THE MCCAMPBELL HOUSE
DAVIDSON COUNTY, TENNESSEE

PHYSICAL CONDITION ASSESSMENT
AND
RESTORATION PRIORITIES

December 2009
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Prepared for the Tennessee State Museum
and the
Tennessee Historical Commission
Nashville, Tennessee

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A Professional Services Project
Tennessee Civil War National Heritage Area
Middle Tennessee State University

*The Tennessee Civil War National Heritage Area (TCWNHA) is a statewide program
dedicated to the interpretation and preservation of Tennessee’s Civil War and
Reconstruction legacies. Partially funded by the National Park Service, the TCWNHA
is one of several projects administered by the Center for Historic Preservation at
Middle Tennessee State University.
# Contents

Introduction  
The Architecture of the McCampbell House  
c. 1805 Floor Plan  
c. 1820 Floor Plan  
c. 1948 Floor Plan  
Preparations for Restoration  
Physical Condition Assessment  
Main House Exterior Details  
Main House Interior Details  
Side and Rear Additions  
Adaptive Reuse of the McCampbell House  
List of Restoration Priorities
**Introduction**

This report has been prepared by the Tennessee Civil War National Heritage Area at the requests of Dan Pomeroy from the Tennessee State Museum and Patrick McIntyre of the Tennessee Historical Commission (THC). The Heritage Area is a partnership unit of the National Park Service. It is a statewide program administered by the Center for Historic Preservation at Middle Tennessee State University. The Professional Service and Outreach initiative of the Heritage Area provides trained staff to assist communities, agencies, and organizations in planning and conducting interpretive, education, and heritage development projects in all of Tennessee’s 95 counties.

The McCampbell House is one of Davidson County’s oldest brick buildings and was part of the Civil War home front in the county. It may be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Situated in the Donelson community, the house and grounds were recently left to the State Museum in a bequest. The property has suffered from a lack of maintenance and attention for a number of years and a considerable amount of cleaning and restoration work needs to be done before it can be fully utilized.

In light of this fact, the following report can serve as a guide to the current physical condition of the building; issues that require immediate attention; areas that need rehabilitation in the short term; and large-scale restoration projects that would require a considerable amount of funding and construction time over the long term.

A History of the house is being prepared as part of the property’s pending National Register nomination by staff from the THC and the Metropolitan Historical Commission. It will provide additional information about the families who have lived in the house, the changes in ownership, and the subdivision of the property.
William Hall came to Tennessee from Maryland and purchased the land on which the McCampbell House sits in 1800. He built a brick house on the property which more than likely reflected the culture that he grew up in during the latter part of the eighteenth century. One traditional house form predominated in the English colonies along the Atlantic seaboard during this period. Built of a variety of different materials, its definitive characteristics include two-story height, one-room depth, and a length of two or more rooms.

The earliest form of this popular house type consisted of two rooms on the first floor, the hall and the parlor. Almost all domestic activities took place in the hall, which was square-shaped and the larger of the two rooms. In New England, a central chimney served both rooms. In the Chesapeake Bay area, external end chimneys were common; in the Middle Atlantic colonies, the chimneys were built flush within the gable walls.

After the American Revolution, the Federal style of building succeeded the Georgian and remained popular in the South until the advent of the Greek Revival in the 1830s. Sometimes referred to as Adamesque, the Federal aesthetic was characterized by balance and symmetry in design, lightness and elegance in mood, and delicacy and finesse in execution. These characteristics were attained by an accent on verticality, carefully controlled proportions, and restrained ornamentation. A hallmark of this style was its emphasis on door and window openings by increasing their size and quality of decoration.

Most early buildings built in Middle Tennessee were uncomplicated and had simple rectangular floor plans. The front and rear walls often had roughly-centered opposing doors. Usually, the chimney was centered on the long axis of the house on the gable end. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the two room hall-and-parlor plan was the most common of the multi-room plans found in Davidson County.

As a dwelling built on the westward-moving frontier at the beginning of the nineteenth century in the nascent “Tennessee Federal” mode, the McCampbell House as originally constructed represents a transitional phase between vernacular building methods and the more fashionable styles that followed. The tall thin profile and the asymmetrical appearance of the façade of the McCampbell House echo the traditions of the past, while Federal characteristics such as paired exterior chimneys, segmented brick lintels, and a low-pitched roof look to the future.
In 1820, Hall sold his property to Thomas Harding, who moved into the house with his wife and growing family. Harding made some major alterations to the house, probably before he moved into it, which is why a c.1820 date has been assigned to this remodeling campaign. He changed the floor plan from the original hall-and-parlor layout into the more up-to-date central hall plan. He accomplished this by constructing a frame wall in both the first and second floor halls to form a new entry on each floor. At the same time, he reoriented the staircase so that it assumed a dominant role in these newly-created spaces. In order to accommodate the new staircase, he had to knock holes in the interior brick wall and relocate the original door openings into the parlors. The older apertures then were filled in with plaster and lath. The new central hallway downstairs created an unheated public area where visitors could be received without having to enter the rest of the dwelling.

