013458
1D2

historic structure report
historic data section
volume 2

december 1985

ARLINGTON HOUSE
THE ROBERT E. LEE MEMORIAL

GEORGE WASHINGTON MEMORIAL PARKWAY, VIRGINIA

HISTORIC STRUCTURE REPORT
HISTORICAL DATA SECTION
ARLINGTON HOUSE
THE ROBERT E. LEE MEMORIAL, VIRGINIA
GEORGE WASHINGTON MEMORIAL PARKWAY
VOLUME II OF II
1933-1942

By

Charles W. Snell

Edited by

Harlan D. Unrau

DENVER SERVICE CENTER
EASTERN TEAM
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
DENVER, COLORADO

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. ARLINGTON HOUSE, 1933-1941 / 1

A. Transfer from War Department to National Park Service, August 10, 1933 / 1

B. Agreement Between National Park Service and War Department Regarding Repair and Restoration of Arlington House, August 17, 1933 / 1

C. Estimates and Plans, September-December 1933 / 3

D. Improvements to Arlington House in 1934 / 20

1. A Coup D'Etat Fails / 20
2. Painting the Mansion and the Slaves' Quarters, 1934 / 24
3. Repair and Alterations to Mansion's Electrical System / 25
4. Restoration of Kitchen Garden / 25
5. Improvements to Grounds / 25
6. Placement of Brick Floors in All Basement Rooms, 1934 / 25
7. Repairs to Mansion Walls and Roofs / 26
8. Rebuilding the Conservatory (Room 116) Roof / 27
9. Expenditures for the Arlington House Restoration Program, 1933-1934 / 27
10. Inspections and Reports on Fire Protection and the Wiring Systems at the Mansion / 27
11. The Battle Over Proposed Stone Steps for Portico, 1934-1935 / 28

E. Improvements to Arlington House in 1935 / 32

1. Climax of the Battle of the Steps / 32
2. Proposed Work Program for 1935 / 35
3. New Wooden Steps for the Portico / 36
4. Reconstructing Roof Over Conservatory (Room 116) / 39
5. Problems with Mansion Stairs / 41

F. Improvements to Arlington House in 1936 / 42

1. Electrical Meter / 42
2. Stairs and Floors / 42
3. Alterations to Wire Grilles Guarding Room Entrances / 43
4. Minor Roof Repairs / 43
5. Front Steps Painted / 44

G. Improvements to Arlington House in 1937 / 44
1. Painting Interior Woodwork in Halls and Exterior Steps / 44
2. Inspection of Electrical Wiring Systems / 44
3. Preservation of Paintings and Fresco / 45
4. Plans for Five Proposed Projects from Public Works Funds / 45

H. Improvements to Arlington House in 1938 / 49
1. Closing of Public Works Federal Project No. 374, 1933-38 / 49
2. Reconstruction and Repair of Mansion Heating System / 50

I. Improvements to Arlington House in 1939 / 52
I. Exterior and Interior Painting / 52
2. Repainting Three Panels / 53

J. Improvements to Arlington House in 1940 / 53
1. Reconditioning Mansion Fire Alarm System / 53
2. Mansion Roof Requires Repair / 54

K. Improvements to Arlington House in 1941 / 55
1. Improved Water Supply System for Fire Protection / 56
2. Historic American Building Survey Drawings (HABS) of Arlington House / 60

L. Summary of Improvements to Arlington House, 1933-1941 / 60

II. ARLINGTON HOUSE, 1942-1961 / 67

A. Improvements to Arlington House in 1942 / 67
1. Completion of Work on Water Supply for Fire Protection / 67
2. Painting the Arlington House Interior and Exterior / 68

B. Improvements to Arlington House in 1943 / 69
1. Painting / 69
2. Telephone Conduit / 69

C. Improvements to Arlington House in 1944 / 70
1. Painting Proposed for Interior / 70
2. Refinishing Floors / 70
3. Painting Proposed for Steps / 70

D. Improvements to Arlington House in 1945 / 71
1. Heating Problems in the Mansion / 71
2. Painting the Interior of Mansion / 72
3. Repairs to Roof / 73

E. Improvements to Arlington House in 1946 / 74
1. Painting Interior of Mansion / 74
2. Plans for Repainting Historic Room Colors in Mansion / 76

F. Improvements to Arlington House in 1947 / 77
1. Plans to Restore Historic Room Colors / 77
2. Exterior Porches Painted / 77

G. Improvements to Arlington House in 1948 / 78
1. Termite Damage Inspection of Basement Timbers / 78
2. Restoration of Historic Colors in Six Rooms / 78
3. Research on Arlington House and the Custis-Lee Families, 1948-1953 / 80
4. War Department Plans and Records of Arlington House Obtained by the National Park Service, 1952 / 84
5. Completion of First Documentary History of Arlington House and the Custis-Lee Families for 1800-1865 / 87

H. Improvements to Arlington House in 1949-1950 / 89
1. Heating System Revised, 1949 / 89
2. Establishment of "Restoration and Repair Record File," 1950 / 89

I. Improvements to Arlington House in 1951-1958 / 90
1. Inspection of Mansion for Insect Damage / 90
2. Revisions to Fire Alarm System / 91
3. Restoration of Historic Period Room Colors / 91
4. Restoration of Original Lee Mantels in Drawing Room (Room 112), 1952-53 / 101
5. Electrical System Revised, 1954 / 103

J. Improvements to Arlington House in 1958-1960 / 103
1. Plans to Restore Roofs on the North and South Wings / 103
2. Plans to Restore Wing Roofs / 105
3. Painting the Mansion / 107

K. Summary of Restoration and Repair of Arlington House, 1942-1961 / 112

III. ARLINGTON HOUSE, 1962-1971 / 115

A. Painting of Rooms, 1962-1963 / 115
B. Restoration of Exterior of Arlington House, 1964-1965 / 116
C. Painting of Rooms, 1965-1966 / 121
D. Investigation of Historic Paint Colors, 1967 / 122
E. Establishment of Regular Schedule for Painting Interior of Mansion, 1965-1983 / 122
F. Efforts to Initiate Major Research Program on Arlington House, 1966-1968 / 123
G. Replacement of Plaster Soffit in Ceiling of Main Portico, 1968 / 128
H. Sears, Roebuck and Company's Proposal to Paint Interior of Arlington House and Need for Further Research, 1970 / 129

I. Architectural Study of Mansion Roof and Gutter Problems, 1971 / 131
J. Summary, Restoration of Arlington House, 1962-1971 / 132

IV. ARLINGTON HOUSE, 1972-1979 / 135

A. Restoration of 1861 Appearance of Wing Roofs / 135
B. Restoration of 1861 Gutter and Downspout System / 136
C. Interior Painting of Mansion, 1972 / 178
D. Exterior Painting of Mansion, 1972-1974 / 178
E. Plaster Molding of Portico Ceiling Replaced, 1972-1973 / 139
F. Proposed Work on Brick Foundation Walls, 1972 / 140
G. Restoration of 1864 Snow Guards on Main Roof, 1973 / 141
H. Marbleization of Exterior of Arlington House, 1972-1974 / 142
I. Fumigation of Mansion, 1974 / 143
J. Installation of Smoke Detecting Fire Alarm System, 1975-1976 / 145
K. Light Filtering Film on Mansion Windows, 1975 / 147
L. Structural Weaknesses in Mansion, 1975-1978 / 148
M. Wallpapering and Painting Mansion Rooms, 1976 / 152
N. Threats to Safety of Arlington House Resulting From Use of Mansion for Social Functions, 1970-1979 / 152
O. Stucco Repair Work on Exterior of Arlington House and West Porch, 1977 / 156
P. Repairs to Windows in Arlington House, 1978 / 157
Q. Preparation of Furnishing Plan for Arlington House, 1972-1979 / 157
R. Additional Bracing for First Floor Rooms, 1979 / 159
S. National Capital Team, Denver Service Center, Undertakes Studies of Physical History of Arlington House, 1979-1982 / 159
1. Preliminary Historical Chronology of Mansion, 1979 / 160
2. Preliminary Architectural Report, 1979 / 160
3. Preliminary Historical Report, 1980 / 161
4. Paint Study, 1980 / 161
5. Archeological Study, 1981 / 162
6. Architectural Data Section, Historic Structure Report, 1981 / 163
7. Historic Data Section, Historic Structure Report, 1981-1983/163

T. Visitation to Arlington House, 1972-82 / 165

U. Summary of Repair and Restoration Work, 1972-79 / 165

V. SUMMARY OF REPAIR AND RESTORATION WORK ON ARLINGTON HOUSE, 1933-79 / 169

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH / 183

I. ARLINGTON HOUSE, 1933-1941

A. TRANSFER FROM WAR DEPARTMENT TO NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, AUGUST 10, 1933

Arlington House, then called the Lee Mansion, was one of the 48 historical areas transferred from the War Department to the Department of the Interior by President Franklin D. Roosevelt's Executive Order 6166. The order was dated June 10, 1933, and the detailed definition of transfer was accomplished on August 10 of the same year.

At that time, the National Park Service had few historians and no historical architects in its employment and its few landscape architects, naturalists, and archeologists had little training or interest in historical research or preservation. The National Park Service did not employ its first historians until 1931 and the first "chief historian" ran a one-man office until 1933. Thus, addition of 48 historical properties to the National Park System caused a crisis. National Park Service Chief Historian Verne E. Chatelain, and his hastily formed staff in particular, were confronted with the problem of quickly formulating and implementing policies for the preservation, maintenance, and interpretation of a large number of historical properties. In this emergency the National Park Service turned for advice to Lt. Col. Charles G. Mortimer, the Depot Quartermaster Supply Officer, who had been in charge of the $110,000 program that had been carried out between 1928 and 1931 to restore and furnish the Lee Mansion.

B. AGREEMENT BETWEEN NATIONAL PARK SERVICE AND WAR DEPARTMENT REGARDING REPAIR AND RESTORATION OF ARLINGTON HOUSE, AUGUST 17, 1933

Thus on August 17, 1933, A.E. Demaray, Associate Director, Office of National Parks, Buildings and Reservations, wrote to Maj. Gen. J.L. DeWitt, Quartermaster General, U.S. Army, confirming and spelling out the terms of the agreement that had been reached with the War Department that provided for the advice of Colonel Mortimer. Demaray wrote:

> In connection with a recent conference between yourself, Colonel Laubach and Mr. Chatelain in regard to the policy for the handling of Lee Mansion at Arlington, I am glad to indicate

the compliance of the office of National Parks, Buildings and Reservations in the details of the plan worked out. I assume that the War Department through Colonel Mortimer, the officer in charge of Arlington Cemetery, will cooperate in the maintenance of the Lee Mansion in the same way in which this problem has been handled heretofore until the Interior Department is able to set up estimates and get an adequate appropriation for this work from Congress.

You will be interested to know that the Lee Mansion has been assigned to Mr. J.T. Gill, Assistant Director, in charge of public buildings. In connection with his general supervision of public buildings in the Capital City, Mr. Gill may later want to talk with Colonel Laubach again with reference to details of administration.

However, as it was decided at the conference, our Accounting Division wishes to work with Colonel Mortimer in arriving at definite estimate figures which can be submitted to the Bureau of the Budget. We will expect to receive from the War Department such things as heat, light, water and comfort station accommodations in the same way as these matters have been handled in the past in order that there will be no necessity for creating new expenses on account of double operation.[1]

In an article that appeared in the Washington Post on August 8, 1933, the policies of the National Park Service in regard to the Lee Mansion were explained:

Harold L. Ickes, Secretary of the Interior, announced yesterday that little change will be made in the direction of Arlington House. The work of restoration and refurnishing, which has progressed under the War Department supervision, will be continued.

Additional furniture perhaps will be acquired, original pieces to make even more authentic the atmosphere of the house. Although the interior is charming and the mahogany and china and silver are exquisite examples of the taste of the period, very few pieces there now ever belonged to Arlington. . . .

---

1. Demaray to DeWitt, August 17, 1933, copy in Park Master Data File Notebook for 1933 (henceforth referred to as PMDF).

> Secretary Ickes is enthusiastic about the historical value of his department's new acquisition. He hopes patriotic societies and individuals throughout the country will assist him in continuing work of restoration.
>
> As far as possible . . . the mansion and garden will be returned to its old appearance.
>
> One of the immediate improvements to be made at Arlington will be the introduction there of guides recruited from the National Park Service. The history of Arlington will be explained . . . Verne E. Chatelain, chief historian of the National Park Service, will undertake to compile its historic story. . . .[2]

C. ESTIMATES AND PLANS, SEPTEMBER-DECEMBER 1933

Estimates for maintaining and operating the Lee Mansion during the next fiscal year (1935) requested a total of $11,895.70. This included $10,499.20 for personnel -five guards and three laborers--and $1,396.50 for supplies, equipment, and utilities.[3]

On September 19, Colonel Mortimer provided H. R. Owens, Building Branch, Office of National Parks, Buildings and Reservations, with estimates totaling $6,300 for restoration of Arlington House. Mortimer explained:

> Herewith I hand you two estimates of funds. The one is intended for use in preparing your annual estimate of funds for submission to Congress at its next session . . . to secure the necessary appropriations with which to operate the Lee Mansion for the fiscal year 1935.
>
> The other is an estimate of funds required immediately from the Public Works Administration for the purpose of painting inside and outside the Mansion and the two buildings belonging thereto and for replacement with stone or bricks the now worn wooden steps on three sides of the portico. Funds for these items--particularly the painting--are required immediately for the proper preservation of the buildings.[4]

---

2. Washington Post, August 8, 1933, in PMDF 1933.

3. Gill, Assistant Director, to the Director, September 19, 1933, in PMDF 1933.

4. Mortimer to Owens, September 19, 1933, in PMDF 1933.

The enclosed estimate called for the following work:

1. Painting Arlington Mansion and Slave Quarters.
To applying two (2) coats of paint to the interior and exterior of Arlington Mansion, putty stopping exterior doors and windows, resetting glass in Conservatory roof, repairs to stucco, plastering, woodwork, down spouts and gutters, also painting and repairs to exterior walls of slave quarters.

Painting 7158 sq. yds. @ 55¢ per sq. yd	$3,936.90
Putty stopping windows and doors, 1000 lin. ft. @ 10¢ per ft	$ 100.00
Resetting glass in Conservatory roof	$ 50.00
Repairs to stucco, plastering, woodwork, down spouts and gutters	$ 188.10
	$4,275.00
Supervision and inspection	$ 225.00
Total cost	$4,500.00

2. Removing old wood steps on east, north, and south sides of portico of Arlington Mansion and replacing same with stone or brick steps (including repairs to driveway and walks resulting from this building operation)

	$1,800.00 [5]
Total cost	$6,300.00

J.N. Nagle, Acting Chief of the National Park Service Engineering Division, had one of his men visit the Lee Mansion and make a sketch plan of the house. "His quantities check Colonel Mortimer's [figures] very closely. However, I recommend that an estimate be submitted on the basis of painting costing $1.08 per square yard rather than 55¢. . . ."[6]

The revised figures prepared by Nagle are listed on the following page.

---

5. Ibid.

6. Nagle to Assistant Director, Buildings Branch, September 22, 1933, in PMDF 1933.

PAINTING MANSION and SLAVE QUARTERS

1. Paint		
2 Coats 7100 Sq. Yds. as follows:		
Exterior 3000 @ $1.08	$3250.	
Interior 4100 " "	4450.	
		$7700.00
Putty stopping windows and doors		200.00
Reset glass roof conservatory (S.W. corner of Mansion)		200.00
Stucco Repairs (would equal 100 sq. yds. new work)		188.10
Supervision and inspection		225.00
		$8413.10

NEW STEPS AROUND EAST PORTICO

2. Limestone on Concrete foundation

Concrete	228
Limestone	1172
	$1400

Plus:

Removal old steps, contingencies, etc., say	$1800.00
TOTAL	$10,213.00 [7]

On September 29, 1933, Colonel Mortimer submitted an estimate totaling $12,209.40 "of funds required for immediate work on Arlington House and grounds . . . for submission to the Interior Department to secure funds already made available to that Department by the Public Works Administration. . . . The greater part of this work can be undertaken immediately and will furnish employment to a considerable number of men."[8]

---

7. Ibid.

8. Mortimer to the Quartermaster General, War Department, September 29, 1933, in PMDF 1933.

This estimate included $4,500 for painting the Lee Mansion and the slave quarters, $1,800 for removing the old wooden steps on the portico, as given in the estimate of September 29, and the following additional items: $1,765 for "restoration in part of the kitchen garden on the north side of the Mansion as contemplated in original study; "$702 for improvements and maintenance to grounds; $2,870 for restoration work on the mansion; and finally $581.40 to pay for supervising this work.

The $2,870 requested for work on the mansion was to be spent:

Restoring brick floors in all basement rooms not now paved.		
20 thousand old Colonial bricks @ $35.00	$ 700.00	
Labor	$ 300.00	
		$ 1,000.00
Minor repairs to walls, roof, etc.		
Labor	$ 350.00	
	$ 300.00	
		$ 650.00
Rebuilding Conservatory roof		
Labor	$ 600.00	
Materials	$ 620.00	
		$ 1,220.00
		$11,628.00
To supervision		581.40
		$12,209.40[9]

The request and estimate for $12,209.40 was submitted by the Quartermaster General to the Public Works Administration on September 30 and on October 2, 1933, .E.K. Burlew, Administrative Assistant and Budget Officer of the Office of the Secretary of the Interior, informed NPS Director Arno B. Cammerer:

> In accordance with the provisions of the National Industrial Recovery Act of 1933, an allotment of $12,470 (F P No. 374) has been made to the Office of National Parks, Buildings and Reservations, for the restoration of Lee Mansion at Arlington, Va.

---

9. Ibid.

> A request is being forwarded to the Secretary of the Treasury to transfer $12,470 to your credit for the performance of these works.[10]

Quartermaster General DeWitt at once moved to take control of the $12,470 and to have Colonel Mortimer continue the restoration work on the Lee Mansion, which had been under his charge since 1928. General DeWitt thus informed Director Cammerer on October 2, 1933:

> An item of $12,470 was included in the War Department Program for construction and reconditioning work from the funds provided for Public Works under the National Industrial Recovery Act, to cover the rehabilitation of the Lee Mansion at the Arlington National Cemetery. These funds were withdrawn from the War Department apportionment and allotted to the Department of the Interior.
>
> This office has had under consideration for a long time the subject of rehabilitation of the Lee Mansion and the plans for the work have already been prepared and are on file in the Arlington National Cemetery. The work planned is essential and should be started at once. It is therefore requested that the sum of $12,209 of the Public Works funds apportioned to your office be transferred to this office, when immediate steps will be taken to begin the necessary reconditioning.
>
> In general the proposed work consists of painting the interior and exterior of the Mansion, including repair of windows, conservatory roof, repairs to stucco, plastering, woodwork, down spouts, also painting and repairs to exterior walls of slave quarters. The plan also contemplates removing old wooden steps on east, north and south sides of portico of the Mansion and replacing same with stone or brick steps (including repairs to driveway and walks resulting from this building operation); restoration in part of kitchen garden on north side of the Mansion as contemplated in the original study; improvement of the trees, walks, planting and grass plots; also restoring brick floors in all basement rooms.[11]

---

10. Burlew to Cammerer, October 2, 1933, in PMDF 1933. Also estimate for $12,209.40 to PWA, dated September 30, 1933, in ibid.

