RICHMOND NATIONAL BATTLEFIELD PARK

GARThRIGHT HOUSE

by

Russell Jones

Contributions by James Askins

Office of History and Historic Architecture
Eastern Service Center
Washington D.C.
March 1971

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
HISTORIC STRUCTURES REPORT

GARTHRIGHT HOUSE

Richmond National Battlefield Park
Virginia

APPROVAL SHEET

RECOMMENDED

Chief, Office of History and Historic Architecture

Date 

Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date 

Superintendent, Richmond National Battlefield Park

Date 

APPROVED

Regional Director, Southeast Region

Date
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a. Name and number of building.

Garthright House - Building Number 6.

b. Proposed use of structure.

The exterior of the house will be restored as an in-place exhibit. The interior will be modified for quarters.

c. Justification for action.

In May 1970 the house was seriously damaged by a fire, thought to be set by vandals. The use of the house as quarters would provide greater protection to the building. The master plan, now in preparation, will reflect this management decision.

d. Provisions for operating structure.

The operating cost will be covered by the park quarters account.
The historic Garthright House (Hospital During Cold Harbor Battle) was severely damaged by fire in May, 1970. The house was an exterior restoration and the interior used as a meeting place for the Pamunkey Womans Club. After the fire and inspection by Historical Architect Askins, ESC, a management decision was made to restore the exterior of the house as an exhibit-in-place but to utilize the interior of the house as a residence for a Park Ranger. This would provide greater protection for the northern half of the park (Cold Harbor, Gaines Mill, Beaver Dam Creek, Chickahominy Bluff, and Garthright House). The new master plan which is presently in draft form will recommend this action.
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<tr>
<th>ITEM</th>
<th>QUANTITY</th>
<th>COST</th>
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<tr>
<td>Restore and modify Garthright House</td>
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**ESTIMATE TOTALS**

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### SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION FOR PROJECT CONSTRUCTION PROPOSAL

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<tr>
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<td>Garthright House</td>
<td>B-16</td>
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#### 1. MANAGEMENT INFORMATION

See attached schedule of work and estimate of costs prepared by Architect Askins, Eastern Service Center.

A temporary emergency roof was placed on the House the day after the fire in order to protect the structure from weather damage. The restoration and modification should be accomplished as soon as possible in order to more completely protect the historic structure.

A new deep well will be required.

A farm outbuilding should be reconstructed to provide vehicle storage space.
ALTERNATE # 3
Cost: $27,250.00
Historic Structure Report Required.

1. Roof
   a. Rafters
   b. Sheathing
   c. Wood shingles  2500.00

2. Cornice
   a. Remove existing
   b. Replace with period type  750.00

3. Weatherboarding
   a. Remove post period
   b. Replace period  3000.00

4. Electrical
   a. Repair existing
   b. Underground service
   c. Additional as required  1300.00

5. Heating
   a. Repair existing
   b. Air conditioning  1300.00

6. Plumbing
   a. Repair existing
   b. Provide bath tub, 2nd floor
   c. Provide 1/2 both, 1st floor  1150.00

7. Masonry repairs
   a. Exterior 1st floor & foundation
   b. Chimneys  4500.00

8. Interior repairs
   a. Plastering
   b. Floors
   c. Millwork
   d. Addition for residence  5500.00

9. Exterior painting  1000.00
10. Interior painting  800.00

    15% Overhead  3270.00
    10% Profit  2180.00

    Total  27,250.00
DESCRIPTION OF STRUCTURE

The Garthright House as we see it today is a typical product of house evolution. Originally it was a one-and-a-half-story brick house with end chimneys and partial basement. It perhaps had only two rooms with center hall on the first floor and a garret above. It may have had one or two dormers.

For some unknown reason, perhaps a fire, the portion west of the hall was removed. A full-story frame second floor containing one room and hall was added above the remaining brick structure. Later a two-story frame addition replaced the previously destroyed brick portion. This consisted of one room on each floor resulting in the ordinary one-room-deep, two-story, center-hall Virginia farmhouse with end chimneys.