Harding sold the property to James Anderson in 1847, and he sold it in turn to Thomas McCampbell five years later. The house remained in the family until the 1940s with minimal changes other than the addition of Victorian-era front and rear porches. The architectural ghosts of these porches are still plainly visible on the north and south elevations, and if one looks hard enough at the front façade, the faint outlines of the smaller long-gone Federal-style portico still remain. This building evolution illustrates the way that succeeding generations choose to alter the family homeplace to reflect their current domestic situations.

Note: This sketch reflects information gathered by Dr. Tara Mielnik of the Metropolitan Historical Commission, which she graciously supplied to the author. The following sources also were used in the preparation of this report:


c. 1805 Floor Plan:

First Floor

Second Floor

Not to Scale
12/9/09
H. Fieser

- Frame
- Frame with Brick Veneer
- Brick
c. 1820 Floor Plan:

First Floor

Second Floor

Not to Scale

12/9/09

H. Fieser

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Frame

Frame with Brick Veneer

Brick
c. 1948 Floor Plan:

First Floor

Second Floor

Not to Scale
12/9/09
H. Fieser
Preparations for Restoration

The most important thing to do in preparation for the restoration of the McCampbell House is to protect the historic property from the elements and agents of harm. To this end, the building should be closely examined for evidence of damage or potential damage from rain, water, snow and ice, wind, hail, fire, sunlight, insects, animals, vandals, and thieves. The following observations should be helpful for assessing the condition of any structure:

1. Rainwater is the most common and most deadly threat to the existence of any structure. Although fire is much more dramatic and quick, rainwater affects all buildings. It is important to protect the wooden, paper, and more fragile elements of the house from dampness. Wood doesn’t rot if it’s kept wet all the time, or dry all the time, but it will deteriorate rapidly if it repeatedly goes through wet and dry cycles. All exterior wood should have at least one coat of primer in order to provide a very minimal and temporary protection. Remember that every part of a building can be affected negatively by uncontrolled rainwater. The most important are the roof and the foundation.

2. The roof needs to be impervious to wind-blown rain and snow. No matter what material is used, it must shed water at every point. The most common areas of roof failure are the eaves, the valleys at roof intersections, and any openings in the roof, such as dormers, chimneys, vents, and pipes. Any penetration of the roof fabric needs to be both flashed and counter-flashed on all sides with a non-corroding metal of the proper thickness. All chimneys and flues should have a sheet metal cap with drip edges. Water collected by the roof should be channeled away from the house with an integrated gutter and leader system. Any missing pieces of trim that help to seal the roof should be replaced.

3. It is important that the area around the foundation be kept dry. If not, most buildings will tend to settle unevenly over the years, causing steady damage. A damp foundation also will raise the humidity level in the house, creating conditions for mold to form. This can be largely prevented by using a gutter and leader system to divert water away from the house. It will also prevent the water from splashing the walls of the foundation. Both gutters and leaders must be inspected on a regular basis to prevent clogging. The compaction of the soil in the immediate vicinity of the house over time will leave the building in a shallow depression. Topsoil should be brought in, spread evenly (using hand tools close
to the house), and sloped away from the building using at least a 1:12 pitch to facilitate drainage. The best time to do this is in the fall, so that the grass seed can be sown and then covered with straw.

4. Any growing plant in close proximity to a building will damage the structure to some degree. Overhanging limbs are accidents waiting to happen. Beware of weak trees like hackberries or pecans. Ivy and other intrusive vines use wood and mortar for food, and damage them for as long as they grow on them. Shrubs and trees trap moisture against the structure, and the high humidity near the house causes rapid deterioration of the building fabric.

5. Any openings in the building (doors, windows, vents) have the potential to admit the elements. These should all be inspected for missing or broken pieces, and the flashing above each one checked as well. The glazing on the windows should be intact, and non-intrusive, functioning screen/storm windows installed. This weatherizing has the added effect of enhancing security.