11. DeWitt to Cammerer, October 2, 1933, in PMDF 1933.

Assistant Director James F. Gill agreed with the plan to use the services of Colonel Mortimer to direct this work, informing the Associate Director of the National Park Service on October 3:

> After discussing the matter of the rehabilitation of the Lee Mansion with Colonel Mortimer, I am convinced that it would be advantageous to have his organization handle this work if the necessary financial arrangements can be made.
>
> Colonel Mortimer explains that he is preparing to proceed with the work at once, that he has the necessary trucking facilities, the services of laborers, inspectors, and engineers available, and that he has the specifications prepared for the painting job. He seems to be very anxious to have charge of this work, and in view of the splendid cooperation which we have had so far from him and General DeWitt in the matter of the transfer of the Lee Mansion to this office, it is recommended that the work be done under the supervision of Colonel Mortimer.[12]

On October 6, 1933, Director Cammerer accepted the quartermaster general's proposals in regards to the Lee Mansion and notified General DeWitt:

> I would prefer that all bills in connection with the work on the Mansion be presented to Assistant Director James F. Gill for payment rather than to transfer the funds back to the War Department. Such procedure is authorized under Section 601 of the Economy Act and would result in Mr. Gill being kept fully informed regarding the condition and work of the building under his supervision.[13]

General DeWitt responded on October 9, enclosing a copy of the detailed plans of the work to be accomplished at the Lee Mansion and commenting:

> With reference to our telephone conversation this date, I had Colonel Mortimer of my office explain these detailed plans to your Assistant Director, Mr. James F. Gill, and they then had a conference with Mr. Demaray. The general agreement seems to be that the plans meet with Mr. Demaray's approval and the desire was expressed that the work be immediately commenced

---

12. Gill to Associate Director, October 3, 1933, in PMDF 1933.

13. Cammerer to DeWitt, October 6, 1933, in PMDF 1933.

and the bills sent to the Office of National Parks, Buildings and Reservations for payment.

If the above has your approval the work on the Lee Mansion will be started within 48 hours after you communicate such approval to this office. It is understood, of course, that the minor details that may arise from time to time will be taken up by the Officer in Charge at Arlington National Cemetery, Colonel Mortimer, with Mr. Gill.[14]

Director Cammerer gave his approval to the plan on October 17, 1933, writing to the quartermaster general on that date:

The plans appear satisfactory and I would be pleased for your office to proceed with the work as you have outlined and in accordance with the understandings had at the conference between Colonel Mortimer, Associate Director A.E. Demaray and Assistant Director James F. Gill.[15]

The Office of the Quartermaster General issued orders on October 19 to Colonel Mortimer "that this work be started immediately and the work be carried through to completion."[16]

On October 20 Colonel Mortimer provided H. R. Owen, Chief, Building Branch, with a memorandum elaborating on the work to be done to Arlington House in accordance with the estimates of September 29-30, 1933. This extension of remarks was prepared for the benefit of the National Park Service's "Historical Section." Mortimer continued:

Enlarging on what is stated in the estimate:

Item 1: Painting and repairing Mansion and Slave Quarters: inside and out. Since the restoration of the building was completed in March 1930, no painting has been undertaken, although it was contemplated to re-paint it in less than three years, due to the fact that a large amount of the paint was put on re-built walls and similar surfaces.

---

14. DeWitt to Cammerer, October 9, 1933, in PMDF 1933. The detailed plans are not in PDMF.

15. Cammerer to DeWitt, October 17, 1933, in PMDF 1933.

16. Laubach, Office of Quartermaster General, to Mortimer, October 19, 1933, in PMDF 1933.

In the nearly four years which have elapsed since the painting was done, there has been certain deterioration in joints, woodwork, etc., which require new putty stoppings, and repairs to plastering and woodwork, also repairs to down spouts, gutters, etc. Other needed repairs will be done, including repairs to heating plant.

Due to the fact that the walls of some of the rooms were whitewashed in the past, it has developed that all of the lime was not entirely eradicated prior to the painting in 1929-30. The result has been that both ceilings and walls have partially peeled in places. These walls will have to be scraped and all of the present paint removed. It can be seen that the painting is a large job and that all furniture must be taken out of the rooms and stored elsewhere. It will be necessary to close parts, if not all of the building, during the progress of such work. It is going to be my effort to keep the building open, at least in part, if it be found practicable. Work to be done by contract. Specifications therefore and request for advertising have been submitted.

Item 2--Removing all wood steps on east, north and south sides of the portico of the Mansion and replacing same with stone steps, is a part of the restoration originally planned and which, due to shortage of funds, was never undertaken. The architect's study in preparation for the restoration, included this item. That architect is coming out shortly to go over the matter with me again to determine the type of steps to be used, as well as to refresh his mind in order that the necessary drawings and specifications may be brought up to date.

It is hoped that this work will start before long, provided the architect's estimate is not too much in excess of the one which I have made and which was based on a cheaper type of stone steps than the architect's study contemplated. Probably contract job.

Item 3--Restoration in part the kitchen garden. In the preliminary study for the restoration, it was found that on the south side of the Mansion there was a flower garden of quite considerable dimensions, enclosed by a picket fence. On the north side, there was likewise a picket fence, surrounding the kitchen garden. The latter was divided into various beds by the usual paths, borders of flowers and other appurtenances of the well-attended kitchen garden in the days of slavery.

It is proposed to start this work and to prepare and plant and maintain that part of the kitchen garden which it is now possible to undertake the restoration of. Conditions are such that it is not now possible to undertake the restoration of this entire garden. Under the supervision of regular cemetery personnel, all of this work will be done by the Purchase and Hire Method.

Item 4--Improvements and maintenance of grounds about the Mansion. This item includes the necessary maintenance work on trees, shrubbery, as well as a small amount of tree surgery at this point, also walks, gravel roadways and landscaping. It involves the necessary restoration of the slope in front of the Mansion at a point where a considerable slide occurred a few weeks ago. Purchase and Hire Method.

Item 5--Laying brick floors in Basement In the basement of the Mansion there are several rooms, some of which are not open to the public. This is necessarily so, as hallways leading to these rooms are so largely involved with ducts of the heating plant system that passage thereto can only be made with considerable difficulty. According to the study made in preparation for the restoration, these rooms were either completely or partly paved with bricks. It is now contemplated to lay old bricks on these floors not only as a part of the restoration but principally to stop the recurring dampness which comes up through some of them and to keep down the dust which arises throughout the house from the unpaved clay and dirt floors. Some repairs to basement walls will likewise be involved in this work. Purchase & Hire Method.

Item 6--Minor Repairs to walls and roof. Purchase & Hire Method.

Item 7--Rebuilding the Conservatory roof. The roof of the glass Conservatory is carried on wooden beams and strips. The latter are constantly rotting out or sagging, causing the roof to leak and the glass to break. It is contemplated to replace these, if not all, then part, with stronger wood frames or to replace the entire work with metal, so constructed and painted, that the fact of them being metal will not be noticeable. Maintenance on this work is a considerable item and my plan contemplates reduction of that maintenance. Purchase & Hire Method.[17]

In response to requests from the budding historical and architectural sections of the National Park Service, Colonel Mortimer provided Assistant Director Gill with the plans and specifications for the items under the Arlington Mansion allotment on October 28:

---

17. Mortimer to Owen, October 20, 1933, in PMDF 1933.

Item #1. Painting Mansion, Slave Quarters and Old Well House.
This item has had specifications prepared and sent to the Office of National Parks, Bldgs. and Reservations for advertising and it is presumed that the advertisements are out. No plan can be drawn for this.

Item #2. Removing old wood steps and replacing with stone.
Plans and specifications will be furnished in the future before work is undertaken. If it be decided to do the work by contract, plans and specifications will be submitted for advertising.

Item #3. Restoration in part of the kitchen garden.
Herewith is sketch of what is contemplated. Work has already been started. No specifications can be furnished and none are necessary. Plan is in accordance with original plan for complete restoration of kitchen and flower gardens.

Item #4. Improvements and maintenance to grounds.
This is an item for care, trimming and feeding of trees, the latter of which is now in process. Repairs to walks as needed. Maintenance and planting of grass plots and regrading, resoiling, draining and planting land slide in front of Mansion which recently occurred. This work is in process under Purchase and Hire Method and no specifications can be given, other than that conditions existing are met as they arise.

Item #5. Restoring brick floors in all basement rooms not now paved.
A sketch showing the rooms to be paved is enclosed. These bricks will be laid with dry joints as in a walk after regrading the floors to conform. Material required 20,000 bricks and 5 tons of sand.

Item #6. Minor repairs to walls, roof, etc.
Specifications for this item cannot now be furnished nor will the work be undertaken until the completion of the painting which is somewhat involved with this item.

Item #7. Rebuilding Conservatory Roof.
Drawing will be furnished before work is undertaken together with a short specification.[18]

---

18. Mortimer to Gill, October 28, 1933, in PMDF 1933.

These plans were reviewed by Chief Historian Chaletain and Landscape Architect Charles E. Peterson, the latter a noted historical architect destined to become the "father" of the Historic American Building Survey.

Meanwhile, Colonel Mortimer and the Building Branch of the National Park Service pushed ahead with plans for painting the inside and exterior of the mansion and old slave quarters. Specifications for "Painting the Arlington Mansion, Slave Quarters and Well House" were prepared by the National Park Service on October 27 and circulated for bids in early November 1933. With regards to the mansion, the contractor was to perform the following work:

> Arlington Mansion interior, apply 2 coats of paint to all walls, ceilings, and woodwork of the first and second stories. (Including the rooms, corridors and stairs).
>
> Apply two (2) coats of paint to all exterior walls, chimneys, columns, and wood work, all doors, windows and the conservatory glass roof to be putty stopped.[19]

On November 17, 1933, John L. Nagle, Assistant Chief, Branch of Engineering for the National Park Service, sent Colonel Mortimer an abstract of the bids for the contract to paint the Lee Mansion buildings, recommending that the contract be awarded to the low bidder, Gosnell, Inc., of Washington D.C., at $1,080 and requesting the colonel's approval. Mortimer approved the award to the lowest bidder on November 21 and remarked:

---

19. Specifications No. A.N.C. 103, October 1933 in PMDF 1933; also Gill to Associate Director, October 27, 1933, with blueprints of painting work; and Mortimer to Gill, November 9, 1933, with suggestions for altering November 3, specifications, also adding:

> For your information in connection with the above, you are advised that the stucco on the outside of the Mansion is a lime mortar composition which absorbs moisture and holds it during damp or cold or freezing weather. Likewise the necessity for repairs to this stucco with its subsequent time for setting up make it very necessary that there be no danger of freezing after it is put on.

> The interior of the Mansion painting can be started by giving us about two (2) days' notice in order that we may remove the furniture out of the second floor and have the contractor keep in touch with me as to when he will be ready for the first floor. The exterior painting should not be undertaken until after the period of freezing weather has passed.[20]

Colonel Mortimer was also engaged in a search for old brick to pave the basement floors in the Lee Mansion. On December 22, however, he was forced to request the help of Assistant Director Gill, writing:

> I have been trying everywhere I know where to get some old, worn bricks that have been used in pavements--paving bricks. These are necessary for me to carry out one of the items of the restoration of the Mansion, and if you remember, are to be used in paving some of the basement rooms.
>
> I am wondering if your office or any of its divisions have about 9,000 of such bricks on hand or any less quantity and failing this, whether your good offices might come into play to locate part or all which we need.
>
> Funds are available with which to buy bricks, but new bricks will not do--they must be old. I have been up against the same problem in the past in connection with paving bricks to be used around the Mansion but heretofore I have been successful. I seem now to have exhausted my resources. I will appreciate anything you may do.[21]

In response to this request, S. J. Oliver informed Gill on January 2:

> We have no old paving bricks on hand.
>
> We do, however, have some old common building bricks at 15th and C Streets, S.W., and it is suggested that Col. Mortimer look at them if he has not already seen them.[22]

---

20. Nagle to Mortimer, November 17, 1933; and Mortimer to Nagle, November 21, 1933, in PMDF 1933.

21. Mortimer to Gill, December 22, 1933 in PMDF 1933.

22. Oliver to Gill, January 2, 1933, [1934], in PMDF 1933.

Meanwhile, on November 10, 1933, the Department of the Interior released a memorandum for the press on the work being done on the Lee Mansion. It read:

> The Lee Mansion in Arlington National Cemetery is undergoing important repairs with funds made available from public works appropriations, according to a statement by Arno B. Cammerer, Director of the Office of National Parks, Buildings, and Reservations.
>
> Although the Mansion was transferred to his bureau from the War Department by Executive Order on August 10 of this year, Mr. Cammerer said the work is being done at his request under the direct supervision of Colonel Charles G. Mortimer, in charge of Arlington National Cemetery. Colonel Mortimer has had charge of the building for some time past.
>
> "The sum of $12,209.40 has been allotted for this work," Mr. Cammerer stated, "and practically one third of it will be used to paint both the interior and exterior of the Mansion and the old slave quarters. The Mansion has not been repainted since its restoration was completed in 1930, although, on account of the large amount of rebuilt walls and similar surfaces, it was planned at that time to repaint it within three years.
>
> It will be necessary to remove and store the furniture now in the rooms where painting is in progress and it may be necessary to close parts of the building to the public, but the entire building will not be closed unless it becomes absolutely necessary as this would result in great disappointment to people from long distances who wish to visit the Mansion.
>
> Wood steps on the east, north, and south sides of the portico will be replaced with stone steps, Mr. Cammerer said. This work was a part of the original restoration plan, but was prevented by a shortage of funds. The roof of the glass conservatory will probably be strengthened by replacing the present wood beams and strips that are constantly rotting or sagging with a metal framework. If the latter material is used, it will be so constructed and painted as to be unrecognizable as metal.
>
> The floors of several rooms in the basement of the Mansion, according to studies made at the time of the restoration, were probably partly or completely paved with brick when General [Robert E.] Lee's family resided there. It is planned to repave these floors, Mr. Cammerer said, to prevent dust and dampness from damaging the upper rooms of the Mansion. About 20,000 colonial brick will be used in the work.

> Restoration of part of a kitchen garden that once existed on the north side of the Mansion will also be undertaken with the public works allotment, but it is not possible to completely establish the garden at this time. The existence of this garden, which was enclosed by a picket fence, was discovered during the preliminary restoration studies which showed that it was divided into various beds by the usual paths with borders of flowers, after the plan of all well-kept kitchen plots of ante-bellum days.
>
> Some minor improvements to walks, gravel roadways, and grass plots will be made on the Mansion grounds. A slope in front of the Mansion that was considerably damaged by a recent slide will be restored and properly landscaped.[23]

Various versions of this release appeared in Washington newspapers on November 10 and 16, 1933.[24]

On November 15, 1933, Assistant Historian Elbert Cox submitted a report to Chief Historian Chatelain of the preliminary investigations that he had made to check the various improvements that Colonel Mortimer had outlined in his letter of October 28 to Assistant Director Gill. Cox reported:

> In an effort to find out what historical basis there might be for the items submitted by Colonel Mortimer, I called on him at his office at Arlington. He could tell me only generally the historical background or justification for the various improvements, but said that each item was a part of the general plan for the restoration of Arlington which Mr. L.M. Leisenring, architect in the Office of the Quartermaster General, had made, and which had been approved by the Fine Arts Commission and then by the Quartermaster General. He further stated that specifications for painting the mansion, slave quarters, and the old well house had already been turned over to the Engineering Division, and that work on restoring the old kitchen garden was practically ready to be started. For further information he referred me to Mr. Leisenring, in the Office of the Quartermaster General.

---

23. Press Release, November 10, 1933, in PMDF 1933.

24. Copies of articles from Washington Evening Star and Washington Herald, November 10, 1933, and Washington Post, November 16, 1933, in PMDF 1933.

Accordingly next morning I called on Mr. Leisenring, who is chief of the architectural unit in the Quartermaster's Office. He very generously spent an hour or more telling me what he had done, and the basis for his plans for the restoration and improvements at Arlington. It seems that no thorough or complete study of or search for full historical data on Arlington has been made. Mr. Leisenring has studied the problem, has gathered what data he has been able to, and as a result of his studies and his thoughts on the problem has drawn up the plans. In my opinion before having had a chance to go into the matter with any degree of thoroughness, Mr. Leisenring has worked with considerable feeling toward a faithful and appropriate treatment of his problem. He very kindly gave me a copy of a study he made some time ago and which contains his ideas on the general treatment of grounds and buildings.

It seems that the records for Arlington are scattered and sketchy. No original plans or specifications for the estate exist, so far as he knows. Furthermore, it seems certain that the building was not completed according to the first plans nor was it built all at one time. Instead, the wings were built first--and perhaps changed to answer immediate utilitarian demands--before the main or central part of the house was begun. Then financial inability prevented the completion of the building in as fine a manner as it had been intended to do it.

With reference to the particular items listed in Colonel Mortimer's program of improvements and repairs, I can see no objection to going ahead with items 1, 4, 6, 7. No great point of historical import is involved in these, they being more particularly matters for the Branch of Plans and Design to pass on.

In regard to item 2, removing old wood steps and replacing with stone, this is in line with the plan drawn by Mr. Leisenring. There have never been stone steps for the building. However, Mr. Leisenring feels, that if the original owner had been financially able to complete the building as he started out to do, or if the architect who designed the building could have carried out his original plans, the stone steps would most likely have been built. Reasoning on this basis he feels that a faithful restoration of the mansion demands stone steps.

Fragmentary evidence only is basis for the restoration of the kitchen garden. It is a part of the plan proposed and now being carried out.

The plan to pave the floors in all the basement rooms not now paved was not suggested by Mr. Leisenring. At present the winter kitchen and one other small room in the basement are paved with the original brick. The wine cellar has a few brick along one side. The remainder of the rooms are not paved,

some of them not even graded. The only justification for paving these rooms is to keep down the dust. The present arrangement of heating system makes impossible the utilization of the greater part of the basement space. There seems to be no reason from an historical standpoint which demands that they be paved. From the standpoint of operation, the paving may be considered a desirable improvement.

The projects above outlined and explained raise a point of policy with reference to the restoration of Arlington. To place stone steps where there have never been stone steps, and to pave the basement floors that have never been paved is restoration in spirit but not in detail. However, there is little question that the original plan of the house would have included these items. Furthermore they will fit into the present condition of the building, and as to the question of steps, I feel that stone steps that will by weathering take the appearance of old steps, are preferable to new wood steps that will have to be replaced at very frequent intervals. Therefore, my recommendation is that the improvements as suggested by Colonel Mortimer be approved. I mention, however, the desirability of close control being exercised over the design, material, and construction. In the meantime I shall continue my research in an effort to get additional data on the building and the original layout of grounds. . . .

From an accompanying brief history we quote only that relating to the architectural history and dates of construction. Of these topics, Cox wrote:

The building was designed by an architect by the name of Hadfield. The stones for its foundation came from the land nearby, and the bricks were burned of clay upon the place according to Lossing who wrote in 1853. There is disagreement as to the year of completion--one story holding that it was finished in 1804, and another not until after the War of 1812.[25]

In 1933 the dates of construction for Arlington House, namely 1802 for the north wing, 1803-04 for the south wing, and 1817-18 for the main or center house had not been established. In 1928-30 the War Department had restored the structure to its "1804 appearance".