Although all walls and ceilings are plaster on wood lath, there are definite variations in the framing and workmanship details to indicate that the frame portions of the present building were not constructed at one time.

The building was restored in 1935. At this time alterations were made to the west second-floor room and a bath was added on the second floor. The central heating system was installed in 1961.
PRESENT CONDITION OF STRUCTURE

FOUNDATIONS

There is no evidence of foundation failure anywhere in the building.

BRICKWORK

All of the brickwork requires repointing due to weathering and inadequate maintenance. A number of brick have disintegrated.

FRAMING

The fire in May 1970 damaged the sills, studs and plate of the south (rear) wall and the partition between the hall and west rooms. Some floor joists of the first and second floor and all second-floor ceiling joists were damaged beyond repair. The entire roof was completely destroyed. In addition to the fire damage, the hall partition is badly infected with rot and termites.

SIDING

The siding is in bad condition generally due to warping, splitting, and rot. The rear wall was damaged by the fire.

EXTERIOR DOORWAYS

One rear door was destroyed in extinguishing the fire. The other two doors are weathered. All door frames, sills and trim are in need of repair and replacement. Extensive damage has occurred in the trim due to the entrance of water at the door heads.
WINDOWS

The sash, frames, sills and trim are deeply weathered and infected with rot. The sash need reglazing. A number of window panes are broken.

CORNICE

Although not evident when viewed from the ground, the cornice was damaged beyond repair by the fire.

ROOFING

The present roof is a temporary structure protecting the building since the fire.

EXTERIOR STEPS

The open riser wood steps at the three exterior doors are not historically correct and are in very poor condition.

BRICK DRAINS

The brick drains installed along the front and rear walls are not in character with a Virginia farmhouse and are causing serious damage to the wall bricks by splashing the water against the walls.

PLASTER WALLS AND CEILINGS

All first and second floor walls and ceilings are plaster on wood lath. There is no plaster in the basement. The entire
second-floor ceiling and about half of the ceiling in the north room, first floor, were destroyed by the fire. All second-floor walls, except the south room, and two walls on the first floor were destroyed by the fire or during the structural investigation.

**FLOORS**

The basement floor is concrete, covered with asbestos tile which is in very poor condition. The flooring of the first and second stories is wood, some of it dating from the historic period. It is in fair condition. A few of the boards are split or splintered beyond repair.

**INTERIOR DOORS**

All of the interior doors, except the three destroyed by the fire, are in usable condition.

**INTERIOR TRIM**

The interior trim is very complete and in good condition except where damaged by the fire and at two or three places where leaking has occurred around windows causing some rot in the sills and stools.

**STAIRWAYS**

The basement stairway is structurally sound but very unsafe due to inadequate headroom.
The stairway from the first to second floor is sound but due to termite damage in the adjacent partition it must be realigned. One baluster is missing.

FINISH HARDWARE

The finish hardware is fairly complete but much of it has been replaced with post-historic period items.

FIREPLACES

The four fireplaces have been closed. All four mantels are in place but appear to have parts missing. All fireplaces and chimneys would require extensive repair and installation of flue linings to make operable.

HEATING SYSTEM

The central forced air heating system was installed in 1961 and is assumed to be adequate and operational. All of the ducts located in the attic were completely destroyed by the fire. All other ducts appear to be in good condition.

ELECTRICAL SYSTEM

The existing 60 amp electrical service was damaged extensively by the fire. Although complete with fixtures and outlets, it would be unsafe and inadequate to serve the proposed quarters.
WATER SYSTEM, PLUMBING AND FIXTURES

The well and pressure water system will be tested by the Park to determine if adequate to serve the proposed quarters. The present sewerage system should be large enough to service the quarters. Certain portions of the hot and cold water supply lines and drain pipes were damaged by the fire.