6. Loose debris, whether inside or out, is a health and safety hazard. The grounds and interior should be kept free of trash at all times. A thorough cleaning of the entire building should be done before restoration work begins. This would eliminate certain problems and provide a clearer picture of what restoration work needs to be done.
Physical Condition Assessment

Main House Exterior Details

1. Foundation

The foundation consists of lightly worked limestone rock laid in courses in a lime mortar. There are some twentieth century repairs that used Portland cement-based mortar evident. Portland cement is much harder than the limestone and can have a deleterious effect upon it. Future repairs should utilize a softer, lime-based mortar to avoid any unnecessary damage to the historic masonry.

At the present time, the exterior foundation is in good condition and only needs some minor joint repair to be weatherproof.

2. Front Porch

The front porch and its steps are composed of limestone rock. It is roughly the size of the original Federal-style portico that was removed some time ago. The porch and its approaches are rather rough and hazardous, and should be redone.
3. Brick Walls

The exterior walls consist of handmade bricks laid in a lime-based mortar in a Flemish bond pattern. The narrow mortar joints have been struck with a pointing tool and show some signs of the original penciling. The brickwork has been repaired over the years in a number of places, particularly at the tops of the walls and under the windows. In 1947, lightning struck the upper southwest corner of the house and the west chimney, causing some damage which was repaired shortly afterward.

Much of the repaired brickwork is easy to identify because its quality is inferior to the original work. In the example below, although the mason took care to use the Flemish bond pattern, the mortar joints of the new work are considerably thicker than the originals and the courses are not level. All of the redone brickwork is functional, although somewhat unsightly. Masonry repairs on other areas of the house were laid in a common bond pattern and were done with Portland cement-based mortar. Any future repairs should be laid in Flemish bond, using a lime-based mortar with the appropriate joint width.

At present, the exterior brickwork is in good condition, although a number of voids in the mortar need careful re-pointing. The mortar used for the repair should match the original mortar in width and color.
4. Exterior Trim Work

The McCampbell House has simple exterior ornamentation with a minimum of wood trim. The exterior wood trim work consists of the window, vent, and door trim; the cornice work (eave mold, fascia board, soffit, molding strip, frieze board, and simple returns); and eave brackets fashioned from painted yellow poplar boards.

The eave brackets appear only on the south façade. These brackets appear to be from a later Colonial-Revival period remodeling effort (c.1948) and are stylistically inappropriate for a house that dates to the beginning of the nineteenth century. Although dentil blocks would be more likely to be featured on the cornice during the time of the original construction, there is no evidence that they were ever used historically to ornament the McCampbell House.

The cornice work needs considerable restoration, particularly on the back of the house. Many of the fascia boards need replacement and the soffits require repairs. There are a number of places where birds, squirrels, and vermin can enter. This is a serious and unacceptable condition and should be corrected as soon as possible, ideally at the same time as the roof replacement.
5. Windows

The brickwork above the window and door openings is supported by segmented brick arches. The present 2/2 wood window sashes with large vertical panes are early twentieth century replacements. More than likely, the originals were 6/6 sashes with smaller individual panes than the ones now in use. The windows on the first floor have thin plain trim and simple wood sills. The second floor ones have wider and more elaborate trim, extended and molded sills, and trim boards below the sills. Possibly the trim for these windows was added during the c.1820 remodeling. A modern aluminum storm and screen unit has been installed over the exterior trim on each of the windows of the house.

The window frames and sashes, sills, storm and screen units, and louvered blinds are in good condition, although the sills and blinds may need some repairs. The window sashes are inappropriate for a house of this era and negatively affect the historic exterior appearance. The current placement of the aluminum storm and screen units prevents the functioning blinds from being operational.
6. Doors

There are two pairs of doors on the front façade of the McCampbell House: an outer set with Italianate characteristics and an inner Federal-style two-paneled set. These inner front doors are original and are positioned in a small recessed opening. The outer set of doors seem to be a later addition. They may be the large yellow poplar doors from another dwelling that an earlier owner acquired and cut down to fit the entrance in the late 1940s. Both sets of doors have Victorian-era hardware at present. The exterior four-light fanlight is modern. The inner fanlight consists of a single pane and it and the surrounding trim appear to be original.

Both sets of doors and their respective fanlights are in good condition at this time.
7. Roof

The framing of the roof consists of 4” to 5” by 8” to 10” sash-sawn yellow poplar ceiling joists, a 1” by 6” sash-sawn yellow poplar false plate, and 4” to 5” by 7” sash-sawn yellow poplar rafters that taper to 3 ½” at the ridge, where they are half-lapped and pegged together.