---

25. Cox to Chatelain, November 15, 1933, in PMDF 1933.

On November 16, 1933, Chief Historian Chatelain submitted copies of the Cox memorandum for review to Associate Director Demaray, Taylor, and Landscape Architect Peterson. He commented:

> I believe [this] contributes materially to our understanding of the historical situation.
>
> It is a matter of policy as to whether we should put steps where none ever existed, even though they were planned. My feeling is that we are safer not to do so. As to paving the basement - if it is a place visited by tourists possibly we should not pave. If the paving is for the preservation of the house and is not frequented, it may be all right.[26]

On December 4, 1933, Historian Cox submitted a second report to Chatelain in which he summarized the additional sources, all published between 1853-1930, that he had searched on the history of Arlington House. He wrote:

> The investigations made so far have given a great deal of information, but far too little to be considered complete. I have found from an examination of the files in the War Department that much of the information I have been gathering is already to be had from the files there. Not only do their files, comprising eight bound volumes, contain a number of the written articles that I have listed above, but a vast amount of typewritten material consisting of notes from published works in the Library of Congress, stenographic reports of interviews with early inhabitants of the locality who remembered Arlington as it was before the war, correspondence relating to architectural features, furniture, pictures, and the condition of the grounds. In view of the fact that the reservation has been transferred to the Department of the Interior, I do not see why the files containing this large collection of information should not be transferred. I recommend that a request to this effect be made before any further studies are made by this office.
>
> From my examination of this material in the War Department, I see no reason for not receiving the entire collection as now filed under the subject of Arlington. I do not believe that it contains material relating to another subject, at least very little of it does. In case this point is raised as an objection, then we should have that which relates to Arlington and to nothing else. This would be a very great addition to

---

26. Longhand note, Chatelain to Demaray, Taylor, and Peterson, November 16, 1933, in PMDF 1933. All three men signed off, and Demaray commented "Excellent memo."

> our files, and material without which we are not fully prepared to answer problems that will come up with reference to the place.[27]

In a memorandum to the director, dated December 15, 1933, Landscape Architect Peterson finally got around to commenting on Colonel Mortimer's improvement program as outlined on October 28 and on Historian Cox's report of November 15. After noting that he had not yet been able to make an official visit to the Lee Mansion, Peterson continued:

> I understand from reading the newspapers that the painting work has gone ahead in the Mansion. The thing in particular that an architect could advise in this matter is the color of the paint, but we do not have any records here of the original colors, and I do not know that anyone else has.
>
> Items 2, 3 and 5 in Col. Mortimer's memorandum seem to involve the installation of features which never existed in the earlier days. This office is opposed to "improving" antique structures to make them look as modern people think they should have, instead of trying to make them look as they really did.
>
> Items 4, 6 and 7 appear to be purely maintenance matters though we would like to investigate them in detail before any construction is carried out.
>
> Mr. Cox's memorandum on Arlington Mansion was interesting though it contained only the most superficial information about the physical condition of the structure and grounds.[28]

It remained to be seen if any of these opinions would have any influence on Colonel Mortimer's restoration projects.

D. IMPROVEMENTS TO ARLINGTON HOUSE IN 1934

1. A Coup d'Etat Fails

On January 25, 1934, Dr. Charles Moore, Chairman of the Commission of Fine Arts and a noted architectural historian,

---

27. Cox to Chatelain, December 4, 1933, in PMDF 1933.

28. Peterson to Director, December 15, 1933, in PMDF 1933.

wrote to President Franklin D. Roosevelt strongly urging that Arlington House be taken out of the custody of the National Park Service and returned to the care of the War Department, which had maintained the mansion since 1861. Moore wrote in part:

> The Mansion has been restored by the War Department with dignity, historical accuracy and a certain elegance, in keeping with this famous building. Congress made such restoration subject to the advice of the Commission of Fine Arts, and our members have both approved and admired the work.
>
> The transfer of the Mansion itself (which has not yet been done) to the Office of National Parks, Buildings and Reservations is bound to lead to a host of petty conflicts of authority, as annoying as they are inevitable. Moreover, the transfer would lead to unnecessary expense in that it would involve a whole set of additional employees. Now, the work of the force deals with cemetery, mansion and grounds. In the interest of good administration, both mansion and cemetery should be in the same hands, responsible to the superintendent on the ground.
>
> I have talked with both the park people and the cemetery people and each set is agreeable to leaving the Mansion with the War Department.
>
> It would save complications in the appropriations now pending if such action could be taken at once.[29]

The letter was accompanied by the draft of a proposed law that would accomplish this transfer back to the quartermaster general.[30]

Arno B. Cammerer, Director of the National Park Service, did not agree with the Moore proposal and on January 31, Cammerer informed Secretary of the Interior Ickes:

---

29. Moore to President Roosevelt, January 25, 1934, in PMDF 1934-35. It had been at Moore's insistence that the quartermaster general had restored and furnished the mansion to the Custis period (1804) rather than the Lee (1855) period as the law required.

30. A copy of the draft of the bill is in PMDF 1934-35.

I have received your note, together with the letter of Dr. Charles Moore of the Commission of Fine Arts, of January 25, dealing with the Lee Mansion in Arlington Cemetery. The proposal made by Dr. Moore to return the Mansion House to the War Department is not, in my opinion, desirable either from the standpoint of the general Historical program of this Office or from the point of view of public interest generally.

The conversation which I had with Dr. Moore was a casual one, in the manner in which we discuss informally many District matters of mutual interest and concern. I mentioned at the time that if there were superior reasons why it would be more advantageous to the United States to have the control of the Mansion under the War Department rather than under this Department I would not stand in the way of it. Several days later I called him specially on the telephone and stated that I had fully reviewed the situation and also had gone into the matter thoroughly with my associates, and that I was opposed to any such change. I regret that he raised this point, especially so at the present time, when conditions are yet not fully worked out.

When the Lee Mansion on August 10 was turned over by Executive Order the funds for its maintenance were so inextricably merged with those for Arlington Cemetery that in our conference with the War Department, we agreed to continue to rely on Colonel Mortimer and his Administration until he had time to get an accounting study made and reach an agreement as to a proper division of funds. This Office believes that that situation may have produced, in the minds of some people, a feeling that we are not keenly interested in the Mansion and anxious to assume the custody of it. Nothing could be further from the truth, and while we have received every consideration from representatives of the War Department in dealing with the situation, we feel that the present arrangement is temporary and that the sooner we can inaugurate our full program, the better it will be. The pending 1935 Interior Department Appropriation Bill contains $9,520 for protection and care of the Lee Mansion. Public Works funds also are available to this Office for necessary repair and restoration work which is now being carried out under our direction.

This Office is the proper custodian of places like the Lee Mansion. The problem is not only one of according reverence and respect to the place. It is a matter of treating it with a service which the War Department is not constituted to handle. At present we are managing several houses of national importance, among them the Ford House (Washington's Headquarters) at Morristown, Wakefield--the birthplace of George Washington, the Moore House at Yorktown--where the terms of surrender of Cornwallis were drafted, and the birthplace of Abraham Lincoln. The spirit of the President's

> Order, it is believed, contemplated the consolidation of all the Historical Shrines, as well as others, under one system, not only for the purposes of proper preservation, but also in order that they might be given proper interpretation through the Historical-Educational service of this Office.
>
> Also, it may be said that the people generally in the State of Virginia welcomed the change in the management of the Lee Mansion from the War Department to this Office, and that a storm of protest, in my judgment, would be aroused throughout the South if the Lee Mansion was turned back to the War Department.
>
> At Lee Mansion, the solution of our problems in this transition period lies not in returning the site to the War Department and returning once more to a lack of system in managing these historic Shrines, but rather in the enlargement of the grounds about the Mansion House and the development of a program which will be fully adequate to the dignity and importance of the Lee Mansion, associated as it was with important events in the life of the Washington and Lee families.[31]

President Roosevelt turned this problem over to the Secretary of the Interior for decision. On February 2, 1934, Secretary Ickes rejected the plan, explaining to Chairman Moore:

> The President has discussed with me your letter to him of January 25, with reference to the Lee Mansion in Arlington Cemetery. We have gone into this matter thoroughly and in view of the fact that the Executive Order by which this Mansion was transferred to the Office of National Parks, Buildings and Reservations of the Interior Department has become effective, it was decided to let matters stand as they are. There is no conflict between the War Department and the Department of the Interior and I think that if you will give the Interior Department a reasonable time you will have no cause to complain of the way in which the Mansion is being taken care of.[32]

---

31. Cammerer to Secretary of the Interior, January 31, 1934, in PMDF 1934-35. Mortimer wrote, to General William B. Horton, on February 21, 1934, "I had a long talk with Mr. [Charles] Moore yesterday, at which time he gave me a copy of the letter and he assured me that his efforts are going to continue as indicated in his letter to the President of January 25th. He did not tell me in what manner." In PMDF 1934-35.

32. Ickes to Moore, February 2, 1934, in PMDF 1934-35.

In Office Order 272, dated June 26, 1934, Director Cammerer, acting "in accordance with the provisions of the Executive Order of June 10, 1933, as amended, issued pursuant to the Act of Congress approved March 3, 1933 (Public Law 428, 47 Stat. 1517) announced that the Lee Mansion will be included hereafter in the Potomac Park Group, Buildings Branch."[33] Arlington House remained in the custody of the National Park Service.

2. Painting the Mansion and Slaves' Quarters, 1934

The contract with Clarence W. Gosnell, Inc., of Washington D.C., was entered into on December 19, 1933, and work was underway in December 1933 and completed on April 24, 1934, at a cost of $1,080. Under the contract the interior and exterior of the mansion received two coats of paint and the interior of the slaves' quarters was also given two coats. Final payment on the contract was made on May 3, 1934.[34]

In a progress report, dated July 9, 1934, on the work proposed under his estimate of September 29-30, 1933, Colonel Mortimer commented on the painting project:

> Item 1 -- Painting Arlington Mansion and Slave Quarters. Contract for this painting was made by your office and did not include the exterior of the Slave Quarters. All work called for was completed last spring in a satisfactory manner. Since that time I have painted those portions of the exterior of the Slave Quarters which were not included in the contract.[35]

---

33. Office Order 272, June 26, 1934, in PMDF 1934-35.

34. Chapman, Assistant Secretary, Interior Department to Secretary of the Treasury, January 2, 1934; Monthly Reports of Mortimer, Officer in Charge of Activities at Arlington House for December 1933, January, February, March, and April 1934. Mortimer to Engineering Branch, National Park Service, April 24, 1934; and note on final payment, dated May 9, 1934, in PMDF 1934-35.

35. Mortimer to Gill, Assistant Director, July 9, 1934, in PMDF 1934-35.

3. Repair and Alterations to Mansion's Electrical System

In March and April 1934 repairs and changes were made to the electrical system at Arlington House.[36] Some electrical circuits were changed.

4. Restoration of Kitchen Garden

Of this project, Colonel Mortimer reported on July 9:

> Item 3--Restoration in part of the kitchen garden.
>
> Items a, b, c, d, e and f have all been completed as indicated. Item g--one laborer was employed on this work as a gardener up to June 30, 1934, on which date he was dropped from your rolls.

5. Improvements to Grounds

Colonel. Mortimer reported of this project on July 9, 1934:

> Item 4--Improvements and maintenance to grounds--expenditures made under this item up to June 30th amounted to $519.00 (gross amt.)[37]

6. Placement of Brick Floors in All Basement Rooms

The search for suitable old bricks to pave the floors in the basement rooms of the mansion started in 1933 and continued into 1934. On January 8, responding to Assistant Director Gill's note of January 3, Colonel Mortimer reported, "I have inspected the old common building bricks in your store yard and they are not suitable for the job. The bricks must be ones which have been used in a pavement."[38] On May 15, Colonel Mortimer again asked for Gill's assistance in securing suitable old paving bricks, commenting, "I am anxious to get to work on the floors of those basement rooms."[39] On May 22, Assistant Director Gill informed Mortimer:

---

36. Mortimer's monthly reports for March and April 1934, in PMDF 1935-35. No other details are available on the work.

37. Ibid.

38. Mortimer to Gill, January 8, 1934, in PMDF 1934-35.

39. Ibid., May 15, 1934, in PMDF 1934-35.

> This office has contacted the Highway Department of the District Government relative to securing the bricks desired and the Department gave us approximately 2,000 bricks, which were delivered to you today. They advised that due to the fact that all old paving bricks are needed by them in repaving work, no more could be spared at this time, and that they would not have any more any time in the near future.[40]

In his monthly report for May 1934, Colonel Mortimer noted, "New work on restoration: Brick flooring laid in wine cellar [Room BO-3], hallway [Room BO-1], and part of center room [in the basement of the mansion]. No more old bricks."[41] The shortage of bricks thus saved the other rooms in the basement of the mansion from having their original earthen floors "restored" with new brick floors.

In summarizing his work on this project on July 9, Colonel Mortimer reported:

> Item 5--Restoring brick floors in all basement rooms. Continuing efforts have been made to secure old bricks necessary for this work and through the help of your office I succeeded in getting about 2000 bricks and paved one hallway, wine cellar and part of another room. The remainder of the work is not completed, due to the lack of suitable material.[42]
>
> This work was done in the cellar stairway hall, the wine cellar and probably the winter kitchen.

7. Repairs to Mansion Walls and Roof

In March and April repairs were made to the walls and ceiling of the mansion, the stucco on the exterior, and the woodwork and hardware. The broken places in the plaster on the exterior and interior of the old slaves' quarters were also repointed.[43]

---

40. Gill to Mortimer, May 22, 1934; and Oliver to Gill, May 21, 1934, in PMDF 1934-35.

41. Mortimer's Monthly Report for May 1934, June 5, 1934, in PMDF 1934-35.

42. Mortimer to Gill, July 9, 1934, in PMDF 1934-35.

43. Mortimer's Monthly Reports for March and April 1934 in PMDF 1934-35. History report for May indicates that all the repair work had been completed.

New slate was received and placed on the mansion roof in June. In his July 9 report, Colonel Mortimer remarked of this work:

> Item 6--Minor repairs to walls, roof, etc. This has been done from time to time, using material supplied by this office and charging labor to the Mansion payrolls.[44]

8. Rebuilding the Conservatory (Room 116) Roof

Of this project, Colonel Mortimer reported on July 9th:

> Item 7--Rebuilding Conservatory roof. This item has been taken care of but the roof has not been rebuilt, inasmuch as the estimate is not believed sufficient to cover.[45]

9. Expenditures for the Arlington Restoration Program, 1933-34

Of the total of $12,470 provided for the completion of Federal Project 374, Restoration of the Lee Mansion, Colonel Mortimer expended $5,424.96 in the period October 2, 1933, to November 19, 1934, leaving an unencumbered balance in this account of $7,045.04 on the latter date.[46]

10. Inspections and Reports on Fire Protection and Wiring Systems

In March 1934 the National Park Service detailed two experts to check the fire protection and wiring systems of Arlington. These were Frank L. Ahern, Fire Protection Engineer attached to the Branch of Forestry, and Arthur Halstead from the Secretary of the Interior's Office.[47] The War Department had equipped the Arlington House and its outbuildings with an Atmo alarm system in 1929-30 at a cost of $1,744 and the mansion had been rewired in 1929 at an approximate cost

---

44. Mortimer to Gill, July 9, 1934, in PMDF 1934-35.

45. Ibid., July 9, 1934, in PMDF 1934-35.

46. Gill, Assistant Director, Branch of Buildings, to the Director, November 19, 1934, in PMDF 1934-35.

47. Associate Director to Mortimer, March 13, 1934, in PMDF 1934-35.

of $1,500.[48] The detailed report of these two men, entitled "Report on Fire Protection for Lee Mansion, Lee Mansion, Electric Wiring, Fire Alarm and Watchmen's Report System," was submitted to the director on April 17, 1934.[49] The report included a detailed description of the existing conditions and recommendations for improvement. They suggested the installation of a new 6-inch water pipe in place of the 4-inch line which then served the mansion as well as a number of other changes and additions (see Plan 4).[50]

11. Battle Over Proposed Stone Steps for Portico, 1934-35

On February 12, 1934, Charles A. Peters, Jr., Eastern Division, Branch of Engineering, informed John L. Nagle of the same branch:

> Specifications for the proposed new stone steps for the Arlington Mansion, Arlington National Cemetery, Virginia, were prepared by this office, to cover the work contemplated by the plan prepared by the Construction Division, Office of the Quartermaster General of the War Department.
>
> The specifications and a copy of the plan were forwarded to Mr. Peterson for comment. Copies of my forwarding memorandum and Mr. Peterson's reply are attached hereto, together with the specifications and a plan showing the proposed work.

After explaining that his office had inherited the job and was now merely attempting to finish the work that the War Department had started, Peters continued:

> Mr. Leisenring, Chief of the Architectural Division of the Quartermaster General's Office has informed us that he has

---

48. Charles W. Snell, "Historic Structure Report, Arlington House, Vol. I," (draft mss., National Park Service, Denver Service Center, Denver Colorado.)

49. Coffman to Director, April 17, 1934. Copies of both reports are in PMDF 1934-35.

50. Report, April 17, 1934, pp. 6-7, ibid.

made a very complete study of the construction of the Mansion. He has prepared all of the plans which have been required for the work of restoration, and his plans, including this one for the steps, were designed we were informed, to carry out the original builder's intent. He believes that Mr. Custis, who began the construction, must surely have contemplated the use of stone steps although, since the lack of money required the wings be constructed at first with the center portion following at a later date, he may never have had steps other than of wood. Portions of the center part were not completed till after the Civil War because of lack of funds. Mr. Leisenring said that wooden steps were not at all in keeping with that type of construction, namely stone columns and brick porch floor, and that similar mansions in this locality built at that time invariably used Aquia sandstone for steps, sills, etc. Mr. Leisenring would be pleased to present his view to anyone interested.

Perhaps another factor which should be taken into consideration in connection with this work is that wood steps are not permanent and will continually require painting and will occasionally require replacement. This will constitute a maintenance cost which could be eliminated through the use of stone steps.

In conclusion, Peters noted that work was ready to be advertised but, because of Mr. Peterson's disapproval, "we can take no further steps until we receive additional instructions."[51]

Nagle passed Peters' memorandum and the problem to Mr. Taylor on February 13.[52] Two weeks later, Assistant Director Gill, Building Branch, sent the specifications and drawings for the proposed stone steps to the associate director, commenting, "As the Engineering Branch could do nothing further, the matter has been referred back to me and I am sending you the file on this subject in the hope that you may be able to assist me in reaching a settlement on this question."[53]

---

51. Peters to Nagle, February 12, 1934, in PMDF 1934-35.

52. Nagle to Taylor, February 13, 1934, in PMDF 1934-35.

53. Gill to Associate Director, February 27, 1934, in PMDF 1934-35. In a letter to Gill on March 21, 1934, Nagle wrote, "In order that there may be no misunderstanding regarding the plans and specification . . . you are informed that this work is being handled by the Branch of Plans and Designs."

