROLA</strong>, 1910-1925 (southeast corner)</td>
<td>VF; RJ; fig. 9</td>
<td>acquire period Victrola; no records needed, since machine will not be open.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Object</td>
<td>Documentation</td>
<td>Recommendation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>31-32 VASES (2), tall, with flared tops, containing CATTAILS and SEA OATS (on either side of porch door)</strong></td>
<td>VF</td>
<td>acquire period vases; use local cattails and sea oats.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>33 PHOTOGRAPH of Benjamin and Dorcas Jennette, the keeper’s parents (on east wall, left of Victrola)</strong></td>
<td>VF; original photograph owned by Vivian J. Frontis.</td>
<td>use original frame (gift) with reproduction of photograph.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>34 TAPESTRY with human figures (over mantel)</strong></td>
<td>VF</td>
<td>acquire period tapestry panel.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>35 RUG, American Axminister, about 9 x 12, beige or rose ground and floral corners (centered)</strong></td>
<td>VF</td>
<td>acquire period rug.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>36 HOOKED RUG, small (in front of rocking chair)</strong></td>
<td>VF</td>
<td>acquire period rug.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>37 WINDOW SHADES (2), ivory, with scalloped and fringed ends, circular pulls</strong></td>
<td>VF</td>
<td>acquire modern cloth shades.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>38-39 CURTAINS, lace, and rose-colored brocade DRAPES</strong></td>
<td>VF</td>
<td>acquire modern curtains and drapes of similar character.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Parlor, Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Object</th>
<th>Documentation</th>
<th>Recommendation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>40 SILK PLANTS (coleus, begonia, and 2 small ferns) in</td>
<td>VF</td>
<td>acquire period plant pots, modern silk plants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41 small ceramic PLANT POTS (4) (on window sills)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42 DOOR VALANCE, rope-and-ball type, wine red (over hall door)</td>
<td>VF</td>
<td>reproduce valance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43-44 CHRISTMAS TREE (optional) (northwest corner)</td>
<td>RJ</td>
<td>During the Christmas season, if potential visitation justifies and staff or volunteer time permits, it would be appropriate to re-create the Jennettes' parlor decorations. This would involve acquiring an artificial cedar, pine, or holly tree, a galvanized bucket to set it in, cotton snow, candles in clip-on holders, some period Christmas tree ornaments (including icicles and angels with cellophane wings), and paper chains made of colored construction paper, a red paper bell to hang from the center of the ceiling, and red and green paper festoons to place around the walls, as described by Raby Jennette (p. 18).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INTERVIEWS


Jennette, Rany B. Taped interview with Katherine B. Menz and William L. Brown, National Park Service, Cape Hatteras, June 23, 1987. Original tape at Harpers Ferry Center, copy at Cape Hatteras National Seashore. Side 3 of this tape is a prepared account of life at the light station, written and read by Mr. Jennette.

MANUSCRIPTS

"Summary of work done on Cape Hatteras Lighthouse area," by E.J. Byrum, project superintendent, Cape Hatteras State Park. Typed report dated August 29, 1939, on CCC work. National Archives, Record Group 26; copy at Cape Hatteras National Seashore.

GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS


_____. _____. "Historic Structure Report, Part I, Administrative, Historical and Architectural Data Sections, Keeper's Dwelling, Cape Hatteras Light Sta-