The roof fabric consists of machine-split western cedar shingles (ca. 1970s) laid on unedged sash-sawn yellow poplar boards. For additional structural support, there is a flat, 1” x 3” wind brace let in to the tops of the rafters at each of the four corners of the building. These braces, considered superfluous by carpenters as the nineteenth
century progressed, help to stabilize the roof system and keep it from racking. Racking occurs when there is a lateral shift in the structural members of the roof under a heavy wind load, and can lead to a complete failure of the roof.

The low-pitched roof, typical of the Federal style in Tennessee, tends to drain slowly and retain moisture. The present condition of the machine-split western cedar shingles is poor. Their surfaces are so compromised that mold and moss are flourishing on them. Water seeps through the shingles into the roof sheathing and framing members whenever it rains and is slowly rotting them.

The poor condition of the roof poses the greatest danger to the McCampbell house in the short term. The wood shingles on both the main house and the additions need to be replaced as soon as possible. All of the old roofing should be removed and all wood framing and sheathing material inspected for rotten wood. Any rotten wood must be removed to prevent its spread to other areas. A plywood substrate should be installed over the historic sheathing in order to provide a solid nail base for the new roof. Care should be taken to properly nail the new sheathing directly to the rafters, rather than just to the old sheathing.
8. **Gutter System**

The gutter system consists of half-round, galvanized steel gutters along the length of the building front and rear, and circular downspouts at each corner. All of the components are painted white.

The gutters and downspouts should be inspected and repaired where necessary after the installation of the new roof and cornice. The system could be improved substantially by attaching a leader to the ends of each downspout. These leaders should be installed in a bed of gravel under the ground at a proper slope away from the building.

9. **Handicap Accessibility**

There are no provisions for handicapped visitors at present. If the building will be used by the general public, certain building spaces and elements, such as entrances, bathrooms, and kitchen counters and appliances must be added or altered so as to accommodate individuals with disabilities or to accommodate the needs of persons with different degrees of disability. Additional comments on this topic can be found in the “List of Restoration Priorities” section on page 50.
Hazardous Materials

Most historic restoration projects entail contact with hazardous materials, most commonly mold; bird and animal waste; the lead in paint; and asbestos in a variety of building products, such as insulation, ceiling tiles, drywall, linoleum, pipe wrap, and others. The McCampbell House is no exception. The following examples illustrate the kinds of problems that need mitigation.

Hazardous material removal should take place early in the restoration phase. When dealing with these substances, workers should wear protective equipment, follow safe procedures, and dispose of the waste properly.
10. Mechanical Systems

a. Electric

The electrical system of the house has been put together in a piecemeal fashion. There are four electrical boxes on the rear basement wall. One of the boxes has fuses; another has circuit breakers. The wiring is of various types and it is difficult to tell which are energized and which aren’t. Much of the wiring is obsolete and should be removed to avoid confusion.

The entire system should be inspected by a licensed electrical contractor and evaluated with the needs of the proposed new HVAC system for the McCampbell House also taken into account. Some of the present electrical system may be able to be incorporated into the new one, but much of this work needs to be started anew.
b. Plumbing

There is a minimum of plumbing in the main house. An upstairs bathroom was created by walling off the south end of the second floor entry, but the execution leaves a lot to be desired. The cast iron vent pipe and fixtures are unsightly and obsolete. The most serious plumbing issue is a leak in one of the water lines (probably the hot water) in this bathroom. This leak has resulted in damage to the walls and ceilings of the rooms below it. If an upstairs bathroom is desired, this is the best location for it, but the current facility should be completely gutted and redone in a more appropriate and skillful manner.

![Plumbing damage images](image1.png)


c. HVAC

No centralized system was ever installed in the house. The previous owners appear to have used space heaters, electric wall heaters, wood stoves, and fans for their heating and cooling needs. A modern HVAC system should be installed in order to fully utilize this building.
Main House Interior Details

1. Basement
   a. Foundation

   The limestone rock of the foundation walls is in good shape, although it needs some minor re-pointing of the joints. All of the basement walls have been heavily whitewashed, some of which has flaked off. The loose material should be brushed off and new whitewashing material applied to the walls.