On March 2 Colonel Mortimer wrote to Assistant Director Gill, requesting that the plans and specifications for constructing the proposed stone steps at Arlington House "be sent to me in order that I may prepare the requisition on your office for advertising this work." He argued that the steps should be built now with the money that was available. He continued:

> It was indicated to me that exception has been taken to the replacement of these steps as part of the restoration due to the fact that the objector was of the opinion they should not be so replaced.
>
> In the studies made by the War Department at the initiation of the restoration of the Lee Mansion, it was decided that stone steps should be installed around the east portico as replacement for the one concrete and four wooden steps now there. The latter were built some time in the 80s or 90s when the building was fixed up as an abode for the Superintendent and the Landscape Gardener. They have, from time to time, been replaced as needed. The question whether stone steps belong as part of the restoration is not necessarily one of whether stone steps were there originally or not. It is rather a question of what belonged there. And what, had the building been finished, would have been put there by the owner. Our records and studies show that the building was never finished until after it was taken over by the United States. There is no question as to the propriety and appropriateness of stone steps to the portico of a building of this type and construction.
>
> Studies made by the architect who designed the restoration indicated stone steps. They were included in the original scheme of restoration. Due to shortage of money and the considerable cost of the steps, they have not been built heretofore. With the money available at this time, they should be built. As I understand it, this item of continued restoration is one of those which has received approval by your department.[54]

The National Park Service, however, failed to provide Col. Mortimer with the desired material and on July 9, in his progress report the colonel was forced to write:

> Item 2--Removing old wood steps of the portico and replacing same with stone steps. Drawings were submitted to

---

54. Mortimer to Nagle, March 2, 1934, in PMDF 1934-35.

the Engineering Branch of your office with a view to having them write up specifications on those drawings some time last winter. I have never received either the drawings or specifications back. It is my understanding that objections to replacing the steps were made by your department.[55]

In a memorandum to the director, dated November 19, 1934, Gill ended the uneasy quiet that had existed on the stone step battlefield, by writing:

> The matter of providing the stone steps was referred to the Branch of Plans and Designs and adverse report was received based on the belief that stone steps were not considered to be correct historically.
>
> However, both Mr. Nagle and I believe that stone steps should be provided because of their permanency. In Colonel Mortimer's memorandum herewith there are a number of items of furniture and furnishings still needed in connection with the restoration work and $100 is listed as an estimate for traveling expenses incident to acquiring such material.
>
> Advice is requested as to whether you consider proper the expenditure of funds under the P. W. Project No. 374, restoration of Lee Mansion, for the items included in Colonel Mortimer's report, and whether there is a possibility of having the Branch of Plans and Designs reconsider its previous report on the installation of stone steps.[56]

Director Cammerer referred the problem, which included the expenditure of $3,000 for removing the old wooden steps and replacing them with stone, to Landscape Architect Peterson. He wrote, "Please let me have a report on this matter as soon as possible so that a decision may be made with reference to the disposition of the funds."[57] In a very brief note to the director, dated December 18, Peterson reaffirmed his opposition to the construction of the stone steps by quoting his disapproval of the project offered in his letter of

---

55. Mortimer to Gill, July 9, 1934, in PMDF 1934-35.

56. Gill to the Director, November 19, 1934, in PMDF 1934-35.

57. Cammerer to Peterson, November 23, 1934, in PMDF 1934-35.

December 15, 1933.[58] On December 21, Acting Associate Director Hillory A. Tolson informed Gill that "unless you desire to recommend the transfer of the $3,000 . . . to some other project [for Arlington House], the necessary steps will be taken to transfer this $3,000 to our unallotted Public Works reserve fund."[59]

In a longhand note to Peters, Nagle wrote on December 26, 1934, "In the last analysis do we care what kind of steps surround this porch. Suggest we ask for transfer of $3,000 to some place where it will do us most good."[60]

E. IMPROVEMENTS TO ARLINGTON HOUSE IN 1935

1. Climax of Battle of the Steps

On January 7, 1935, Peters, in a letter to Nagle, reported that he had discussed the question of the $3,000 with Gill and that "we suggest re-allotting $3,000 in such manner that will permit its use for some other work in connection with the restoration of the Lee Mansion."[61]

Tolson's letter of December 21, 1934, had been referred by Gill to Colonel Mortimer on January 16, 1935, and the officer replied by strongly urging the construction of the stone steps, writing in part, "To my mind, there is no doubt about the historical correctness of stone steps on a building of the Lee Mansion type. I will be glad to have this matter settled by the Director of the National Parks Service. I have worked more or less continuously for the past five and a half years on the restoration of the Mansion and I am keenly interested in completing the job."[62]

---

58. Peterson to Cammerer, December 18, 1934, in PMDF 1934-35.

59. Tolson to Gill, December 21, 1934, in PMDF 1934-35.

60. Nagle to Peters, December 26, 1934, in PMDF 1934-35.

61. Peters to Nagle, January 7, 1935, in PMDF 1934-35.

62. Mortimer to Gill, January 16, 1935, in PMDF 1934-35.

On January 18 Assistant Director Gill tossed the entire problem back into the lap of Assistant Director Tolson by sending on the letters of Peters and Mortimer and asking, "Do you wish to arrange for this conference and advise Colonel Mortimer, or shall we consider the matter of the stone steps closed and submit a recommendation for the reallotment of the sum of $3,000 to some other project?"[63]

On January 25 Director Cammerer issued an order instructing Messrs. Demaray, Tolson, Gill, Peterson, Chatelain, and Taylor, to meet in Demaray's office at 10 a.m. on January 29, to meet with Colonel Mortimer to discuss the problem of the stone steps for the Lee Mansion.[64]

Apparently in preparation for this conference, Chief Historian Chatelain directed Historical Assistant J. Walter Coleman to conduct some historical research on the question of the stone steps. In a one page report dated January 23, 1934, Coleman reported that the earliest detailed description he could find was Benson J. Lossing's "Arlington House," in Harper's Monthly Magazine of September 1853. "Lossing's sketch [of the portico] shows four steps but the viewpoint is too distant to indicate the material of which they are constructed."

Two "Brady" photographs (No. 856, June 23, 1864, and No. 2304) both in the Fine Arts Division, Library of Congress, show "that there were then four steps and they are clearly revealed, in my opinion, as constructed of wood. . . ." In conclusion, he wrote, "Since no very early view [prior to 1864] is available, I can only say that there were four steps in place at the time of the Civil War and have been since that time."[65]

---

63. Gill to Tolson, January 18, 1935, in PMDF 1934-35.

64. Note of the Director to all men listed; and Gill to Mortimer, January 25, 2935, in PMDF 1934-35.

65. Coleman to Chatelain, January 23, 1934, in PMDF 1934-35.

The meeting was held on January 29 and L. M. Leisenring, the architect who had directed restoration of the Lee Mansion for the quartermaster corps, attended and urged the construction of the portico steps in stone. In a letter to the director, dated February 1, and expressing the architect's personal views on the subject, as required by Chatelain, Leisenring conceded that steps to the portico had probably always been constructed of wood. He wrote in regards to the steps:

> The architect of Arlington House was George Hadfield, a young Englishman who came to this country in the late 1700's to assist Doctor Thornton with the design for the National Capitol. Hadfield was a man educated in the then newly rediscovered and delineated architecture of Greece, and Mr. Custis, who built Arlington House, was exactly the type of man who would demand in his residence the latest mode and the most impressive design.
>
> The fact that Mr. Custis overreached himself with his designs and could not fully complete them for many years after their original conception is evidenced by the fact that certain parts of the house were left without stucco, although the original design was for a completely stuccoed building laid off to imitate freestone. There is no positive evidence that the stone steps to the portico were not not [sic] constructed, but presumably this was one of the things that was left undone. So far as we have been able to discover the temporary wood steps were left to remain. In recent years the lowest step was rebuilt in concrete to avoid the frequent repairs required.[66]

The conference decided against reconstructing the portico steps of stone.[67] On February 4, 1935, Nagle informed Peterson, "I am forwarding herewith Mr. Chatelain's memorandum of January 31, to Mr. Cammerer concerning the steps for the Lee Mansion. The Director's orders that the steps be constructed of wood have been noted.

---

66. Leisenring to Director, February 1, 1935, in PMDF 1934-35.

67. Mortimer apparently tried to save the day for the stone steps by suggesting on February 2 to Gill that the question be referred to the Commission of Fine Arts, where perhaps Moore would vote for stone. In PMDF 1934-35.

I presume that you will desire to take care of the work." The battle of the steps was over.[68]

In a letter to Gill, dated January 23, 1935, Nagle reported that the allotment under Federal Project 374 for Lee Mansion had been $13,855, of which $6,708.23 was still unexpended.[69]

The money had been allotted and expended as follows:

	Engineering	For Construction	Total
Total	$1,385.00	$12,470.00	$13,855.00
Expended	799.41	6,347.36	7,146.77
Balance	$ 585.59	$ 6,122.64	$ 6,708.23

2. Proposed Work Program for 1935

In a letter to Assistant Director Gill dated January 23, 1935, Nagle reviewed the progress that had been made on the seven projects proposed by Colonel Mortimer's estimates of September 29-30, 1933, and funded as Federal Project 374, with $1,385 for engineering and $12,470 for construction. Nagle reported that four of the proposed projects had been completed, and that the three uncompleted ones were:

1. Replacing the old wood steps at the Lee Mansion portico with new ones (Item 2).

2. The restoration of the brick floors in the basement of the mansion, finished in three rooms, had not been completed in "approximately five rooms and one hallway" because of the shortage of old paving bricks (Item 5).

Nagle wrote of the Conservatory roof:

---

68. Nagle to Peterson, February 4, 1935, in PMDF 1934-35; Chatelain, January 31, 1935, is missing from that file. On February 8, 1935, Assistant Director Gill informed Mortimer, "It has been definitely decided to install wooden steps at the Lee Mansion and arrangements are being made for the preliminary work." Ibid.

69. Nagle to Gill, January 23, 1935, in PMDF 1934-35.

> The roof over the Conservatory is in very poor condition and should be replaced. The present construction is wood which has rotted away in several places so that leaks have developed. It was the intention to replace this with a structural steel structure with wire glass panels.[70]

As has been mentioned, there was $6,708.23 left in the 1933 funds to continue this restoration program.

3. New Wooden Steps for Portico

The Eastern Division, Branch of Plans and Design, conducted an investigation of the physical evidence to be found at and under the old wooden steps of the mansion portico. On April 4, 1935, Architect Thomas T. Waterman stated:

> In order to complete our investigations of the steps of Arlington Mansion it will be necessary to take up the rest of the wood steps to the Portico and excavate under them. While this excavation is being made it will be necessary to build temporary steps to the Portico at the North end of the front where the investigation is already complete.[71]

This study was being conducted "in order to be able to definitely determine the original form of the Portico steps" and in order that National Park Service should not "be placed in an embarassing position if further information should come to light" about the steps.[72] On April 25, 1935, Colonel Mortimer wrote to Gill, warning that the end of the fiscal year was approaching rapidly and that contracts should be let,

---

70. Nagle to Gill, January 23, 1935, in PMDF 1934-35. Operating funds for the Lee Mansion for fiscal year 1935 amounted to $9,400, of which $4,600 was for guard services and $4,800 for maintenance. About $7,714.58 had been expended as of April 30, 1935. "Status of Allotment for 483 Lee Mansion Memorial as of April 30, 1935," ibid.

71. Waterman to Finnan, April 4, 1935, in PMDF 1934-35.

72. McCarter, quoting Waterman's notes to Gill, April 24, 1935, in response to Assistant Director Gill's memorandum of April 10, 1935, to Waterman, complaining about the removal of the old steps and urging that excavations be made under their site, in PMDF 1934-35.

or day labor used to build the new steps before the money for this project was lost. The time problem was resolved by an act of Congress on the Public Works funds and on May 9, Mortimer again wrote Gill and urged:

> Inasmuch as the appropriation for the Restoration of the Mansion has been extended two years from next June 30th, I hope you will spike any further efforts on the part of other branches of the National Park Service to use the balance remaining in the allotment.[73]

In a report submitted to Landscape Architect Peterson on May 7, 1935, Waterman called attention to the fact that the Lee Mansion had been restored to the wrong period (the Custis era) rather than to the Lee period (the era immediately prior to the Civil War) as the Joint Resolution of Congress had required. Waterman noted also that the existing exterior paint job did not agree with the external appearance of the mansion at the time of the Civil War. He wrote:

> The proposal to restore the steps to the portico of Arlington Mansion makes me wonder if further restoration work should not be undertaken to fulfill the requirements of Public Resolution-No. 74 68th Congress (H.J. Res 264) that the Lee Mansion be restored to the Condition in which it existed immediately prior to the Civil War. Funds for this work are available, I believe.
>
> In one important characteristic the house has been radically changed from this state, that is in the exterior painting. In the photographs taken during the war the stucco of the exterior is definitely shown as veined to represent Aquia Creek stone. This is now painted white and buff. A drawing shows the pediment to have been plastered and laid off in blocks to represent stone, while at present it is boarded. In my opinion, the intent of the architect will be more nearly fulfilled if the exterior stucco is restored to simulate stonework. Thus a true restoration, as required by the Congress, will be accomplished, and the Mansion as seen across the new bridge will better harmonize with the stone work of the approach. It is possible that the simulated stone veining was done in fresco and remains under the existing paint, and can be recovered.
>
> Although no photograph seems to exist of the court side of the house, there is an indisputable indication that a porch was

---

73. Mortimer to Gill, May 9, 1935, in PMDF 1934-35.

> proposed if not built here. This is in the hinged panels under the second floor hall window, to permit egress. No signs show on the exterior as the stucco has been replaced here. I believe that excavations should be made under the rear step to determine if the porch was ever built. The rebuilding of such a porch would be a great artistic addition to the facade.[74]

The specifications for the construction of the steps to the portico for the Arlington Mansion at the Arlington Cemetery and notice for bidders were issued on June 6. These were accompanied by plans for stone and wood steps (Drawings 2.3-68) dated June 4, 1935. The sealed bids were to be opened on June 11.[75] On June 18, Oliver G. Taylor, Deputy Chief Engineer, notified the J. George Bensel Company of Baltimore, Maryland, that they were being awarded the contract as the lowest bidder for the sum of $1,690.[76] The J. George Bensel Company received its copy of the approved contract on July 20 and had 40 calendar days, or until August 29, to complete its work.[77]

There is evidence that the top tread of the steps, which formed the outer edge of the portico, was replaced with sandstone as a part of this contract. This data is contained in a series of letters from the contractor requesting an extension of time due to delay of sandstone from a quarry at Mount Pisbia, Ohio. Severe floods in Ohio and West Virginia had halted transportation of the stone.[78] The project was apparently

---

74. Waterman to Peterson, May 7, 1935, in PMDF 1934-35.

75. See Contract Files, Contract No. I-IP-3130-F.P. No. 374 (P.W.A.), with Invitation to bid, June 6, 1935, in PMDF 1934-35.

76. Taylor to Bensel Company, June 18, 1935, in PMDF 1934-35.

77. Bensel Company to National Park Service, July 30, 1935 (the contract was dated June 28, 1935) and Moskey to the Returns Office, General Accounting Office, July 30, 1935, in PMDF 1934-35.

78. Correspondence of Bensel Company with National Park Service, August 8, 10, and September 10, 1935. The stone came from the Mount Pisbia Stone Company at Elyria, Ohio. The extension was granted on September 25, 1935. Monteith to Bensel Company, in PMDF 1934-35.

completed within the extension period as there is no further correspondence on the steps project.

4. Reconstructing Roof Over Conservatory (Room 116)

The preliminary drawing showing the proposed reconstruction of the roof over the conservatory was submitted for Peterson's review on May 2, 1935. In his letter of transmittal, W.B. Montgomery, Acting Chief, Design Section, commented:

> We proposed the use of aluminum shapes of such size which when painted, will give the impression that the members are of wood. Also, all connections would be hidden. In other words, the roof, when painted, would have every appearance of wood with none of its objectionable features from the standpoint of maintenance.[79]

The specifications for reconstructing the roof over the conservatory of the Arlington Mansion, and the invitations to bid were issued on May 29, 1935. The sealed bids were opened on June 11.[80]

That same day, Deputy Chief Engineer Taylor, informed the Redmond Concrete Company, Inc. of Philadelphia, they were being awarded the contract as the low bidder at $2,290.[81] The company received its copy of the approved contract on July 9, and the project was supposed to be completed within 60 calendar days or by September 7, 1935.[82] Due to changes instituted by the National Park Service

---

79. Montgomery to Peterson, May 2, 1935, in PMDF 1934-35.

80. Data in PMDF 1934-35. The bids were to be opened on June 6, but that date was changed to June 11 due to Amendment 1 to the specifications, dated June 5, 1935. Contract I-1P-3108, Public Works Project 374.

81. Taylor to Redmond Concrete Company, July 11, 1935, in PMDF 1934-35.

82. J. A. Whelan Company to National Park Service, July 9, 1935, in PMDF 1934-35. The plan for the work may be found in File 2.1-60, 2.1-65.

in the specifications, the company asked for and received a total of 104 calendar days in extension of time. The project appears to have been completed within the extended period.[83]

The alterations that caused the delays were:

1. Modification in the design of aluminum joints (Drawing File 2.1-60). These were manufactured by the Aluminum Company of America, and the revised product was not received by the contractor until October 14.

2. On October 12, Assistant Chief Nagle requested and the contractor agreed on October 28 to do the following additional work:

> It has been found that the brick wall does not extend high enough to anchor the new aluminum rafters in the manner indicated on the contract drawings.
>
> Therefore, this office is considering the advisability of including the following described work under your contract, and accordingly you are requested to submit an estimate of the cost which would be involved; and on a separate sheet indicate a detailed breakdown of your estimate.
>
> The work would consist of undercutting the existing wooden rafters and installing a 6 inch by 4 inch yellow pine plate above and toe-nailed to the existing wood wall plate. The new plate would extend the entire length of the wall involved in supporting the new aluminum rafters.
>
> Your attention is invited to the fact that if the work be performed in the manner indicated above, it will not be necessary for you to drill for or furnish expansion bolts for the anchors, but you will be required to install anchor belts through the wood plates for each aluminum rafter.[84]

---

83. The Redmond Concrete Company to National Park Service on July 28, August 1, October 14, and 28, 1935, requesting extensions of time. Taylor to Redmond Concrete Company, November 6, 12, and 29, 1935, granting a total of 104 extra days, in PMDF 1934-35. There is no further correspondence on the roof project after November 29, 1935, in the files, indicating that the work must have been completed on time.

84. Nagle to Redmond Concrete Company, October 18, 1935, and Whelan to Nagle, October 28, 1935, in PMDF 1934-35.

5. Problems with Mansion Stairs

On September 11 Colonel Mortimer expressed his concern for the safety of the stairways in the Lee Mansion to Assistant Director Gill. He observed:

> 1. I request that you cause a careful inspection to be made of the beams or struts which support both stairways in the Lee Mansion and particularly the main "up" stairway.
>
> 2. Due to the large number of people using these stairways, I am a little concerned regarding their strength to support the weight. Of course, we regulate the number of people that may go on the stairway at any one time but their supporting strength should be beyond question.[85]

Acting Assistant Director Peters, responded on September 17, informing Colonel Mortimer:

> The struts and beams supporting the stairways were found to be in excellent condition and the stairs were amply strong, except for the second flight of the "up" stairs. This flight deflects and vibrates under traffic.
>
> It is suggested that the plaster be removed during a slack period so that the beams may be examined further.[86]

On November 21, 1935, Colonel Mortimer suggested that the steps from the south hall (Room 113) to the conservatory (Room 116) needed repair. He explained:

> 1. The steps from the south hall of the Arlington Mansion to the Conservatory . . . need resetting and the brick floor of the conservatory needs tearing up, under-filling and replacing on a good bed of sand.
>
> 2. It might be well to have the contractor now working on the roof of the Conservatory do this as an extra under his contract, if possible. Otherwise, it should be done as a matter of maintenance.[87]

---

85. Mortimer to Gill, September 11, 1935, in PMDF 1934-35.

86. Peters to Mortimer, September 17, 1935, in PMDF 1934-35.

87. Mortimer to Peters, November 21, 1935, in PMDF 1934-35.

The above projects completed the work that was undertaken on Arlington House during 1935. Of the $6,708.23 in Public Works funds available on January 23, 1935, approximately $3,980 had been expended under the terms of the two contracts, leaving a balance of some $2,700.23 available for work in 1936.

F. IMPROVEMENTS TO ARLINGTON HOUSE IN 1936

No major work was done to the mansion in 1936. The following alterations and repairs, however, were made during 1936:

1. Electrical Meter

At the request of Colonel Mortimer, a meter to measure the use of electricity was installed at the mansion so that the power used by the National Park Service could be separated from that used by the War Department for Arlington National Cemetery. The meter was ordered on February 11, 1936, and installed on April 8, 1936.[88]

2. Stairs and Floors

B.C. Gardner, Chief, Administrative and Protection Division, inspected Arlington House and reported to Peters on May 1, 1936:

> In a recent inspection of the Lee Mansion it was noted that the bottom step leading from the basement to the first floor, north stairs, is decayed and in need of repair. Also the stair guard-rail leading from the first to the second floor should be strengthened.
>
> With the large number of visitors congregating on the second floor, it is believed that the question of safe carrying capacity of the floor should be studied.[89]

---

88. The meter was first requested by the colonel on December 28, 1933. Peters, Assistant Director, to Mortimer, February 12, 1935; and Blankenship, Group Superintendent, Potomac Park, to Peters, April 9, 1936, in PMDF 1936-37.