The bathroom fixtures are in fair condition. The tub cannot be used in the proposed bath and, since the fixtures are in color, replacement of the tub would create a problem in matching color.

INSULATION

All exterior frame walls are insulated with 2" blanket insulation. This is inadequate for the winter temperatures of the Richmond area.

INTERIOR PAINT

The painted surfaces throughout the building are in poor to fair condition.

PROPOSED RESTORATION AND MODIFICATION

BRICKWORK

FRAMING

Replace all framing damaged by the fire. Replace all framing damaged by rot and termites. Install new second-floor ceiling joists. Install new roof and gable framing.

SIDING

Replace all deteriorated and fire-damaged siding. The existing siding shall be used as a model for the new material. All sound existing material shall be reused.

EXTERIOR DOORWAYS

Replace one door. Repair other two doors. Repair or replace as required frames, sills, thresholds and trim. Install flashing at all doors and windows.

WINDOWS

Repair or replace all sash, frames, sills and trim. Replace broken glass and reglaze all sash. Original sash trims, etc., shall be used as a model for the replacement items.

CORNICE

Reconstruct the entire cornice and all large boards. The replacement moldings shall duplicate the original items.

ROOFING

Cover roof with red cedar shingles laid on open sheathing.
EXTERIOR STEPS AND PORCHES

Remove existing front steps and replace with open riser wood steps and brick pad.

From a safety standpoint, since the building will be converted to quarters, it is recommended that the steps serving the two rear doors be replaced by small porches with railings, copied from similar structures of the historic period.

FLASHING

Install new lead-coated copper flashing at both chimneys and all door and window heads to make watertight.

EXTERIOR PAINTING

At the time of the 1935 restoration it was believed that the exterior of the building was not painted. However, during the present investigation, evidence was found to indicate that the exterior had at one time been painted a blue-gray.

In keeping with this evidence and to preserve the exterior wood surfaces, it is proposed the exterior wood surfaces be painted. Colors to be selected jointly by the Superintendent, Restoration Specialist and the Restoration Architect based on the research findings.

NEW CONSTRUCTION

Shall include the installation of a powder room and a coat closet located in the entry hall, first floor and a storage room
located in the stair hall, second floor. All new construction shall be removable without damage to the historic fabric.

PLASTER WALLS AND CEILINGS

Install new plaster on metal lath on wall and ceiling areas damaged by the fire and where it was necessary to remove plaster for repair of rot and termite damage. New plaster to be a three-coat job.

FLOORS AND FLOOR COVERING

Remove existing asbestos floor tile in basement and install vinyl-asbestos tile and rubber base. Repair all wood floors and install indoor/outdoor carpeting in all areas except powder room, kitchen area, storage room and bathroom, which shall receive underlayment and vinyl-asbestos tile and rubber base. Color to be selected by the Superintendent.

INTERIOR DOORS

Replace the three doors destroyed by the fire. Repair, refasten and refit all other interior doors.

INTERIOR TRIM

Repair and re fasten existing trim. Replace where necessary. New trim shall match existing adjacent trim in design, size and material.
STAIRWAYS

Install new stairs from basement to first floor to provide additional headroom.

Realign and refasten stairs from first to second floor.
Replace all components damaged by fire, rot or insects. Replace missing baluster.

FIREPLACES AND MANTELS

Close all four fireplaces with masonry. Remove the mantels from the kitchen-dining room (west room first floor) and both second-floor rooms. Mantel in living room (east room first floor) shall remain in place, repair as necessary. The three mantels removed from the building shall be provided safe storage in the attic of the house.

KITCHEN AND DINING ROOM CABINETS

Install cabinets as indicated by the drawings. Kitchen base cabinets to have formica work top.

FINISH HARDWARE

Replace all non-historic hardware with items of the correct historic period. Repair historic hardware as necessary to make operational.

STORM SASH

Install interior type storm sash at all windows. No storm doors will be provided.
INSULATION

Install 4" blanket insulation under the floor of the west room, first floor, all exterior frame walls and the entire second-floor ceiling.