   The original use of this basement area was as a kitchen and the whitewashing was used for sanitary reasons, as well as to brighten the work space. Enslaved African Americans worked and lived in this section of the house, and carried food to family members in other parts of the dwelling. Any historical interpretation of the building should make note of this fact.
b. Floor Joists

The floor joists consist of 4” to 5” x 10” whip-sawn yellow poplar timbers. Most of the joists appear to be sound although there is insect and moisture damage to some of them. To help counter this deficiency, the joists in each basement room have been reinforced by the installation of a large wood beam directly underneath them in the centers of their spans. This beam is supported at each end by a steel jack post.

Each joist should be thoroughly inspected by a carpenter in order to determine whether additional reinforcement is necessary.
c. Floor

The entire basement has a dirt floor. There appears to have been some groundhog activity in the room under the parlor where the earth is stirred up. A pest control company could determine whether or not the animals are still active.

Depending on the ultimate use of the McCampbell House, consideration should be given to installing a permanent floor in the basement. An archaeological investigation should precede any new construction here.
d. Fireplace

The original kitchen fireplace in the basement was constructed as an integral part of the limestone foundation of the house. Although somewhat obscured by numerous layers of whitewash, the well-crafted arch stones and keystone that support it are plainly visible. As the nineteenth century progressed, the basement kitchen fell out of favor in Tennessee and was moved out to the backyard to for use as a detached kitchen. The opening of the basement fireplace has been bricked up and is no longer functional. An aperture for a stovepipe has been cut just above the arch and remains uncapped. Asbestos wrap can be clearly seen on the water pipe above and next to the fireplace. As noted above, this hazardous material must be properly removed by a qualified contractor.

A minimum of restoration would allow the superior craftsmanship of the historic stonework to be visible. The masonry and the other construction tasks were more than likely done by skilled enslaved artisans.
e. Stairs

The basement stairs are constructed of southern yellow pine lumber and wire nails. The stairway was constructed at some point long after a major remodeling of the house during which the builder relocated the main stairway that led to the second floor. No sign of an earlier stair to the basement could be found, so it appears that for some time the only original basement entry was from the outside where the present access doors are located.

The stairs are adequate for limited use but may need to be reinforced if traffic increases.
f. Ventilators

There are four ventilators (two in front and two in the rear) set into the top of the limestone foundation that allowed light and fresh air into the basement. These windows are set flush with the outside of the brick walls. Each consists of a painted rectangular yellow poplar frame within which are arranged closely-set square wood bars (resembling the stair balusters inside) placed diagonally. The frame is surrounded with flat wood trim and a molding strip. On the inside, a later divided sash with two large panes of glass has been set within the opening to keep the weather out.

These ventilators are in good shape. The inside sashes need to be painted.

g. Doors

1. Outside entry to the basement is provided by a pair of access doors. With the exception of the stone steps, all of the components of this entryway (frame, sidewalls, doors, and hardware) are constructed with modern materials.
The access doors are in good shape at the present time.

2. There is a stone dividing wall in the basement that runs perpendicular to the front and rear walls. It is original to the house and supports the brick dividing walls above it on the first and second floors. Providing access to the basement room under the parlor is a battened plank door to the left of the foot of the basement stairs. This whitewashed door is in poor condition. It is composed of tongue-and-groove, edge-beaded yellow poplar planks joined together by horizontal battens. One of the original planks has been replaced by a circular-sawn board some time ago. The original forged strap hinges are missing and have been replaced by Victorian era hardware. The trim work (edge-beaded flat trim with a molding strip) needs repair but is basically intact. The thick wood threshold rests directly on the dirt floor.

This basement door needs to be rebuilt and the trim work repaired.
2. First Floor

a. Floor

The flooring consists of narrow, matched, tongue-and-groove red cedar boards. They appear to be original. The undersides of these boards have been eased with a hatchet where they cross each joist in order to provide a smooth top surface for the floor. All of the floors have been varnished.

Although well-used, the flooring in the downstairs rooms is sound and its appearance is generally acceptable. The main exceptions are in the front entry, where a carpenter removed a large metal floor register and replaced it with different sized wood of another species, and two small mortises where the studs from an earlier wall were secured. Also, there is a small hole in the floor at the threshold of the side door of the parlor.
b. Walls

All of the walls consist of the original plaster over brick with the exception of the frame wall that separates the original hall room from the newer central hall. Each room has been wallpapered.

The wallpaper needs to be replaced and the underlying plaster substrate repaired where necessary.
c. Trim

All of the first floor window and door openings in the walls are nicely paneled and painted. The window and door surrounds have simple moldings. Both the hall and the parlor have small crown moldings and baseboards, and the parlor has a simple chair rail.