89. Gardner to Assistant Director Peters, May 1, 1936, and Peters to Kaufholz, April 30, 1936, in PMDF 1936-37.

These repairs were made from regular maintenance funds.

3. Alterations to Wire Grille Guarding Room Entrances

In his May 1 report to Peters, Gardner noted:

> In view of the value of the furnishings in the Mansion consideration should be given to providing grille gates or doors of sufficient height to prevent persons gaining access to the rooms.[90]

Assistant Director Peters directed F. Kaufholz, Jr., Technical Division, to "prepare an estimate for remodeling all of the wire grille entrance-ways to the various rooms so that they will be approximately seven and one-half feet high. Where curved entrance-ways are not provided, the new installation should be curved as so to permit visitors to actually step into the room."[91]

In his report to Peters, dated May 5, 1936, Kaufholz wrote:

> An inspection has been made of the number of interior doorways to be fully enclosed at the Lee Mansion. Using most of the present grilles and adding sections on top, there is needed approximately 340 square feet additional at $.50 per square foot. The estimated cost is $170.00. This price includes the slave quarters and an exterior door for the north slave house.[92]

4. Minor Roof Repairs

During October 1936, "Several small leaks in the roof" of the Lee Mansion were repaired.[93]

---

90. Ibid.

91. Peters to Kaufholz, April 30, 1936, in PMDF 1936-37. Kaufholz was also instructed by Peters to repair the stairs and check the floors.

92. Kaufholz to Peters, May 5, 1936, in PMDF 1936-37.

93. Superintendent's Monthly Narrative Report for the Lee Mansion, Lincoln Museum, and the House Where Lincoln Died for the Month of October 1936, in PMDF 1936-37.

5. Front Steps Painted

During November 1936 "the front steps at the Lee Mansion were painted."[94]

During the period January 1, 1936, to April 9, 1937, some $2,500 was expended on small improvement projects at the Lee Mansion buildings. Of the total $2,728.23 in Public Works Federal Project 374 funds that had been available on January 1, a balance of $216.20 in unexpended restoration funds was recorded on April 9. These funds were to be returned to the general treasury if they were not obligated by June 30, 1937.[95]

G. IMPROVEMENTS TO ARLINGTON HOUSE IN 1937

1. Painting Interior Woodwork in Halls and Exterior Steps

No major work was done on the mansion during 1937. In his monthly narrative report for March 1937, Acting Superintendent Harper L. Garret noted that "Minor repairs were made at the Lee Mansion."[96]

In the report for May, Garrett wrote, "At the Lee Mansion the porch steps at the west entrance to the main and north halls and all woodwork in the lower and upper halls were painted. Minor repairs were also made to the roof of the south slave quarters."

2. Inspection of Electrical Wiring Systems

"On May 13 and 14 an inspection was made by representatives of the American District Telegraph Company of all electric wiring of the Mansion and slave quarters."[97]

---

94. Superintendent's Monthly Narrative Report for November 1936.

95. Peters, to Superintendent Garrett, Lincoln Museum, April 9, 1937, in PMDF 1936-37.

96. Monthly Report, April 6, 1937, in PMDF 1936-37.

97. Monthly Report, June 4, 1937, in PMDF 1936-37.

3. Preservation of Paintings and Fresco

On June 4, Ned J. Burns, Acting Chief, Museum Division, provided Superintendent Garrett with an estimate of $51.11 for the work of one artist for eight days for "retouching and preservation of three old paintings on stone and on the fresco in the Lee Mansion." This work was to be paid for from the Public Works, Federal Project 374 account.[98] In his monthly report for July, Superintendent Garrett reported:

> At the Lee Mansion the painting of the woodwork in the Mansion and north slave quarters was continued. In addition the three paintings over the doors of the south slave quarters and the fresco in the hall of the Mansion were retouched by Mr. Herman Van Cott, an artist from the Museum Division. The work was carefully done so that the antique appearance of the paintings might be preserved.[99]

4. Plans for Five Proposed Projects from Public Works Funds

Considerable thought, however, was given to future work on the mansion under projects to be financed, hopefully, by Federal Public Works funds. The forms for five such projects, dated May 25, 1937, requested $14,025 to be expended:

> 1. Weather stripping all outside openings: $ 3,125
>
> The present windows and doors are very loose and leak air in cold weather.
>
> High winds cause bad drafts and due to air leakage waste fuel. Dirt is blown into the building and the walls and furnishings are damaged due both to dirt and dry air in winter.

---

98. Burns to Garret, June 4, 1937, in PMDF-1936-37.

99. Monthly Report, July 7, 1937, in PMDF, 1936-37.

Fuel savings as high as 15 per cent can be expected with well weatherstripped buildings.[100]

2. Replacing steps at Lee Mansion: $ 600

The present steps at the mansion are badly in need of repair. They are in such condition that they are a hazard to the public.[101]

3. Replacing roof gutters and all downspouts: $3,600

At the present time several small leaks have developed. It is anticipated that the entire roof and down-spouts will have to be replaced or repaired by 1941. [The existing system of copper gutters and downspouts had been installed on the mansion in 1929.][102]

4. Repointing and redecorating exterior and interior of Lee Mansion: $2,500

This house is an historic structures [sic] and should be pointed on the outside every three years for preservation. On the inside the house should be redecorated every five years due to the heating system carrying dirt into the house and to absence of weather stripping on all openings.[103]

5. Heating system--installation of control fan and humidifier and otherwise improving present heating system in Lee Mansion. [Heating system had been installed in 1929-30.] $4,200[104]

The existing heating system is inadequate. The control is subject to outside wind conditions. The arrangement of the fresh air intake is such that dirt is carried into the house. The system does not recirculate house air but used all outside air. This is wasteful of fuel as recirculation of a greater portion of the room air through the heaters will reduce the fuel used by at least 30 percent for heating. . . .

---

100. Report 2739, Project Report for Planning for Federal Works, May 25, 1937, approved by Demaray, Associate Director, in PMDF 1936-37.

101. Report 2737, May 25, 1937, in PMDF 1936-37.

102. Report 2378, May 25, 1937, in PMDF 1936-37.

103. Report 2736, May 25, 1937, in PMDF 1936-37.

104. Report 2735, May 25, 1937, in PMDF 1936-37.

With the present arrangement it is impossible to heat the building to 60° Fahrenheit when it is 0° Fahrenheit outside.

In the 1939 preliminary estimate for the Lee Mansion, Assistant Regional Director Peters requested, in addition to the normal maintenance and operating funds, $9,400 for the following four improvement and repair projects:

1. Paint exterior and interior, patch plaster and point up where necessary $2,700

The exterior finish of the Lee Mansion consists of lime Stucco on brick. This Stucco in many instances has become loosened by the action of water and frost and should be replaced as soon as possible to prevent the water from increasing the damage. The entire surface has begun to peel and should be protected by additional coats of paint to prevent the weathering action from deteriorating the exterior surface.[105]

2. Reconstruct and repair heating system to furnish adequate heat $3,500

The present heating system in the Lee Mansion is of the indirect type using hot water as the heating medium. There are six sets of cast iron hot water coils on the basement ceiling each connected to ductwork supplying heated air to concealed outlets on the first floor. The inlet to these coils is from window openings in the basement.

With these outside air connections there is not sufficient heating surface in the coils to heat the building.

The heating is also at the mercy of the winds as a cold wind blowing against an outside air intake will produce cold drafts in the room.

---

105. Peters to Demaray, July 14, 1937 and Strawser to Jennings, Tolson, and Demaray, August 9, 1937, in PMDF 1936-37.

It is proposed to apply motor driven fans to these heating units and change the outside air intake connections to recirculate the air from the house.

Such an alteration would reduce the heating costs by approximately thirty per cent and insure adequate heating without cold drafts.[106]

3. Reconstruct and repair fire detection system $1,200

The recorder on the fire detection system is now located in the boiler room at the Mansion. Because of its out of the way location, and in the event of fire the guard would be required to leave the Mansion and rush to the boiler house in order to determine the location of the fire. In a building of this type such loss of time would probably result in the fire's gaining such headway as to be beyond control before the guard could return.

The installation of the tubing is defective in a number of locations and the detector units are in need of complete replacement.

The recorder should be moved to the Custodian's office and the necessary repairs made to the tubing and detector units so that the system may operate in the proper manner.[107]

4. Install 1-1/2-inch standpipe hose stations and hose $2,000

Provide improved fire fighting facilities by installing one and one-half inch standpipe hose stations and hose to reach all parts of the building. Estimated cost $2,000.00.

The present fire fighting equipment in the building consists of portable extinguishers. After these are used the additional protection depends on the arrival of the fire engine and crew from Fort Myer. A fire could gain considerable headway before this equipment and large hose lines could be brought into service. The installation of the proposed one and one-half inch standpipe hose stations would make it possible for a small force to successfully fight a fire of considerable size and extinguish it or at least hold it in check until assistance arrived.[108]

---

106. Ibid.

107. Ibid.

108. Ibid.

Of the $9,400 requested, the Bureau of the Budget, on December 31, 1937, allowed only $2,700 for painting and patching the exterior and interior of the mansion to remain in the estimate that was submitted to Congress.[109]

The Interior Department Appropriation Act provided $15,210 for the administration, protection, and maintenance of the Lee Mansion during the 1938 fiscal year: $8,740 was for administration and protection and $4,740 for maintenance, repair, and operations.[110]

H. IMPROVEMENTS TO ARLINGTON HOUSE IN 1938

1. Closing of Public Works Federal Project 374, 1933-38

Public Works Federal Project 374, funded with $12,470 in September 1933, was officially closed on August 4, 1938. At its completion the total expended on the project was $12,304.91.[111]

On March 16, 1938, Executive Officer H.L. Wooten alerted Assistant Director Peters that at least $3,000 would be available to make improvements at the Lee Mansion. He explained:

> A study of the accounts for Lee Mansion indicates that on the present basis of operation there will be a surplus of between $3,000 and $3,500 in this year's allotment, due to the delay in filling the Superintendent's position, the Historian's position and the Librarian's position.
>
> It is suggested that steps be initiated at this time to perform necessary physical improvements and repairs to the Mansion not to exceed approximately $3,000.[112]

---

109. Action by the Bureau of the Budget--Lee Mansion, 1939 Estimates, December 31, 1937, in PMDF 1936-37.

110. H.L. Wooten, Acting Assistant Director to Gardner, Owen, Little, and Garrett, September 7, 1937, in PMDF 1936-37.

111. Allotment Advice 4140 (National Park Service), August 4, 1938, Jennings, Acting Assistant Director, in PMDF 1938-39.

112. Wooten to Peters, March 16, 1938, in PMDF 1938-39.

2. Reconstruction and Repair of Mansion Heating System

On April 18, 1938, Assistant Director Peters, informed Associate Director Demaray:

> The item for reconstructing and repairing the heating system, estimated to cost $3,500 which was included in the 1939 estimates but which was not allowed by the Bureau of the Budget, will be undertaken during the current fiscal year from savings that have been made through delay in filling the positions of Superintendent, Junior Historian and Librarian.[113]

On April 21, Peters wrote to Oliver G. Taylor and inquired if Taylor's office could handle this work and have it under contract by June 30. The estimated cost, he noted, was $3,500 and he explained:

> It is believed funds will be available to correct the inadequate heating system in the Lee Mansion. The work should be done by contract and plans and specifications will be necessary. The work will involve changes in sheet metal duct work and the addition of electric blowers to change the system to a recirculating forced draft system. Mr. Mallett, of the Technical Division, is familiar with what is required.[114]

The contract was awarded to Teunis F. Collier as Contract 1-1P-12842, and drawing File 2.1-85.[115]

The architectural effects on the structure of the mansion resulting from the installation of the heating system are revealed in Assistant Architect Stuart M. Barnette's memorandum to Thomas Vint on July 15, 1938:

---

113. Peters to Demaray, April 18, 1938, in PMDF 1938-39.

114. Peters to Taylor, April 21, 1938, in PMDF 1938-39.

115. Taylor, Chief of Engineering, to Collier, September 15, 1938--re: change order 1 and Peters, to Montgomery, May 31, 1938, in PMDF, 1938-39. The detailed correspondence, specifications and contract, however, are not in PMDF 1938-39, but may be found in Drawings 2.1-75, 76, 77, and 78.

On Thursday, July 14, in the company of Inspector Hunt of the Branch of Engineering, I visited the Lee Mansion . . . .

The most inconspicuous positions have already been selected for the heat grills. The only contribution I could make to further their obscurity was to suggest they be kept as close to the base board as possible and be grained in painting to match the present flooring.

In the basement it will become necessary in the installation of new work to cut into the original arched chimney foundations and in one instance to cut into part of an original basement fireplace. There seems to be no way to eliminate the necessity of this cutting other than exposing a large unsightly grille in the floor of one of the main rooms of the first floor. It is therefore recommended that the fireplace to be altered be measured and recorded before construction begins and that pure white Medusa cement mortar be used in making these and all other changes in the masonry. By so doing the white joints in the new work will furnish a permanent and obvious record of changes which have been made to the original structure.

Installation of this new work was to have started this week. The measurements of the fireplace to be altered should therefore be taken at once. Two hours should suffice to complete such records.[116]

Change Order 1 required some additional work to a basement wall as revealed by the following letter of Chief of Engineering Taylor to the contractor, Teunis F. Collier of Washington, D.C. dated September 15, 1938:[117]

The offer contained in your letter of September 10, 1938, to furnish the necessary labor and materials required to complete the work of underpinning the basement wall and other work indicated on our drawing File No. 2.1-35 in connection with Contract No. I-1P-12842 for making certain alterations to the Heating System of the Lee Mansion located within the Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington, Virginia, for the sum of One Hundred and Fifteen Dollars ($115.00) is considered reasonable and is hereby accepted. You are, therefore, directed to proceed with the work as above indicated.

---

116. Barnette to Vint, July 15, 1938, in PMDF 1938-39.

117. Taylor to Collier, September 15, 1938, in PMDF 1938-39.

This additional work involving an increase in your contract price in the amount of One Hundred and Fifteen Dollars ($115.00) will be recorded as Change No. 1.

This work was completed by December 1938.[118]

The 1939 appropriation bill provided $17,380 for the administration, protection, and maintenance of Lee Mansion. Of this sum, $2,700 was earmarked for "Painting exterior and interior, patching plaster and pointing up." Of the total, $9,880 was for administration and protection, and $7,500 for maintenance, repair, and operation.[119]

The preliminary estimate for the 1940 fiscal year for Lee Mansion included a request for $3,200 for two projects: (1) reconstruct and repair fire detection system -- $1,200; and (2) install 1-1/2-inch standpipe, hose stations, and hose -- $2,000, which had first been proposed July 14, 1937, but was then deleted by the Bureau of the Budget from the final estimate for 1939.[120]

I. IMPROVEMENTS TO ARLINGTON HOUSE IN 1939:[121]

1. Exterior and Interior Painting

Under the terms of the appropriations for fiscal year 1939, $2,700 was alloted for painting the exterior and interior of the Lee

---

118. Demaray, Acting Director to The Trane Company, December 21, 1938, in PMDF 1938-39.

119. Allotment Advice 4086 (National Park Service), July 13, 1938, Tolson, Acting Associate Director, and Peters, to Demaray, April 18, 1928, in PMDF 1938-39.

120. Peters, to Demaray, April 18, 1939, in PMDF 1938-39. The total amount requested for fiscal year 1940 was $19,380.

121. On April 24, 1939, the Secretary of War wrote to President Franklin D. Roosevelt making a determined effort to have Arlington House returned to the custody of the War Department. In PMDF 1938-39.

Mansion. This work must have been accomplished in 1939 as the funds were not returned to the general treasury. The park files for 1939, however, contain no correspondence or contracts relating to this painting project.

2. Repainting Three Panels

On November 17, 1939, Acting Superintendent Frank T. Gartside requested Ned J. Burns of the Museum Division "to proceed with the re-painting of the three panels at the Lee Mansion, as outlined in your memorandum of November 10," and to bill his office for the work.

On December 1, 1939, Acting Superintendent Gartside informed Charles A. Peters, Buildings Manager, Public Buildings Administration, Federal Works Agency:

> There has been allotted to the Office of National Capital Parks funds "to reconstruct and replace portions of the fire detection system" in the Lee Mansion, Arlington National Cemetery. The Lee Mansion and the $1,200.00 appropriation for this project were transferred by your office to the jurisdiction of this office on June 30.
>
> In order to carry out this work, it is respectfully requested that you agree to furnish the services of your staff to prepare plans and specifications and advertise for bids for this work.
>
> If you are agreeable to doing this work, your office will be reimbursed for the actual cost involved as a charge against appropriation 1401000.821, National Park Service, 1940.[122]

J. IMPROVEMENTS TO ARLINGTON HOUSE IN 1940

1. Reconditioning of the Mansion Fire Alarm System

Reconditioning of the automatic fire system in the Lee Mansion was accomplished by contract in 1940 (Contract I-28P-35, Drawing 2.3-52).[123]

---

122. Gartside to Peters, December 1, 1939, in PMDF 1938-39.

123. Note in PMDF 1940-49, the contract, however, is not on file. The specifications, dated April 19, 1940, are in the "Restoration and Repair" records file drawer at the park.

2. Mansion Roof Requires Repair

On May 29, 1940, George E. Clark, Chief, Construction and Repair Division, informed Randle B. Truett, Chief, Memorials Section, that he had inspected the roof of the Lee Mansion. He wrote, "As I told you yesterday, the existing roof has been damaged mainly from use by persons walking on it, apparently engaged in other work. You should, therefore, issue instructions to the Custodian that no one is to have access to the roof unless accompanied by either himself or a responsible member of his staff who will see that no damage is done to the slate." Cost of the repairs was estimated at $414. This sum included $164 for materials and $250 for two men for about 20 days labor. Some 1,500 new slates (10" x 20") had to be placed on the roof.[124]

On July 9, 1940, Acting Director Demaray informed the acting superintendent of National Capital Parks that the 1942 preliminary estimates for Lee Mansion National Memorial contained $2,600 for two projects:

1.	Replacement of broken and damaged slate	$ 500
2.	Installation of standpipe connections and equipment	2,100
		$2,600

An additional $2,000 was also requested for the installation of permanent flood-lighting fixtures.[125]

On September 17, 1940, J.W. Hetrick, Historical Technican, provided Superintendent Truett with a detailed statement of the damage to the slate on the roofs of the mansion wings. He wrote:

> As there appears to be some thought in the minds of some of the N.C.P. officials that the present condition of the slate on the wings of the Lee Mansion is due to employees walking on the roof--particularly to gather magnolia buds--I should like to tell you a little of the history of this roof and explain why its present condition cannot possibly be attributed to our employees walking on the roof.

---

124. Clark to Truett, May 29, 1940, in PMDF 1940-49. No other data on this project in the file.

125. Demaray to Acting Superintendent, July 9, 1940, in PMDF 1940-49.

To begin with, the roof, according to the Superintendent of the Cemetery, is close to forty years old, and perhaps older. The greatest amount of damage was done to roofs on the wings of the house when the mansion was restored. At that time it was necessary to determine if their [sic] had been ballustrades on the roofs. Several experts were called and holes were cut in the roof. When it was learned that there had been ballustrades, they were built on the roof, and in doing this, permanent damage was done to the roof. The workmen cracked much of the slate, and when the posts were set in, leaks developed that have never been permanently mended. Every few months it starts leaking around the posts and we have to go out and cement it.