ARTICLES


TRADE CATALOGS

Several period furniture or general merchandise catalogs have been consulted in an effort to find illustrations that match family memories of what was in the house in 1927-33. These included catalogs of Sears, Roebuck and Company for 1902, 1907, 1915 and 1927; Montgomery Ward for 1922; Fred Macey Company, Grand Rapids, ca. 1905; Kehr, Kellner and Company, New York, 1873-74; Isaac C. Decker, Inc., c.1930; Kalamazoo Stove Company, 1927/28; and Consumer's Price Guide, Bakersfield, California, ca. 1915. All of these catalogs are in the Vera B. Craig Historic Furnishings Collection, Harpers Ferry Center Library, National Park Service.
ILLUSTRATIONS
Figure 1  Plans of first and second floor, principal keeper's quarters, Cape Hatteras Light, April 1888, accompanying a letter from the Engineer, 5th District, U.S. Light House Service, January 30, 1889.
Figure 2  Plan of first floor, principal keeper's quarters, after addition of the dining room in 1927. Adapted from a drawing by Archie W. Franzen in his *Historic Structure Report, Part I, Architectural Data Section, Principal Light Keeper's Quarters, Cape Hatteras Light Station, Cape Hatteras National Seashore, North Carolina*. Washington: National Park Service, 1968.
Figure 3  Plan of second floor, principal keeper's quarters, with 1927 addition. Adapted from a drawing by Archie W. Franzen in his *Historic Structure Report, Part II, Architectural Data Section, Principal Light Keeper's Quarters, Cape Hatteras Light Station, Cape Hatteras National Seashore*. Washington: National Park Service, 1968.
Figure 4  Principal keeper's quarters, from the southwest, after restoration. 1988 photograph, Warren Wrenn, CAHA.
Figure 5  Type of dining chair, dining table, high chair, and rocking chairs remembered by Mrs. Vivian Jennette Frontis. Dining Chair from Sears, Roebuck & Company's 1927 catalog; others from Sears, Roebuck & Company's 1915 catalog. Harpers Ferry Center Library.
Figure 6 Type of desk and secretary remembered by Mrs. Fron-tis. Desk from catalog of Montgomery Ward & Company, 1914; secretary from catalog of Kehr, Keller & Company, New York, c.1873. Harpers Ferry Center Library.
Figure 7  
Type of couch and sewing machine remembered by Mrs. Frontis. From 1902 Sears, Roebuck & Company catalog (reprint). Harpers Ferry Center Library.
Figure 8  Type of hall rack, telephone, radio (but with cabinet doors instead of drop front), and heating stove recalled by Mrs. Frontis. Stove from catalog of Kalamazoo Stove Company, c.1930; radio from Sears, Roebuck & Company's 1927 catalog; telephone from 1915 Sears catalog (Harpers Ferry Center Library). Hall rack from c.1907 catalog of Adams Furniture Company, Toronto (H.F. duPont Winterthur Museum library).
Victrola, piano, and parlor suite like those Mrs. Frontis remembered. Piano and table from 1915 Sears, Roebuck catalog; victrola from 1925/26 Sears, Roebuck catalog; parlor suite from Isaac C. Decker catalog, 1927/28. Harpers Ferry Center Library.
Figure 10  Lamp, clock, stereoscope, and parlor table, as remembered by Mrs. Frontis. Stereoscope from 1908 Sears, Roebuck & Company catalog (reprint); table from 1915 Sears, Roebuck & Company catalog; clock and lamp from Sears, Roebuck's 1902 catalog (reprint). Harpers Ferry Center Library.
Figure 11 Bedroom suite and rocking chair similar to those in the Jennettes' spare bedroom. From Nelson, Matter & Company's 1884 catalog (bedroom suite) and Sears, Roebuck catalog for 1915 (rocker). Harpers Ferry Center Library.
Figure 12

Porch furniture and icebox remembered by Mrs. Frontis. From 1915 (icebox and settee) and 1927 (rocker) Sears, Roebuck & Company catalogs; fernery from Heywood, Wakefield Company's 1928 catalog. Harpers Ferry Center Library.
Figure 13  Kitchen range and kitchen cabinet similar to those Mrs. Frontis remembered. From Sears, Roebuck & Company's 1915 catalog. Harpers Ferry Center Library.
Figure 14  Bedroom furnishings similar to those used by the Jennettes. From Sears, Roebuck & Company's 1915 catalog. Harpers Ferry Center Library.