The first floor trim is in good condition and only needs a good cleaning and painting.
d. Windows

The 2/2 double-hung sash windows are in good condition. As noted above, 6/6 sashes would be more appropriate for a house built in the early nineteenth century.
e. Doors

There are two types of doors found on the first floor: four-panel and six-panel. The two four-panel doors were placed on the original exterior of the house and are taller than the interior doors, measuring 6’ 9” and 7’ 2” high. There is also a cased opening (7’ 1” high) in the end wall of the parlor that appears to have been an original exterior door. The six-panel doors are found in the interior openings and measure 6’ 4’ high. All of the doors measure approximately 3’ 6’ wide, with the exception of the basement staircase door, which is 2’ 8’ wide. The original carpenter locks and doorknobs are gone and have been replaced with rim locks and porcelain knobs commonly used in the late nineteenth century.

The interior doors and hardware are in good shape and only need cleaning and minor repairs.
f. Fireplaces

The original wood-burning fireplace openings have been altered to accommodate the burning of coal. Modern firebrick has been installed inside the firebox that makes the space shallower and narrower. The openings are bordered with marble slips. The hearths, which are composed of bricks set in a loose sand base, should be either re-laid or replaced with more suitable material.

![Fireplace Photos](image1.png)

![Fireplace Photos](image2.png)

g. Mantels

Each room has a unique Federal-style mantel. A paint analysis could determine the original finishes if desired. The mantels and fireboxes are in good condition.

h. Ceilings

![Ceiling Photos](image3.png)

The ceilings in each room are paper over plaster and need to be redone. The first floor ceilings have begun to fail due to age, and the hall ceiling has also
suffered water damage from the faulty plumbing in the upstairs bathroom. The main first floor rooms have small crown moldings at the tops of the walls.

i. **Staircase**

The staircase is an interesting feature of the McCampbell house. Located in the entrance hall, it reflects the light and airy style of the Federal aesthetic. With a gentle rise it is comfortable to use, although the winder steps halfway up are somewhat narrow. The delicate U-shaped staircase, although it is not in its original location, is original to the house and retains its original unembellished newel posts, handrails, and balusters. The thin hand rail terminates at a slender newel post. A closed string staircase with paneling underneath begins along the east wall of the hallway and continues to a set of winder steps that complete a ninety degree turn above the rear door. A straight run of steps leads to a half-landing and then another straight run terminates on the second floor. There is no handrail along the wall. The remaining newels are plain square posts that support the gracefully curved handrail at the corners. The upper section of the staircase is the open string type. The handrails and treads are painted black and the rest of the components are painted white. There are no decorative elements on the stringers except a molding strip along the bottom of the outside stringer. The area under the lower section of the staircase is enclosed for use as the interior entry to the basement. It is accessed by a six-panel wood door.

The staircase is missing a baluster, but otherwise is in good condition.
3. Second Floor

a. Floor

The second floor consists of narrow, matched, tongue-and-groove red cedar boards, similar to the first floor. They appear to be original. Some of these boards have been taken from their original location in the second floor entry and recycled to fill in the place where the older stair opening once was. All of the floors have been varnished.

With the exception of the bathroom floor, which is somewhat problematic because of the water leak, the flooring in the upstairs rooms is sound and its appearance is generally acceptable.
b. Walls

All of the walls consist of the original plaster over brick with the exception of the frame wall that separates the original upstairs hall from the newer second floor stair entry. Each room has been wallpapered. There are no crown moldings at the tops of the walls and both rooms feature a chair rail and baseboard.

The wall paper needs to be replaced and the underlying plaster substrate repaired where necessary.

This area under the window on the north wall of the second floor parlor is in worse condition than anywhere else in the original house.
c. Trim

All of the second floor window and door openings in the walls have nicely reeded paneling and are painted. The window and door surrounds have simple moldings; the parlor features an unusual molding which is a combination of window surround and chair rail. Both the hall and the parlor have baseboards and a plain chair rail.

The second floor trim is in good condition and only needs a good cleaning and painting.
d. Windows

The 2/2 double-hung sash windows are in good condition. As noted above, 6/6 sashes would be more appropriate for a house built in the early nineteenth century.
e. Doors

Six-panel doors are found in the upstairs openings and measure 6’ 4’ high. The doors measure approximately 3’ 6’ wide. The original carpenter locks and doorknobs are gone and have been replaced with rim locks and porcelain knobs from a later period.