Another reason for the cracking of the slate is that every three or four years when the house has been painted, scaffolds have been built on the roof. Very little care was apparently taken. Sand bags were never used.

A few years ago while Cemetery workmen were blasting stumps some rather heavy pieces were blown upon the roof of the North wing.

Up until this summer we did go out on the roofs to cut Magnolias. Only one person ever did this - Dave Spencer -- and he has been doing it since the Mansion was restored. He cut Magnolias for Col. Mortimer and the Cemetery officials before the Mansion was turned over to the Park Service. Before this the Cemetery gardener cut them. Dave always was very careful of the roof.

A point to note is that the roof leaks as badly other places as it does where Dave Spencer went out on it. In fact, the worst leak has always been on the West side of the South wing where there are no Magnolias, or trees of any kind. The patch of plaster which fell recently in the State Dining Room was a result of this leak, although the roof at the time was not leaking.[126]

No other major work was accomplished on the mansion, other than reconditioning the automatic fire system for approximately $1,200 in 1940.

K. IMPROVEMENTS TO ARLINGTON HOUSE IN 1941

On May 15, 1941, Colonel Mortimer wrote to Irving C. Root, Superintendent, National Capital Parks:

---

126. Hetrick to Truett, September 17, 1940, in PMDF 1940-49.

> Several months ago, I went over the matter of putting in fire protection stand pipes and hose connection on each floor to protect the building against possible fire. I was of opinion at the time that the Park Service were about ready to make a suitable installation which I had mapped out. As far as I can observe, nothing has been accomplished to provide this protection.
>
> I am now writing with a view to expedite the installation above referred to. Water will be sufficient in case of a small fire, provided pipe lines are equipped with hose connection on each floor.[127]

Responding on June 3, Superintendent Root informed Colonel Mortimer:

> You are advised that we have ordered material to install four stand pipes for fire protection in the Arlington Mansion, and installation will be made as soon as the material is received.
>
> A request is made at this time to make a 2-inch tap off the existing (National Cemetery) 6-inch main located approximately 100 feet from the Mansion. . . .[128]

Colonel Mortimer granted the desired permission on June 6, 1941, but noted, "However, our maps and records show this main to be a 4-inch, instead of six-inch. It is believed that sufficient pressure will be available, notwithstanding."[129] The estimated cost of this work was $344.60.[130]

1. Improved Water Supply System for Fire Protection

On September 26, 1941, Superintendent Root wrote to Colonel Mortimer seeking his cooperation in improving the water supply

---

127. Mortimer to Root, May 15, 1941, in PMDF 1940-49.

128. Root to Mortimer, June 3, 1941, in PMDF 1940-49.

129. Mortimer to Root, June 3, 1941, in PMDF 1940-49.

130. Fire Protection-Estimate for water extension (Fire Protection-Lee Mansion Force Account), sent to files May 2, 1941, from William F. Haiber's materials. The plan may have been proposed by Mortimer. See his letter of October 21, 1940 and tracing made from File 2.1-75 drawing to William F. Haiber. All data is in PMDF 1940-49.

system to increase the fire protection at the Lee Mansion. Root wrote:

> It has come to our attention that you are reinforcing the water supply system in the Arlington National Cemetery, and have run a new 8" C.I. main from Fort Myer to your Administration Building, and also at present are connecting on to the existing 4" main to supply the area around the Lee Mansion.
>
> We all have been cognizant of the fact that the water supply around Lee Mansion is inadequate for fire protection, and it is suggested that we enlarge the supply on a cooperative basis. It is therefore proposed that an 8" main be run from the front of the Administration Building to the fire hydrant south of Lee Mansion, a distance of approximately 575 feet, and a 6" main be run to replace the existing 4" main to the fire hydrant on the west side of Lee Mansion, a distance of approximately 200 feet.
>
> As you have the 8" pipe on hand it is suggested that you supply the 8" pipe and this Office will supply the 6" pipe and pay for the installation of both lines. As your men are now laying pipe, it is agreeable that your forces lay all the pipe and we will reimburse you for the labor.
>
> We believe that this arrangement is mutually beneficial and will serve as a nucleus for further extensions of water mains in the Cemetery.
>
> If you give your approval to the above procedures, we will order the 6" pipe immediately so that it can be installed along with the 8" main.[131]

Colonel Mortimer, Officer in Charge of Arlington National Cemetery, agreed to Root's proposal on October 2, writing:

> 1. Reference is made to your letter of September 26th, (received September 30th), regarding new 8" cast iron water lines which I have installed in this Cemetery and connected with the new 8" main at the Fort Myer Gate.
>
> 2. I have not connected on to the existing 4" main in the immediate vicinity of the Lee Mansion. There is no question but what the fire protection at the Mansion is not as adequate as it should be, although 4" lines exist, and pressure is derived from two directions.

---

131. Root to Mortimer, September 26, 1941, in PMDF 1940-49.

3. I am glad to cooperate with you in the installation of an 8" main (connecting with our 8" main) to the vicinity of the Arlington Mansion, and to install 6" connections therefrom to the fire plugs south and west of the Mansion.

4. We have 8" pipe and some 8" fittings on hand, and I started the work of digging trenches for this installation yesterday. I, therefore, suggest that you purchase and deliver here fittings, (4", 6" and 8") as shown by the attached sheet. We to lay the pipe and your office to reimburse us for the cost of labor and other necessary material, such as oakum and lead. We will install the 8" pipe and such fittings as we have, without cost for that material.[132]

Accordingly, on October 6, Acting Superintendent F. F. Gillen ordered the necessary valves and parts from the D.C. Water Department.[133]

Acting Superintendent Gillen gave NPS confirmation to the agreement on October 7 and also informed Colonel Mortimer that the necessary parts had been ordered.[134]

On October 15 Colonel Mortimer informed the National Park Service that the War Department had completed its construction of the new 8-inch water line, but had been unable to complete work on the 4- and 6-inch lines because the Park Service had not yet delivered the necessary materials. The colonel described the situation:

Reference is made to my letter of October 2 and to yours of October 7--subject matter, installation of the new water pipe line connecting with fire plugs at the Arlington Mansion.

---

132. Mortimer to Root, October 2, 1944, in PMDF 1940-49.

133. Gillen to Superintendent Humphrey Beckett, D. C. Water Department, with a detailed list of parts, October 6, 1941, in PMDF 1940-49.

134. Gillen to Mortimer, October 7, 1941, in PMDF 1940-49.

I have extended, up to the present time, the 8" line to, and partially across, the road leading to the Mansion. I find that the pipe for the 4" and 6" lines have not been received, although the fittings have.

I, therefore, contemplate running the 8" line to a point adjacent to the old 4" line and installing cross to connect with that line. This will give an additional supply of water now.

I contemplate installing a 4" valve in the old line at this time south of the connecting tee of the plug on Sherman Avenue. This will make that plug available for use while the cross is being cut in, and will leave the 4" connection to fire plug available.

The only time the Mansion will be without water will be that period when this valve is being installed - two or three hours.

If you desire to continue the completion of this project when your pipe arrives, I have no objection to your doing it and will furnish you with our plan.[135]

On November 1, 1941, Colonel Mortimer informed Acting Superintendent Gillen:

As you know, the work has been completed so far as this office is to take it.

It is, therefore, desired to turn over to you the valves and fittings which were not used.

If and when your office extends the line with 6" and 8" pipe to the fire hydrants, it is requested that valves be used which correspond to others at this station, i.e. to open to left and close to right and to have 2" square operating nuts.[136]

---

135. Mortimer to Superintendent, National Capital Parks, October 15, 1941, in PMDF 1940-49.

136. Mortimer to Gillen, November 1, 1941, in PMDF 1940-49.

It appears that the National Park Service was unable to hook the mansion up with the new 8-inch water line and the 4- and 6-inch pipes as had been proposed in 1941.[137]

2. Historic American Building Survey Drawings (HABS) of Arlington House

The Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) completed measured drawings of Arlington House during 1941 and, on December 10, Chief of Planning Vint transmitted the vandyke negatives of HABS Survey VA-443 (18 sheets), Arlington House, Arlington County, Virginia, to the Superintendent of National Capital Parks (Drawing 2.3-66).[138]

L. SUMMARY OF IMPROVEMENTS TO ARLINGTON HOUSE, 1933-1941

Under the Public Works Program, $12,470 was provided for restoration work on Arlington House and grounds in Federal Project 374 on October 2, 1933. Of this total $9,170 was earmarked for work on the mansion and $3,330 for ground projects. From October 1933 to June 30, 1938, a total of $12,304.91 was expended under Federal Project 374. In addition, the National Park Service made available approximately $6,900 from its appropriations for the following three projects: the heating plant, 1938--$3,000; painting the mansion, 1939--$2,700; and revising the fire detection system in the mansion, 1940--$1,200. Total money spent for restoration, repair, and improvement at Arlington House totaled approximately $19,370 during the period 1933 to 1941.

---

137. No documents are in PMDF for such work during November and December 1941.

138. Vint to Superintendent, National Capital Parks, December 10, 1941, in PMDF 1940-49.

a. Painting the Mansion, Non-Historic Colors Utilized Inside and Out

(1) Exterior Painting

The exterior of the mansion was painted two coats by the War Department in 1929.

Exterior painted two coats in 1934 at a cost of $1,080, including interior, under contract by Clarence W. Gosnell, Inc., of Washington, D.C.

Wooden steps of portico on east or front elevation painted in 1936.

Exterior painted two coats in 1939 at a cost, including interior, of approximately $2,700

(2) Interior Painting

1929-30--Interior of mansion painted two coats by War Department

1934--Interior of mansion painted two coats by contractor Clarence W. Gosnell, Inc., of Washington. D.C.

1939--Interior painted two coats

(3) Murals in First Floor Hall (Room 111)

Retouched in 1937 by the NPS Museum Division. Cost of work $51.11.

b. Repair and Alteration of Electrical System

1929--The War Department rewired the mansion at a cost of $1,500, and an additional $1,000 was spent to lay better electrical lines from Fort Myer to the mansion.

1934--Minor repairs made and some electrical circuits altered.

April 17, 1934--Inspection and report describing system.

April 8, 1934--First electrical meter installed at mansion.

May 1937--Inspection of wiring system.

c. Fire Detection or Alarm System

1929-30--War Department expended $1,842.70 to install an automatic fire alarm system in the basement, first, second, and attic floors of mansion, also in three outbuildings, Atmo alarm system.

April 17, 1934--Inspection and description of existing system.

1940--Some $1,200 spent under Contract I-28P-35 to reconstruct and repair existing fire alarm system.

d. Rebuilding Conservatory (Room 116) Roof

1929--The War Department rebuilt the glass roof of the Conservatory.

1934--Minor repairs

1935--Roof constructed at a cost of $2,290 using aluminum painted to look like wood under contract with Redmond Concrete Co., Inc. of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

e. Brick Floors Laid in Basement

1934--About 2,000 old bricks were used to pave the earthen floors in basement rooms cellar stairway hall, winter kitchen, and wine cellar. A lack of old brick prevented five additional rooms from having their earthen floors paved with brick as had been planned.

f. Water Supply for Fire Protection

The existing (1933) water mains, 4-inch cast iron pipes and fire hydrants had been installed by the War Department in 1907 at a cost of $1,880.

April 17, 1934--Inspection report and description of existing water supply system for fire protection purposes.

1940--Project proposed at estimated cost of $2,000 to install 1-1/2-inch standpipe and hose connections on each floor of mansion.

1941--Four standpipes ordered at estimated cost of $344.60.

Six-inch water pipe was to be installed and 4-inch water pipe to be linked to Arlington National Cemetery system. These plans were not executed in 1941 because parts and pipes did not arrive in time.

g. Steps of East or Front Portico

1929--War Department repaired and painted the existing wooden steps.

1935--After great debate with the War Department over whether to rebuild the steps of stone or wood, the east portico steps were reconstructed in an historically accurate manner of wood and sandstone so as to resemble their 1861 appearance. The work was performed under contract by J. George Bensel of Baltimore, Maryland, cost $1,690.

1936--east portico steps painted

h. Interior Stairs

1929-30--War Department spent $600 to repair the interior stairs.

(1) Stairs in Room 113
September 1935--Stairs inspected for safety.

(2) Stairs in Room 110
September 1935--Stairs inspected for safety.

(3) Steps from Room 114 to Room 116
1935--Steps repaired

i. Room Guards 1929-30--The War Department installed metal guard rails and screens at all doors of rooms open for viewing to visitors. These were modeled after the guard rails used at Mount Vernon, Total cost of $796.

1936--Approximately $170 was spent to improve and heighten the room guards.

j. Heating System
1929-30--The War Department spent $12,000 to erect an outside boiler house, guard room, and public comfort station. An additional $4,500 was spent to install a new concealed heating system of pipe in the mansion. Grills and hidden radiators served the new hot water heating system.

1935--Approximately $3,115 was expended under contract with Teunis F. Collier to reconstruct and repair the existing heating system.

k. Mansion Roof
1929--The War Department repaired the existing slate roofs of the mansion and two wings. These dated from 1908.

June 1934--Some new slates replaced on the roof.

October 1936--Several small leaks in roof repaired.

1940--Estimate prepared to replace about 1,500 new 10-inch by 20-inch slates on mansion roof at cost of $500.

l. Gutters and Downspouts

1928--War Department installed new copper gutters and downspouts and 6-inch tile drains were laid to carry off the water from the downspouts.

1934--Repairs made to gutters and downspouts.

m. Exterior Stucco

1928--War Department pointed and repaired exterior stucco.

March-April 1934--minor repairs made to stucco.

1939--stucco repaired

n. Interior Walls and Ceilings

1929--War Department spent approximately $1,600 to repair plaster walls, ceilings, and cornice throughout the mansion.

March-April 1934--repairs made to walls and ceilings, minor.

o. Interior Woodwork and Hardware

1929-30--the War Department spent $1,600 to reconstruct "Colonial Period" hardware throughout the mansion. Only two of the original door locks, located on the east and west entrances of Room 111, were found to be still in place. A third original door lock was returned to the mansion and restored to its original location on the hall door on the north side of Room 111 and opening into Room 109. The War Department also repaired or duplicated the existing interior mill work.

March-April 1934--Minor repairs were made to woodwork and hardware.

REPAIR AND RESTORATION WORK TO ARLINGTON HOUSE, 1933-41

Projects	Funds	1933	1934	1935	1936	1937	1938	1939	1940	1941
Painting exterior and interior Lee Mansion, exterior slaves' quarters	$ 4,500	0	1,080					2,700		
Replacing portico wooden steps	1,800	0		1,690						
Restoring north kitchen garden	1,765	0	Done							
Ground restoration	702	0	Done 519							
Brick floors in mansion basement	1,000	0	as far as possible							
Minor repairs to walls and roof, mansion	650	0	Done							
Rebuilding conservatory roof, mansion	1,220	0		2,290						
Restore three paintings in mansion hall	--	0	0	0		51.11				
Revision of heating system	--	0	0	0			3,115			
Revise fire alarm system	--	0	0	0				1,200		
Improved water supply, fire protection	--	0	0 (1)	0						400
TOTALS	$12,470+	0	$7,146.77	$3,980	$2,512.03	$1,333.89	$3,115	$3,900		

Spent to June 30, 1938 $12,304.91

+Available October 2, 1983 (1) January 23, 1935

II. ARLINGTON HOUSE, 1942-1961

The Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, and the United States entered World War II. Wartime hours of operation and defense precautions were instituted at Arlington House and other National Capital Park sites on December 8, 1941.[1] National Park Service appropriations and personnel were cut to the bone during the national emergency, and operations were reduced to caretaking activities. With the end of the war, however, appropriations for the National Park Service did not increase greatly or rapidly. Moreover, in June 1950, just as there seemed to be some progress in funding, the United States entered the Korean conflict and once again funds were drastically reduced.

A. IMPROVEMENTS TO ARLINGTON HOUSE IN 1942

1. Completion of Work on Water Supply for Fire Protection

During the spring of 1942 the water supply system of the Lee Mansion was finally connected to the 8-inch pipe system of Arlington National Cemetery. In a memorandum dated February 17, 1942, P.E. Smith noted, "A priority of A-10 was obtained for replacing water pipe outside the building, and it is essential that this service be extended within the building. This same justification should be used for the fire hose purchased under Purchase Order No. 14497, dated July 1941."[2]

---

1. Superintendent, National Capital Parks, to the Director, December 8, 1941, in PMDF 1940-49. Also see Radio and Press Release, December 8, 1941, ibid. On December 8, 1941, Mortimer offered to transfer additional ground in the vicinity of Arlington House to the jurisdiction of the National Park Service, pointing out that the extension to the north would include two large rosebush and tulip gardens that would require the services of one additional laborer. Mortimer to Superintendent, National Capital Parks, December 8, 1941, ibid. Superintendent Gillen informed Mortimer on December 12, "The limited funds and maintenance personnel available to this office will not make it possible to accept jurisdiction over the additional ground in the vicinity of the Lee Mansion. . . ." Gillen to Mortimer, December 12, 1941, ibid.

2. Smith to Gartside, February 17, 1942, in PMDF 1940-49. Four valves were ordered.

Assistant Superintendent Gillen's memorandum of March 21, 1942, to George Clark, provided some information on the nature of the changes being made to the water supply pipes:

> A leak has developed in the recently installed water main under the road west of the Lee Mansion. This main leads to the fire plug which was moved up the hill nearer to the entrance to the grounds. Will you please have this situation inspected and taken care of at once.
>
> It is requested that at the time the above work is done the furnace room and lavatories be connected to a new 4" main running within a few feet of this building. This will assure our water supply in this building as well as in the North wing of the Mansion. The line now leading to this building has been in so long that nobody at the Mansion knew of its existence until it broke under the rose garden one Saturday a few weeks ago. It was thought the Mansion buildings were connected with the new line until this happened when it was discovered that only the drinking fountains are connected with the new line.
>
> My Lynn, Cemetery Engineer, has informed us that the old pipe is in very bad condition, was mended with difficulty and is liable to go out again at any time. Should this happen it would result in damage to our rose garden and tulip bed, and inconvenience to our visitors.
>
> Colonel Mortimer of the Cemetery, has given us permission to have this office make the connection. [Drawing 2.3-67 - "Location of Water Pipes," February 17, 1942].[3]

2. Painting of Arlington House Interior and Exterior

During the spring of 1942 the interior of the Lee Mansion was painted by the paint crew of the National Capital Parks paint shop.[4] This work, which required 79-man days of labor, was accomplished between January 12 and March 17, 1942. The first floor rooms painted included the following: storeroom (Room 114); General Lee's room/office (Room 117); state dining room (Room 115); family dining room (Room 109, probably also Room 112); Custis bedroom (Room 106); Custis sitting room

---

3. Gillen to Clark, March 21, 1942, in PMDF 1940-49.

4. Gillen, Senior Assistant Superintendent, National Capital Parks, to Clark, August 20, 1942, in PMDF 1940-49.

(Room 107); and sewing and school room (Room 104). In addition, railings at entrance and the ladies and mens restrooms which were in the separate comfort station building were painted.[5]

On August 20, 1942, Assistant Superintendent Gillen requested George Clark to have the paint crew carry out this work, writing, "the exterior trim and front columns need attention.... We feel that the stucco which now painted a dark cream does not need attention at this time."[6] Work on the project, which took 122-1/2 man days, began on August 24 and was completed on October 2, 1942.[7]

B. IMPROVEMENTS TO ARLINGTON HOUSE IN 1943

1. Painting

During the period April 19 to May 13, 1943, a total of 59 man days were spent painting the stairways in the conservatory (Room 116), school room (Room 104) in the mansion and the exterior of the smoke house.[8] There is no other record of work being carried out on the mansion during 1943.[9]

2. Telephone Conduit

On September 23, 1943, the National Park Service granted the Chesapeake and Potomac Telephone Company permission "to construct a conduit through the grounds adjacent to the Lee Mansion, as indicated on the sketch enclosed with your letter of September 16."[10]

---

5. National Capital Parks List of Units Painted in Custis-Lee Mansion, 1942-65, in PMDF 1965.

6. Gillen to Clark, August 20, 1942, in PMDF 1940-49.

7. National Capital Parks List of Units Painted in Custis-Lee Mansion, 1942-65; and Memorandum of Hetrick to Kelley, October 9, 1942, in PMDF 1940-49.