HEATING - AIR CONDITIONING

Inspect, clean and adjust existing furnace for proper operation. Install air conditioning complete with all piping, condensers, and blowers as required for proper operation. Replace all ducts damaged by the fire. Make necessary alterations to existing ducts as may be required by the installation of air conditioning. Insulate all ducts located in unheated area.

ELECTRICAL

Remove existing panel, wiring, outlets, switches and fixtures. Install new underground service from terminal pole (approximately 350' north of building), 150 amp panel wiring, outlets, switches and install all government fixtures as shown on the drawings. Provide fused switch for water pump. Provide necessary outlets for electric range and clothes dryer. Provide and install exhaust fan in powder room. Provide all necessary wiring and switches for heating and air conditioning.

All electrical work shall be inspected and certified as complying with all national, state, local and underwritten codes.
PLUMBING

Remove former basement kitchen supply and drain lines. Replace all undersized or fire-damaged supply and drains serving the second-floor bath; and relocate as required by the new fixture arrangement. Install all supply and drain lines as required for the powder room and new kitchen. Relocate water system pump and pressure tank. Provide and install new 50-gallon electric water heater. Provide new fixtures for second-floor bath. Install lavatory and water closet from bath in new powder room. Provide connections for washing machine. Insulate all hot water supply lines and cold water supply lines and drains in unheated areas. Make all necessary connections to existing water system and septic tank.

PRESERVATIVE TREATMENT

All existing and new timbers in contact with brick foundations and piers shall be given a standard preservative treatment.

INTERIOR PAINTING

Give all previously painted surfaces two coats of oil paint. All new material shall receive three coats of oil paint. Color to be selected by the Superintendent.

GRADING

Remove the brick gutters at front and rear walls. Regrade on all four sides of the building to direct surface water away from the walls.
PHOTOGRAPHS
PLATE I

Copy of a photograph of the Garthright House thought to have been taken in the 1880s.
PLATE II

Copy of a photograph supposedly made in 1887.

(See PLATE III for reverse side.)
PLATE III

Reverse side of photograph shown in PLATE II. Garthright House is listed as #10. Note the difference in spelling.
LIST OF VIEWS
Made during the Excursion, May, 1887, of the
57th and 59th Massachusetts to the

BATTLEFIELDS OF VIRGINIA.

1. Group of Excursionists in Fort Steadman.
2. Fort Steadman, looking towards Petersburg.
3. The Crater.
5. View across the field on which the Union troops charged,
   July 30, 1864, also showing location of Tunnel which
   entered the Mine.
6. Tablet showing advanced position of the 58th Massachusetts,
   July 30th, 1864.
7. Tablet showing camp ground of the 58th Massachusetts,
   near Fort Meikle.
8. Hotel Albermarle—Petersburg.
9. Old Cold Harbor House
12. View showing where Hancock’s troops charged June 3d,
    1864—Cold Harbor.
13. House at Mechanicsville, occupied both by McClellan and
    Lee, as headquarters.
15. Spottsylvania Court House and group.
16. Group of Members of the 56th Massachusetts on the
    banks of Ny river.

Group on steps of Beverley House—St. George.
PLATE IV

Front view of Garthright House before 1935 restoration.
PLATE V

Rear of Garthright House before 1935 restoration.
PLATE VI

The Garthright House during the 1935 restoration.
PLATE VII

PLATE VIII

West elevation showing fire damaged gable and condition of chimney.
PLATE IX

Rear elevation showing extent of fire damage to this side.
PLATE X

The gables were damaged more extensively by the fire than appears from the outside. Note the appearance of the masonry due to poor workmanship in repainting.
PLATE XI

View of the foundation showing lack of maintenance.
PLATE XII

The weathering of the lower portion of the walls has been accelerated by water splashing from the brick drains.
PLATE XIII