The second floor doors and hardware are in good shape and only need cleaning and minor repairs.
f. Fireplaces

The original wood-burning fireplace openings have been altered to accommodate the burning of coal. Modern firebrick has been installed inside the firebox that makes the space shallower and narrower. The openings are bordered with brick. The hearths, which are composed of bricks set in a loose sand base, should be either re-laid or replaced with more suitable material.

![Fireplace images]


g. Mantels

The upstairs parlor has a unique Federal-style mantel, while the plain upstairs hall mantel exhibits Greek-Revival characteristics. All four mantels in the house show signs of being replaced at an earlier date. The mantels just don’t quite fit in their respective locations; the trim work around each has been shimmed to accommodate each mantel. Possibly these mantels were purchased elsewhere and substituted for the originals at an unknown date. A paint analysis could determine the original finishes if desired. The mantels and fireboxes are in good condition at this time.
h. Ceilings

The ceilings in each room are paper over plaster and need attention. The second floor ceiling paper has begun to fail due to age, and a large section of plaster which has failed in the stairway entry must be repaired.
i. Staircase

Lighting the half landing on the rear wall is a 2/2 double-hung wood window. The newels are plain square posts with simple caps that support the thin handrail at the corners.

The upper part of the staircase is in good condition.
j. Closet

On the second floor landing, a closet with paneled doors and walls has been constructed from historic materials, most likely during the c.1948 remodeling effort. This closet abuts the bathroom wall, which also dates from that time period.

The closet is in good condition at this time.
4. Attic

Because of the low pitch, one can only stand fully upright in the center of the attic. There is a modern louvered vent on each side of the chimney on the west gable wall and similar vent on the south side of the chimney on the east wall. These newer vents have been inserted into the old frames of earlier vents. The screens over the vents are torn away and need repair. Heavy gauge hardware cloth should be used in order to repel squirrels.

The attic allows access to view the building techniques that the carpenters used to secure the partition wall at the top. The tops of the studs of the frame wall are nailed to deadwood grounds that are attached to the ceiling joists on each side of the wall below. These nails were manufactured before 1845. The brick dividing wall has been extended upwards at three points and then pinned between two ceiling joists. Each method prevents the tops of the respective walls from swaying.
Side and Rear Additions

Shortly after World War II, the owner of the McCampbell House constructed two additions in order to make the dwelling more livable. One was added to the east side and one was placed in the rear, at the middle of the north wall. Although both had wood frame walls, they were veneered with recycled brick to better match the main house.

The foundation of the side addition is made of limestone, although the quality of material and workmanship is inferior to that of the main house. The kitchen addition to the rear utilized a standard brick-veneered concrete block foundation. The framing of the floor, walls, and roof system of both additions consists of southern yellow pine lumber. The wall fabric consists of paper over plaster in the side addition, and paper over drywall in the rear.

Both additions were roofed with the same split western cedar shingles as the main house. These roofs are also in poor condition and should be replaced. There is a minimum of exterior trim work and no gutter system exists on either addition.
The sets of 2/2 double-hung wood twin windows on the side addition have a wide mullion between them, and the lintels and sills are made of concrete. The windows on the rear addition are standard mass-produced double-hung wood millwork. The large window on the north wall has a large fixed-glass center pane with a double-hung flanker on each side.

There are no exterior doors on the side addition. The rear addition has modern six-panel wood doors that are sold by any millwork company. The interior doors in the side addition are the paneled types that were used in the 1940s, trimmed with flat wood trim and a small cornice. The cased opening was formerly an exterior door.
The floor in the side addition is composed of narrow strips of high quality, tongue-and-groove end-matched white oak. It is well-laid and can be refinished. The kitchen addition utilizes a vinyl rug over a wood subfloor and needs replacement.

The ceilings in both additions have suffered water damage from the leaky roofs. Both the paper over plaster ceiling in the side addition and the acoustical tile ceiling in the kitchen must be redone.
Besides these two brick-veneered additions, a small weatherboarded frame addition was constructed in the rear of the brick side addition that served as a bathroom.

This addition is in poor shape on the interior and does not match the rest of the house on the exterior. It does not provide usable space if the building is used as an office or other public functions. The removal of this addition should be considered, depending on the ultimate utilization of the property.
Adaptive Reuse of the McCampbell House

The McCampbell House is a fine example of early Middle Tennessee architecture. The size, features, and location of the building make it an ideal candidate for adaptive reuse, possibly as an office for a governmental or non-profit agency. The high-quality architectural detail and tall ceiling heights found within the dwelling would provide an appealing workplace. Since the building is a local landmark, its adaptive reuse can also exert a strong emotional appeal on the community. The idea of restoring and preserving a beautiful, historic building and making it available for public use should find considerable support among neighborhood and preservationist groups.