8. National Capital Parks List of Units Painted in Custis-Lee Mansion, 1942-65, in PMDF 1965.

9. In PMDF 1943, Vol., 1940-49.

10. Gillen to Morrison, September 23, 1943, in PMDF 1940-49.

C. IMPROVEMENTS TO ARLINGTON HOUSE IN 1944

1. Painting Proposed for Interior

On March 6, 1944, Assistant Superintendent Gartside informed Gillen:

> The hallways and rooms at the Lee Mansion are in good condition and it is believed the usual painting can be dispensed with for this year.
>
> It is requested, however, that the two porches on the west of the building and the stairways to the basement of the North Servants' Quarters be painted as this work was not completed last year. The gray paint on the railings of the steps in the Conservatory has worn bare through continual cleaning and it is recommended that they be stained mahogany with the rungs and sides repainted gray. This would match the railings of the two stairways to the second floor and the one to the basement which needs restaining.[11]

This work, however, was apparently never carried out in 1944.[12]

2. Refinishing Floors

In the staff meeting minutes for July 5, 1944, it was noted, "Refinishing of the floors at the Lincoln Museum and Lee Mansion has been completed in a very satisfactory manner and at an economical price. Now the problem is to keep them clean, since they are much lighter than before. . . ."[13]

3. Painting Proposed for Steps

On October 3, 1944, Harry T. Thompson's and Gartside's attention was directed to the fact that painting should be completed before winter because the "steps in front of the portico at the Lee Mansion are badly in need of paint. The paint has peeled off to such an extent that the steps may be injured by snow and cold weather. . . ."[14]

---

11. Gartside to Gillen, March 6, 1944, in PMDF 1940-49.

12. No record of this work appears in PMDF or on NCP Lists of Units Painted in the Custis-Lee Mansion, 1942-65.

13. Staff Meeting, July 5, 1944, extracts in PMDF 1940-49.

14. Assistant Superintendent to Thompson and Gartside, October 3, 1944, in PMDF 1940-49.

This work was also apparently not carried out before the end of 1944.

D. IMPROVEMENTS TO ARLINGTON HOUSE IN 1945

1. Heating Problems in Mansion

On February 19, 1945, Assistant Superintendent Gartside outlined the heating problem that had developed at the Lee Mansion to Thompson as follows:

> The hot-water plant at the Lee Mansion, which is located in the basement of a small building 75 feet from the mansion, fails to provide adequate heat during the winter months. During the last part of January, a record of the temperature was made in several parts of the building. The highest temperature recorded was 62° in the conservatory (south entrance) which is the warmest place in the building. In the south hall the temperature averaged about 58° in the center hall about 50°, and in the north hall about 45°.[15]

Mechanical Engineer Charles W. Andrae inspected the heating system as a result of this request and on July 21 submitted his report in which he recommended that the existing system be repaired at an estimated cost of $283.50. He reported:

> Without attempting a major revision of the entire plant it is recommended that certain repairs and adjustments be made to the existing system, in order to thoroughly demonstrate the capacity of the plant to heat the Mansion.
>
> The work proposed consists of approximately 66% of items necessary in ordinary maintenance and are marked on the estimate with as asterisk (*), the remaining items being necessary to obtain the data as to the adequacy of the existing equipment.

---

15. Gartside to Thompson, February 19, 1945, in PMDF 1940-49.

* Overhauling stoker (Iron Fireman) (estimated)	$125.00
New Altitude--Thermometer gauge	5.00
New Aquastat	11.00
Rewiring aquastat	18.00
* Overhauling circulating pump	8.00
New Expansion Tank (Closed System Type)	16.50
* Cleaning Boiler and flue	13.00
* Labor installing exp. tank, etc.	30.00
Labor testing out system	30.00
* Hauling	12.00
Incidentals	15.00
Total estimated cost	$283.50 [16]

On November 8, 1945, P. E. Smith, Chief Engineering Division, informed Stanley McClure, "It is our intention to operate this winter with the existing equipment including the coal stoker making such minor corrections as may be required and in the spring convert the boiler plant to oil and at the same time make such major changes in the entire system as may be necessary. . . ."[17] These repairs were completed in 1945.

2. Painting Interior of Mansion

On February 19, Assistant Superintendent Gartside recommended to Thompson that the following painting be carried out on the interior of the Lee Mansion:

> It is recommended that the painting . . . be completed at the Lee Mansion during the winter and early spring:
>
> 1. The Conservatory (entrance on south), including the staining of the railings of the two small stairways.
>
> 2. The first and second floor hallways, including the doors, door frames, and window sashes and frames. The railings of the stairways to the second floor and to the basement also are to be stained.
>
> 3. The basement on the north end of the building to be whitewashed and door and window frame painted.[18]

---

16. Andrae to Thompson, Acting Superintendent, July 21, 1945, in PMDF 1940-49. P.E. Smith, Chief Engineering Division, recommended this solution, and Thompson concurred.

17. Smith to McClure, November 8, 1945, with detailed instructions on operations and temperature, in PMDF 1940-49.

18. Gartside to Thompson, February 19, 1945, in PMDF 1940-49.

This project got underway on March 1, involved 59-man days, and was completed on March 22, 1945. Rooms painted included: the conservatory (Room 116); main hall, second floor (Room 201); and stairway hall, first floor and stairway (Room 113); vestibule and small hall (west [sic] Room 110); main hall, first floor, and iron mesh gates (Room 111); rear halls, first floor and stairway to basement (Rooms 101 and 105); and basement hall (Room BO-1), office, and closet.[19]

3. Repairs to Roof

On July 12, 1945, Architect W.M. Haussmann submitted a detailed inspection report to Thompson in which he described the leaks in the roof and outlined necessary repairs to the mansion. He wrote:

> Leaks in the roof: There are three leaks which need to be definitely located and repaired before the interior is repainted. A cursory examination was made of the roof areas involved but it is difficult to establish the precise point of entry of the water since in each location there were several ways in which this could have occurred. The worst one is at the left corner of the fireplace in the state dining room. The leak occurs somewhere in the neighborhood of the chimney at the roof line. The stucco surface of the chimney is badly cracked and may need to be replaced. The top of the chimney appears to be edged with wood which is rotting. The caulking between the flashing and the chimney has pulled loose in several spots and needs repair. Water appears to enter mostly during southwest storms by being pushed back up under the flashing extending down over the glass conservatory roof. This needs further investigation and correction.
>
> A second leak occurs at the east corner between the main building and the north wing. There is loose flashing in the roof against the main wall at this point. This should be repaired.
>
> The third point of entry is at or near the chimney in this wing. There are cracks in the stucco facing here; also, as well as in the caulking at the roof line. The material of the chimney cap is disintegrating. The copper ridge cap is loose and water undoubtedly blows up under it in heavy storms. This should be entirely reset and caulked.

---

19. National Capital List of Units Painted in Custis-Lee Mansion, 1942-65.

Leaks are in general difficult to trace since they may originate at a considerable distance from the obvious damage. These roofs should all be carefully gone over and repaired before the damage becomes greater in the way of spotted plaster, possible rotted timbers and damage to almost irreplaceable furnishings.

(c) Ceiling repairs: Several of the ceilings in the second floor are badly cracked and on one the paint shows signs of blistering. These ceilings have obviously been patched several times and not too carefully. In some instances the plaster appears loose, unsound and in danger of falling. It is possible that they may survive one more painting but they are urgently in need of repairs. Removal of the present work and complete restoration may be necessary in some instances. Areas of blistered paint are not serious and are probably caused by paint having been applied over a fresh plaster surface.[20]

These leaks in the roof were stopped by the extensive repairs that were made in September 1945.[21]

E. IMPROVEMENTS TO ARLINGTON HOUSE IN 1946

1. Painting Interior of Mansion

On November 29, 1945, Assistant Superintendent Gartside informed Thompson that the following painting should be done to the interior of the Lee Mansion:

The leaks in the roof at the Lee Mansion have been stopped by the extensive repairs made in September. This will permit the painting of the State Dining Room and other rooms, the walls of which were damaged by the seepage of water after rains. It is recommended that the painting as follows be done at the Lee Mansion after January 1, 1946:

1. The glass roof of the Conservatory stained.

2. All rooms in the house, both upstairs and downstairs, which have not been painted for several years. This is to include all doors and window frames connected with the rooms.

3. A small area of the ceiling in the south hallway damaged by water seepage. Otherwise the hallways are in good condition.

---

20. Haussmann to Thompson, July 12, 1944, in PMDF 1940-49.

21. Gartside to Thompson, November 29, 1945, in PMDF 1940-49.

4. Clothes closet at end of south hallway and wash closet at end of north hallway.

5. Railings of Conservatory stairs, and stairs to second floor and basement stained.

6. The front porch and both rear porches.

7. Doors, trim and railings of North and South Servants' Quarters.

8. Rooms of North and South Servants' Quarters whitewashed.

9. Doors, windows, trim and inside of toilet rooms. These are in bad condition as they have not been painted for several years.

10. Inside of furnace room and guard room.[22]

On December 17, Chief, Repair and Construction Division, reported to Thompson that Chief Painter Blaine had inspected the proposed painting areas and estimated that a total of $2,644 would be required. Of this $1,460 was necessary for item 2, and $1,184 for items 1 and 3-10.[23]

At the National Capital Parks staff meeting held on January 2, 1946, Clark reported on the status of repairs at the Lee Mansion as follows:

> . . . Mr. Clark brought up the question of doing some work at the Lee Mansion. The mansion needs to be completely repainted both inside and outside. The labor is available and from a visitors' standpoint this is the best season to do the work but funds are not available at this time to do a complete job. The leaks in the roof have been repaired and the rooms disfigured by the leaks should be repainted if nothing else is done. The heating plant has been repaired and will last out this season but a new heating plant probably will be needed next year.[24]

---

22. Ibid., November 29, 1944, in PMDF 1940-49.

23. Clark to Thompson, December 17, 1944, in PMDF 1940-49.

24. NCP Staff Minutes, January 2, 1946, in PMDF 1940-49.

Work on painting the main house and outbuildings, involving 42 man days, got underway on January 1, 1946, and was completed on April 19, 1946. The following items were painted: sewing and school room (Room 104); state dining room (Room 115); glass in the conservatory (Room 116); railing and treads on stairways; guard room in the toilet building; interior of the toilet building; and the stable and smoke house interiors.[25]

2. Plans for Repainting Historic Room Colors in Mansion

In June 1946, Historian Sutton Jett and Architect Stuart Barnette of the director's office in Chicago held a conference regarding the possibility of discovering and then restoring the original room colors in the Lee Mansion.[26]

On October 18, Associate Director Demaray requested the services of Barnette to study the Lee Mansion, explaining to Director Newton Drury:

> Several rooms of the Lee Mansion National Memorial will require repainting during the coming winter. The National Capital Parks would greatly appreciate the consultation and supervision of Stuart M. Barnette in a program to discover the old paints, and if this is not possible, his advice in the selection of the proper colors for these rooms.[27]

Upon being informed that Barnette had resigned effective October 14, 1946, to take the position of Professor at Alabama Polytechnic Institute, Auburn, Alabama, the services of Dick Sutton, Branch of Plans and Design, Chicago Office, were then requested on November 8 to provide advice on the painting of the interior of the Lee Mansion.[28]

---

25. NCP List of Units Painted in Custis-Lee Mansion, 1942-65.

26. Jett to Barnette, June 1946, in PMDF 1940-49.

27. Demaray to Director, October 18, 1946, in PMDF 1940-49.

28. Superintendent National Capital Parks to Associate Director, National Park Service, November 8, 1946; and Tolson to Demaray, October 22, 1946, in PMDF 1940-49.

F. IMPROVEMENTS TO ARLINGTON HOUSE IN 1947

1. Plans to Restore Historic Room Colors

On November 18, 1947, T. Sutton Jett, Chief, National Memorials and Historic Sites Division, National Capital Parks, after studying the historic paint color in the rooms at the Lee Mansion, informed Harry T. Thompson:

> Approval is requested for the following painting at the Lee Mansion to be accomplished during the coming winter months:
>
> 1. State Dining Room and Office and Study
> 2. Family Dining Room and Family Parlor
> 3. Lee Bedroom
> 4. All hallways
>
> A study has been made of the old wall colors in these rooms, and it is recommended that these colors be reviewed. Samples are being made so that they may be accurately matched, and for submission to the Planning Division for approval.
>
> It is noted that the many coats of paint which have been applied to the woodwork over the years have destroyed much of the interesting detail. It is recommended that this old paint be removed prior to adding another coat. It is understood that this will require considerable labor and that time may not be available to complete this job throughout the building this winter. It seems advisable, however, to make every effort to accomplish this work in the rooms listed for painting this year, and if necessary, to delay the painting of the doorframes and other trim in the hallways until such time as the old paint can be removed.
>
> The front and rear steps should be painted this fall to afford protection against the weather.[29]

2. Exterior Porches Painted

The porches on the Lee Mansion were painted between November 12 and 17, 1947, involving six and one-half-man days of labor. Work on historical rooms in the mansion began on December 31, 1947, and was completed on February 17, 1948. The following rooms were painted:

---

29. Jett to Thompson, November 18, 1947, in PMDF 1940-49.

office and study (Room 117); north hall (Room 110); General and Mrs. Lee's room (Room 207); family dining room (Room 109); and probably the family parlor (Room 108).[30]

Hence the first effort to restore interior room color to a "historic period" was completed by the National Park Service on February 27, 1948.

G. IMPROVEMENTS TO ARLINGTON HOUSE IN 1948

1. Termite Damage Inspection of Basement Timbers

On March 22, 1948, Sutton Jett recommended to Harry T. Thompson "that the services of a specialist in termite control be engaged to inspect the timbers of the Lee Mansion." He observed, "There is evidence of deterioration visable [sic] in the basement of this area. It is possible that the damage is being done by termites. . . ."[31]

On April 20, 1948, Jett requested a second structural inspection of the mansion. Regarding the main stairway, he noted, "It is requested that the Engineering Division examine the principal stairway at the Lee Mansion. . . . During periods of high visitation there is some indication of instability in these steps."[32]

2. Restoration of Historic Colors in Six Rooms

On August 23, 1948, Jett next reported to Thompson that "the exterior of the Lee Mansion was last painted in September and October 1942." Continuing he wrote:

---

30. NCP List of Units Painted in the Custis-Lee Mansion, 1942-65.

31. Jett to Thompson, March 22, 1948, in PMDF 1940-49.

32. Ibid., April 20, 1948, in PMDF 1940-49. The files do not contain the results of these inspections. Certain steps used extensively by the public at Lee Mansion had their worn out rubber treads replaced in the spring of 1947, and the remainder of the steps were retreaded in 1948. Jett to Berg, August 24, 1948, in PMDF 1940-49.

TABLE NO. 1

Instructions for historic colors to be utilized in Painting Rooms in the Custis-Lee Mansion, November 18, 1947, and applied December 31-February 27, 1948.

PAINTING--LEE MANSION

NORTH & SOUTH WALLS [Rooms 110 and 113]

1. Repeat buff wall color
2. Ceiling white in accordance with sample
3. Woodwork white; finish coat to be in accordance with white sample.
4. DO NOT COVER SAMPLE COLORS

STATE DINING ROOM [Room 115]

1. Walls grey in accordance with sample (dull finish)
2. Ceiling and cornice white in accordance with sample
3. Woodwork to be painted white in accordance with sample -- If one coat satisfactorily covers do not apply second coat since this paint will have to be removed ultimately.
4. DO NOT COVER SAMPLE COLORS

OFFICE AND STUDY [Room 117]

1. Walls green in accordance with sample made by Mr. Root 1/28/48
2. Ceiling and cornice white in accordance with sample
3. Woodwork white in accordance with sample
4. DO NOT COVER SAMPLE COLORS

LEE BEDROOM [Room 207]

1. Walls green in accordance with sample made by Mr. Finnegan
2. Ceiling and cornice white in accordance with sample
3. Do not paint woodwork

FAMILY DINING ROOM AND PARLOR [Rooms 108 and 109]

1. Walls grey in accordance with sample (same as State Dining Room)
2. Ceiling white in accordance with sample
3. Do not paint woodwork
4. Do not cover sample colors

> It is recommended that this building be examined to determine the advisability of repainting the exterior this fall or next spring. This work is not considered necessary from the standpoint of appearance, but may be required for preservative reasons. It is observed that the window sills on the west side of the structure are badly in need of paint.[33]

Nothing came of this suggestion, however, and the exterior of the mansion, as well as the interior, were not painted in 1949 or 1950.[34]

3. Research on Arlington House and the Custis-Lee Families, 1948-53

On November 30, 1948, Chief Historian Ronald F. Lee wrote to Elbert Cox, the Director of Region One, in Richmond, Virginia, explaining that "National Capital Parks is engaged in an important research project on the Lee Mansion National Memorial." Continuing, he wrote, "It occurs to me that Douglas Southall Freeman [the noted biographer and historian] may have discovered material on George Washington Parke Custis in connection with the research on his R. E. Lee and George Washington biographies which he did not consider relevant to these volumes, but [this] data [may be] invaluable to the Park Service in connection with the development and interpretation of Arlington." He asked Cox or Regional Historian Roy Appleman to consult with Freeman on this matter.[35]

Freeman responded on December 7, 1948, that he had no such data, but promised, "I shall certainly keep you in mind for any further information I procure regarding George Washington Parke Custis' occupancy of Arlington. It will be a pleasure to do so if I can."[36]

---

33. Jett to Thompson, August 23, 1948, in PMDF 1940-49. The estimated cost of painting the exterior of the Lee Mansion was $2,300. Clark to Thompson, September 14, 1948, in PMDF 1940-49.

34. NCP List of Units Painted in the Custis-Lee Mansion, 1942-65.

35. Lee to Regional Director, November 30, 1948, in PMDF 1940-49.

36. Freeman to Cox, December 7, 1948, and Cox to Director, December 9, 1948, in PMDF 1940-49.

The National Park Service, which had managed and interpreted Arlington House for 15 years, was about to undertake the first major historical research into primary sources that had ever been conducted on the history of the Custis-Lee families and the Lee Mansion. The program was to be directed by Historian Murray H. Nelligan, who had graduated with his M.A. in American history from Columbia University, New York. This project was his first job with the National Park Service. The results of Dr. Nelligan's work, conducted from 1948 to 1953, were to establish definite dates for construction of the various sections of the mansion and outbuildings, 1802-61, and also the first record of repairs and remodeling made to the plantation house prior to the Civil War. His findings resulted in a comprehensive reorganization of the data relating to the physical history of the house and the social history of the Custis and Lee families. It made possible an accurate restoration of the structure to the 1861 period and development of an accurate interpretive program for the site.