Outside basement entrance. This will be investigated during the restoration to determine its historic accuracy.
PLATE XIV

A close-up of the south elevation showing the general condition. Note "Pud Lock" hole to facilitate scaffolding during construction.
PLATE XV

While not historically accurate, the basement windows are in good condition and will not be replaced at this time due to limited funds. They should be corrected as soon as possible.
PLATE XVI

Front door and steps. The present steps will be replaced with a historically accurate reproduction.
PLATE XVII

This close-up photograph of a window in the masonry portion of the building illustrates the extent of deterioration and repair necessary.
PLATE XVIII

This rear door was damaged beyond repair during the fire. Note the condition of the trim and threshold and the attempt to seal the siding at the door frame. Flashing must be installed to correct this condition.
PLATE XIX

Window in frame portion of building showing typical condition.
Much of the siding must be replaced and properly fastened to prevent this condition from recurring.
PLATE XXI

View showing fire damage at eaves, south (rear) wall.

Observe detail at junction of frame wall over masonry portion and the abutting two story frame addition.
PLATE XXII

This close-up photograph of the cornice does not reveal the extensive internal damage caused by the fire.
PLATE XXIII

Interior view of south wall and cross partition first floor showing fire damage.
PLATE XXIV

Second floor fire damage
PLATE XXV

Fires do strange things. This is the inside face of the closet door, south room, second floor.
PLATE XXVI

Termite damage to first floor partition studs was revealed during the investigation to determine the extent of fire damage.
PLATE XXVII

This photograph of the attic shows the extent of the fire damage in this area. Note underside of temporary roof construction.
PLATE XXVIII

Heating ducts located in the attic were completely destroyed.
NOTE: Window shown here has the only original sash remaining in the west wing.

It should also be noted that the upper sash has apparently been hung upside down.

Comparing with other plates in this set will bring out the difference of styles as used in the original house and in the addition Part of the siding are the original beaded type. Other parts were obviously the result of remodeling.
PLASTER FACE

F. S. SECTION A-A'

F. S. SECTION C-C'

EAST ELEVATION OF LIVING ROOM

SCALE 1/4" = 1'-0"

ELEV. OF LIVING ROOM CLOSET DOOR & MANTEL

SCALE 1/4" = 1'-0"

ELEV. OF BED ROOM MANTEL

NOTE: DOORS AND MANTELS ARE OF PINE AND ARE NOW PAINTED BLACK - FORMERLY A GRAY-GREEN.

CLOSET DOORS IN BOTH LIVING & BED ROOMS ARE SIMILAR.

A. A. DAVIS & H. W. SHIPLE, DEL.

GATHWRIGHT HOUSE

OLD COLD HARBOR, HANOVER COUNTY, VA

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

OFFICE OF NATIONAL PARKS, BUILDINGS, AND RESERVATIONS

BRANCH OF PLANS AND DESIGN

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

INDEX NO.

VA 76

SHEET 8 OF 13 SHEETS
GENERAL NOTES

1. Replace and repair old flooring, where necessary.
2. Repair arches, use all old arch and new arches, where found.
3. New arches, approximate detail shown, but exact detail will be furnished later.
4. Replace all plaster, where necessary, the finish of wall and ceiling will be new plaster.
5. Paint and repair all doors, where necessary, rework cornice, replace arches, etc.
6. All new woodwork, will be identical to the old, and of the material specified.
7. The plumbing fixtures and electric wiring, except, will be as shown, but only to be inspected by Architectural Firm.
8. All new doors and window frames will be lined up and all necessary masonry done before new doors or windows are hung.
9. Replace all necessary stoves, chimneys, toilet, etc., and fasten.
10. Replace all old fixtures with new, except pipe flange, 2" x 2".
11. Replace joist hangers.

NOTE: The millwork contractor must check all measurements and details before commencing work on materials and shall be responsible for same.

U.S. Department of the Interior
National Park Service
Richmond Battlefield Park
The Gathright House

[Signatures and dates]