The greatest physical asset offered by many older buildings is location, and the McCampbell House is no exception. Situated in the heart of Donelson, the property is easily accessible from Lebanon Road and I-40. The house is surrounded by a large lot, which has enough space to handle the parking requirements of an office building.

One key reason for choosing adaptive reuse is money. An older building may have little or no value in its current condition, but rehabilitating a historic building can provide considerable savings compared to constructing a new one. A major renovation of an existing space could cost between $35 and $75 per square foot. The structural integrity of the exterior, the presence of asbestos and other hazardous materials, and the suitability of the floor plan all influence the cost. At the Tennessee Preservation Trust conference held in Franklin in 2007, nationally known rehabilitation expert, Donovan Rypkema, stated that a total building rehab will cost approximately 16 percent less in construction costs and 18 percent less in construction time than comparable new construction even if asbestos and other substances are present.

In addition, renovation or adaptive reuse for public use triggers compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. According to the ADA, alterations that affect usability must provide accessibility to the "maximum extent possible." Thus, buildings undergoing major renovations would almost certainly have to install accessible entrances, corridors, and washrooms. The costs of making the McCampbell House handicap-accessible would be minimal because all major functions of the building could occur on the first floor.

Obviously, a building used by the general public will be required to have all systems meet the local building codes. This usually does not pose a significant problem because most adaptive reuse projects completely remove the older work before renovation begins. Adaptive reuse provides a cost-effective, time-efficient alternative to new
construction. While reuse projects require the flexibility and creativity to deal with unexpected conditions during construction, the benefits in speed, money, and a continued sense of history often far outweigh the potential drawbacks.

If used as an office building, the McCampbell House could provide a minimum of four private offices, a meeting room, bathrooms, and a kitchen. Because of its location away from internal traffic patterns, one of the potential offices, the west room on the first floor, is ideally situated to serve as an exhibit space, if that would be desired. The entry would distribute traffic to the exhibit space on one side, the restrooms and kitchen straight ahead in the rear addition, the meeting room and east office to the other side, and the two offices upstairs.

The offices and meeting room would be located in the original part of the house, and would require little or no disturbance to the historic fabric of the building. The main rest rooms and kitchen could be located in the rear addition, where the conventional construction would be easier to work with than the brickwork and heavy framing found in the original part of the house.

If the building will be used by the general public, it must be handicap-accessible. All building modifications to serve the handicapped must comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The historic doors found in the McCampbell House are at least three and a half feet wide and pose no problem for wheelchair access. An ADA-compliant entrance ramp could be easily fitted to the back of the building at the junction of the rear addition and the main house. This addition is centrally located and is an ideal place to build the proposed new rest rooms and kitchen facilities. Presumably, a parking lot would be constructed in the rear of the building as close to the handicap-accessible entrance as possible. The parking lot and sidewalk should be smooth and level to facilitate wheelchair use. With centralized bathroom and kitchen facilities close by and easily available, visitors would have complete access to all public areas of the building. ADA Regulations and Technical Assistance Materials are available for free from the U.S. Department of Justice.
List of Restoration Priorities

1. Issues that Require Immediate Attention

   Security
   Maintain grounds
   Trash removal
   Vine removal
   Interior cleaning
   Neutralize and remove mold
   Prime exterior wood surfaces
   Inspect wiring and outlets
   Inspect plumbing

2. Areas that Need Rehabilitation in the Short Term

   Replace roof -- plywood, metal, flashing
   Repair gutter system
   Repair and replace cornice work.
   Repair historic plaster on walls and ceilings
   Remove and replace attic insulation and other hazardous substances
   Exterior cleaning
   Stone and brick mortar repair (repointing)
   Paint exterior wood surfaces
   Remove upstairs bathroom furnishings
   Repair side addition floor
   Inspect and repair first floor joists

3. Future Restoration Projects

   Replace window sashes with more historically correct ones
   Remove outer set of front doors and fanlight
   Replace storm and screen units with more appropriate units
   Paper and paint interior walls
   Repair and refinish all interior woodwork: staircase, mantels, doors, windows, and trim
   Replace upstairs bathroom
   Rehabilitate kitchen addition
Construct downstairs bathrooms
Install basement floor
Repair or replace front stoop
Remove cornice brackets
Remove rear frame addition
Construct handicap access
Whitewash basement walls
Rebuild interior basement door, frame, trim
Repair patches in historic floors
Refinish floors