In a memorandum to Superintendent Truett, Historian Nelligan explained the need for an historical research program on Arlington House in the following terms:

> Since its completion more than a century ago, the old home of the Custis and Lee families at Arlington has been one of the chief attractions of the national capital. Its dramatic site and architectural style, the natural beauty of its surroundings, the breath-taking view of the city from its portico, have made the Lee Mansion outstanding among historic homes. Equally impressive are its many close associations with historic persons and events. To an extent not generally appreciated, the story of Arlington embodies a significant portion of our national history.
>
> Yet, despite the attention which the mansion has always received, very little is known about many aspects of its past. Even the date of its completion is not definitely known. The passage of time and the nature of many of the events that occurred there, have combined to obscure many phases of its history. Of course, much of the information desired is to be readily found, but being scattered through a variety of sources, it has been to all practicable purposes unusable. Consequently most of the writings of the last fifty years have been based largely on one or two earlier works, rather than on original sources. To accumulate the fragments of the

information, to rediscover the forgotten episodes, and finally to combine all that is known into a form in which it may be easily used--this has been [Nelligan would have been more accurate if he had written "should be"] the primary task of the historian at the Lee Mansion.

When these objectives were accomplished, Nelligan promised, three things would be achieved:

> First there will be available a history of the Lee Mansion, indexed in detail to facilitate its use. In it will be all that is known concerning the old buildings and much about the families that lived there. While it is intended to make the history readable and interesting, the emphasis will be placed on completeness and accuracy, so that it will be useful as a source for other writers. For the same reason it will be fully documented.
>
> Second, there will be a [museum] card catalogue of the mansion's furnishings, each card having only a complete historical description and photographic record of a specific item. With these aids it will be possible to answer quickly and adequately almost all questions asked about the mansion.
>
> Lastly, a base historic map will be prepared as a basis for a master plan so that the appearance and presentation will be as accurate historically as possible. The plan will include a museum and reference library, as well as office space.[37]

The Arlington House research project was thus one of the major pioneer efforts toward a comprehensive study of a historical site in original sources to be conducted by the National Park Service. Despite many statements to the contrary, the National Park Service engaged in little original historical or architectural research from 1941 to 1955. There were two major reasons for this: (1) many officials in the regional and Washington offices believed that research had no practical

---

37. Nelligan to Truett, May 16, 1949, (copy of letter in WASO research files on Arlington House).

use and hence was a waste of the taxpayers' money; and (2) many Congressmen tended to agree.[38]

The National Park Service was not against all research, however, but rather favored studies that did not cost much money. Park historians, if interested, were not forbidden to conduct historical research during the off-travel season at historical sites that had a seasonal visitation. Thus at some parks, where the historians were interested, considerable progress could be made during the off season, but at many sites little was accomplished from 1933 to 1955. The Arlington House project was unusual in that park Historian Nelligan enjoyed the support of the superintendent of National Capital Parks and of Chief Historian Ronald F. Lee in his research efforts.[39] Historian Nelligan began on the historical research project in 1948 and completed item 1 (history) and item 2, (establishment of a museum catalog) in 1953. The third item, which involved preparation of a historical base map, was not completed.[40]

In his monthly report for June 1952, Nelligan, informed the superintendent:

---

38. Each year during 1949-55, park, regional, and Washington historians submitted plans for proposed research projects with estimated costs, but with perhaps one or two exceptions, Congress never provided money for the projects.

39. These remarks are based in part on the personal experiences of the author of this study, who was a park historian in the field from 1948-57. Historian Nelligan was also to receive his PhD on the basis of his study of Arlington House.

40. See Acting Chief, Public Use Section, Nelligan's report to Superintendent, re: Inspection of Interpretive Program Lee Mansion, October 8, 1951, and Randle B. Truett's memorandum on same report, November 21, 1951, in PMDF 1950-54. The latter documentation stated, "Your recommendations covering an interpretive statement and master plan for the Lee Mansion . . . has my endorsement, and I recommend that it be accomplished as soon as possible. . . . The full-length history of the house which is now under preparation should be completed . . . and put in proper form for ready use by all members of the staff . . . . "

Interpretation: The major accomplishment this month was the completion of the second draft of the definitive history of the Lee Mansion embodying the research accomplished over the last four years. A conference was held June 14 with Mr. Ronald F. Lee, Assistant Director, N.P.S., to explore the possibilities of publishing it. Mr. Lee favored commercial publication inasmuch as he believes the book would get a wider distribution than if it was published by the Government. Another conference is to be held in the early fall, at which he hopes to have present Mr. Frederick Tilden, who is now writing a history of the National Park Service, and Mr. [Alfred] Knopf, publisher, and Chairman of the N.P.S. Advisory Board. Until then I am to explore any leads I may turn up, but make no commitments as to publication. . . .[41]

4. War Department Plans and Records of Arlington House Obtained by the National Park Service, 1952

As a part of his research on the mansion, Nelligan consulted with Architect Leisenring, who had supervised the restoration of the structure for the War Department from 1928 to 1931.[42] The park historian was also the first to examine War Department records relating to Arlington House. In his monthly report for July 1952, Nelligan reported on his findings:

Research. June 3, I visited the Old Records Section, Office of the Chief of Engineers, Department of the Army, to see what records, if any, they had of the Lee Mansion National Memorial, or of Arlington National Cemetery which might contain pertinent information. There I learned that those which had not been transferred to the Department of the Interior (letter of transmittal dated Dec. 19, 1933) were in storage at the A.G.O. Records Depot, Alexandria, Va. There I located a number of maps and plans in the Arlington National Cemetery file relating to changes made in the grounds and gardens about the Lee Mansion National Memorial at various times prior to its transfer to the Department of the Interior, 1933. In addition to these, I found a number of house plans for the mansion, made at various dates, which should have been transferred to the Department of the Interior in 1933, but which for some reason were not. A memorandum requesting such transfer has been prepared for the Superintendent's signature, so that they may become part of the records of the Lee Mansion National Memorial.[43]

---

41. Monthly Report, July 23, 1952, in PMDF 1950-54.

42. Nelligan to Leisenring, August 19, 1952, in PMDF 1950-54.

43. Monthly Report, August 13, 1952, in PMDF 1950-54.

On August 15, Edward J. Kelly, Superintendent of the National Capital Parks, wrote to the Chief of Engineers, Department of the Army, explaining:

> A number of old plans and tracings of the Lee Mansion, at Arlington, were deposited by your office in the A.G.O. Records Depot at Alexandria, Va., sometime ago.
>
> As you undoubtedly know, the Lee Mansion was transferred from the War Department to the Department of the Interior by executive order in 1933, at which time all plans and tracings of the house were also to have been turned over to the Department of the Interior, but perhaps through an oversight those listed below were not. They are numbered and described as follows:
>
> 6608-14. Sketch of buildings and walks at Lee Mansion, Arlington National Cemetery, Aug. 22, 1931.
>
> 6608-37. Steam heating for Lee Mansion, Arlington National Cemetery. Oct., 1906.
>
> 6608-38. Detail of new trusses over porch at Lee Mansion. Undated.
>
> 6608-138. Plan for work to be done at Lee Mansion, Aug. 16, 1923.
>
> 6608-213. Old Well, Lee Mansion, Arlington National Cemetery.
>
> 6608-1032 to 1046. Miscellaneous plans and elevations of Custis-Lee Mansion, Arlington National Cemetery; by Rodier and Kundzin. Undated.
>
> These plans constitute an important record of the physical structure of the Lee Mansion National Memorial and for this reason we request that they be transferred to the Department of the Interior, National Park Service, National Capital Parks.[44]

R.V. Prangley, Chief, Administrative Service Division, writing on behalf of the Department of the Army, authorized the transfer on September 2, 1952:

> The plans and tracings recently borrowed by your office from the Departmental Records Branch, AGO, covering Lee

---

44. Kelly to Chief of Engineers, August 15, 1952, in PMDF 1950-54.

> Mansion only, as well as additional drawings also considered of interest, inclosed [sic] herewith, are hereby authorized for permanent transfer to the National Park Service as shown on the attached list. It is requested however, that the drawings included in those borrowed from the Departmental Records Branch which cover the entire Fort Myer Reservation on which the Lee Mansion is located (Nos. 6608-1, 3, 6, & 324), be returned to the depository.[45]

The maps transferred are listed in Appendix 1. These original plans are now in Record Group 79, Arlington National Cemetery and Arlington House, in the Cartographic Branch of the National Archives, at Alexandria, Virginia.[46]

Nelligan established the park's master data file, a series of approximately 50 loose-leaf notebooks in which copies of documents and articles relating to Arlington House and plantation history, 1800 to 1967, are filed in chronological order. This file is the source of virtually all information known about the site. In October 1952 Nelligan enriched this file by adding War Department records relating to the 1928-31 restoration of the mansion and outbuildings. He commented:

> Several days were devoted to annotating and filing miscellaneous papers pertaining to the restoration of the Lee Mansion by the War Department. Though time-consuming, this work has been amply justified by the valuable information they contain. Thirty-six photographs of historic pictures of the mansion, its furnishings, and persons and events associated with it, were added to the prints and photographs file also.[47]

---

45. Prangley to Superintendent, National Capital Parks, September 5, 1952, with attached list of maps transferred, in PMDF 1950-54.

46. Charles W. Snell, "Historic Structure Report, Arlington House," (draft mss.), Denver Service Center, National Capital Parks, Denver, Colorado .

47. Monthly Report, November 4, 1952, in PMDF 1950-54.

5. Completion of First Documentary History of Arlington House and the Custis-Lee Families for 1800-1865

In November 1952 the park historian also launched a program of examining the paint colors in the various rooms of the mansion to establish the colors that were in use in the 1861 period.[48] As a result of this study of the room colors in the north wing, Nelligan found structural evidence suggesting a revised history of the erection of that building.[49] He also carefully recorded the results of his physical investigations, 1949-53, in two loose-leaf notebooks entitled, "Restoration and Repair Records, Volumes I and II."

On May 26, 1953, Dr. Nelligan completed his monumental study of Arlington House and commented to the superintendent of National Capital Parks:

> Herewith is a copy of the latest revision of my history of the Lee Mansion National Memorial.
>
> In accordance with the suggestions you made last year, I have shortened the manuscript from 923 pp. to 703 pp., and in the process have tightened it up considerably. The preface has been cut in half, and the less important books deleted from the bibliography. Some of the footnotes have been shortened, but otherwise the documentation is as complete and thorough as in the original. Since the footnotes, which take up 110 pp. in typescript, would be much reduced when printed, I estimate that the manuscript would run between 350 to 400 pp., depending on the number of illustrations--a reasonable length for a work of this kind.
>
> I have also changed some of the chapter headings, as you suggested, and the title of the book as well. "Old Arlington" was the way Lee often referred to the house and the estate, and I thought this a more interesting title than the more formal one of the original manuscript. You will notice, too, that instead of covering Lee's resignation and the entire Civil War period in one chapter as before, I have made them into two. I

---

48. Monthly Report, December 5, 1952, in PMDF 1950-54. This topic is treated in detail in a later section on paint colors.

49. Monthly Report, February 4, 1953, in PMDF 1950-54. More important was the discovery of evidence corroborating the hypothesis that the north wing was built as a unit and partitioned off into three small rooms perhaps two or three years later.

have also tried to make the other chapters more nearly uniform in length.[50]

Following completion of this study, Nelligan was assigned to interpretive planning and research work on Fort Washington and henceforth little of his time was devoted to the Lee Mansion. In October 1953, however, he discovered and obtained copies of Robert E. Lee's 1859 fire insurance application, including a ground plan, for Arlington House from the Hartford Fire Insurance Company of Connecticut.[51]

In March 1954 he also obtained "several original measured drawings of the Arlington Mansion, made apparently at the time the Mansion restoration work was in progress," from the Memorial Division of the Office of the Quartermaster General.[52]

In 1955 Nelligan was transferred and promoted to a position in the newly established Region Five Office in Philadelphia. The Arlington House research project, 1948-53, provided an immense amount of previously unknown data about the history of the house and the Custis and Lee families, 1800 to 1865. Certain aspects of the Arlington House, however, were not studied. These included the preparation of a historical base map for the buildings and grounds in 1861, and a study of the physical repair, alterations, and use of Arlington House from 1861 to 1954.

---

50. Nelligan to Superintendent, May 26, 1953, in PMDF 1950-54. As published in mimeographed form in 1953, the study bore the following title: "'Old Arlington,' The Story of the Lee Mansion National Memorial."

51. Assistant Superintendent Gartside to Hartford Insurance Company, October 5, 1953, in PMDF 1950-54.

52. Watt, Lt. Col., OMC Memorial Division to Superintendent, National Capital Parks, March 17, 1954, in PMDF 1950-54.

H. IMPROVEMENTS TO ARLINGTON HOUSE IN 1949-1950

1. Heating System Revised, 1949

There is no record of any painting, repairing, or restoration being done on the Custis-Lee Mansion in the period 1949-50.[53] A contract was entered into in May 1949, however, to make "Revisions to the Existing Heating System in the Lee Mansion," Contract I-28np-663, (Drawing 2.3-81, Revisions to Existing Heating System, April 29, 1949).

2. Establishment of "Restoration and Repair Record File," 1950

During this period Historian Nelligan established the aforementioned "Restoration and Repair Record" file comprised of two large loose-leaf notebooks. These records should be examined by historical architects interested in tracing the work that was done to the exterior and interior of the mansion from 1942 to 1955. The park historian made copies of National Capital Parks work sheets, 1942-52. These sheets describe in detail the work being done, the paint formula being utilized, and the number of man hours expended on each project. Volume I contains a file for exterior work and a file for each room in the mansion on the first floor. Volume II has similar files for the exterior and every room on the second floor and the basement of the mansion. Historian Nelligan and Architect W.M. Haussmann recorded their findings of the investigation for the historical paint colors of mansion rooms in the proper room file, together with data that had been found in documentary sources. The file includes a record of repairs made and also some photographs showing existing conditions.[54] Data for work in later years has also sometimes been placed in this file.

---

53. The PMDF and the "Restoration and Repair" records, Vols. I and II have been checked. The historic "Restoration and Repairs" file drawer at the mansion contains a copy of "Specifications for the Revisions to the Existing Heating System, Etc. in the Lee Mansion," May 9, 1949, and a blueprint of NCP Drawing 2.3-81 for Contract I-28np-663.

54. The two volumes are in the park research library, together with the park master data files.

I. IMPROVEMENTS TO ARLINGTON HOUSE IN 1951-1958

1. Inspection of Mansion for Insect Damage

On May 10, 1951, Plant Pathologist Horace V. Wester informed George Clark of the results of an investigation of the joists in the basement of the Lee Mansion. Wester wrote:

> At your request I have investigated insect damage to joists in the basement of the Lee Mansion.
>
> The insect damage referred to was determined as caused by the old house borer, Hylotropus bajalus, by Dr. T.E. Snyder, R.A. St. George, of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the writer. This is an introduced European insect pest which may cause serious damage to coniferous wood in buildings. It only attacks sapwood and not heartwood.
>
> A survey of the woodwork in the basement showed that the borer damage was confined only to certain joists under the center hallway and drawing room. The results of examining each joist for the borer damage are summarized below.
>
> Joists under center hallway [Room 111]
>
> The joists under the center hallway were numbered 1-28 from east to west wall. Joists numbered 5, 10 and 13 were found weakened respectively about 20%, 25% and 10% by the borer damage. The remaining joists under center hallway appeared free of borer damage.
>
> Joists under drawing room [Room 112]
>
> The joists under drawing room were numbered 1-16 from north to south wall, east and west side. Joists 3, 4 and 6, east side, were found weakened respectively about 20%, 5% and 20%, while those remaining on this side appeared free of borer damage. Only joist #1 on west side showed any evidence of borer damage, which was estimated as weakened about 5% from this cause.
>
> The borer damage to joists generally appeared to be old and possibly was caused some years back. Only one borer tunnel was found which appeared relatively fresh, indicating this pest was active in the building. This was found in the sixth joist from north wall under east side of drawing room. The tunnel is next to flooring, about 11-1/2 feet from east wall. Although no borers causing the above damage were found in the joists, this does not necessarily mean they are not in the building, as the insect is difficult to find in the wood.

Wester recommended that observations for the presence of borers be continued up to November 1, 1951. At that time he suggested that the "building be fumigated or local treatment be applied for control of the old house borer as conditions indicate."[55]

2. Revisions to Fire Alarm System

Drawings suggest that the following work may also have been done on the mansion during the period 1949-51: Revision to Fire Alarm System, Lee Mansion, December 31, 1949, five sheets, Drawing 2.3-84-1; and Fire Alarm System, Lee Mansion, October 25, 1951, two sheets, Drawing 2.3-88-2.

3. Restoration of Historic Period Room Colors

As a part of his major documentary research program, Park Historian Nelligan also undertook in late 1950 or early 1951 to conduct what he called "an archaeological reconnaissance" of the paint on the walls and woodwork of the rooms in the Lee Mansion to determine what colors were in use during the period 1855-61. Once this had been established a program of restoring the room colors was adopted. Beginning on February 8, 1951, 39-man days were expended removing paint from the walls, trim, and doors of the Custis bedroom (Room 106) and dining room (Room 109).[56]

On October 1, 1951, the Acting Superintendent of National Capital Parks requested the Chief, Construction and Repair Division, to have the interior of the Lee Mansion painted in the following priority:

1st. Conservatory [Room 116] (some plastering needed also)
Drawing Room [Room 112]
The Lee Girls Bed Room [Room 203] (ceiling need replastering)
Inside Hall, first floor [Room 104]

---

55. Wester to Clark, May 10, 1951, in PMDF 1950-54.

56. NCP List of Units Painted in the Custis-Lee Mansion, 1942-65.

2nd. South Hall [Room 113]
Both stairways to the second floor (in Rooms 113 and 110)
Playroom [Room 202]
Miss Mary Lee's Room [Room 204]
Boys Room [Room 206]
North Hall [Room 110]

3rd. Whitewash the interior walls of the North and South Servants' Quarters

Messrs. Truett and Haussmann concur in the recommendation that the woodwork in all the rooms of the Mansion, except the doors in the Drawing Room, should be restored to a stained walnut finish - a treatment which has been established historically by Mr. Murray H. Nelligan. This was done in the Custis Sitting Room last year, and has been considered highly satisfactory.[57]

Haussmann, Chief, Architectural Studies, inspected the ceiling in the Lee girls' room (Room 203) in January 1952 and informed Superintendent Truett on the 7th:

The ceiling appears at a glance to be in extremely poor shape, with many cracks and irregularities and two places which seem to be sagging. You will recall that I tested a large part of the area by sounding it. There were no hollow spots. The sags seem to be "built in" and not the result of loosening of the plaster. The cracks are sound except in a few small spots where the juncture of two diagonal cracks has broken into a small island. Imperfections in the moulded plaster cornice may be the result of past attempts at patching. Continuing our investigations into the attic, I examined the key between the plaster and the lath and between the lath and the joists. So far as I could determine there was no appreciable loosening of either. There were no important indications of broken keys or loose lath. It should be noted, of course, that both materials are old and brittle and cannot be relied upon to remain stable but are in as good condition as can be expected.

---

57. Acting Superintendent to Chief, Construction and Repair, October 1, 1951, in PMDF 1950-54.

As a result of this inspection it seems to me that your idea of canvassing the ceiling is an excellent one. All paint should be removed from the surface and cracks cleaned out and filled with Swedish putty or plaster. Loose plaster should of course be cut out and replaced. Where one side of a crack may have dropped below the other side, the juncture should be smoothed down with a sand block but no attempt need or should be made to remove other irregularities. This work can well be performed by our own forces and includes both the flat portion of the ceiling and the moulded cornice.

The flat area should then be covered with canvas, such as the Columbus Coated Fabrics Corp. "Wall-Tex Stiffened Canvas #3097". The ceiling should first be glue sized and the canvas then pasted on with regular wheat flour wall paper paste. This portion of the work should be done by a good commercial paperhanging firm experienced in this type of work.

The canvas and the cornice may then be painted with flat lead and oil by our own men.

This treatment should strengthen the ceiling and greatly improve its appearance although it will not, of course, convert it into a perfectly smooth unblemished expanse.[58]

During the period January 28 to February 29, 1952, Park Historian Nelligan[59] also devoted an additional 112 hours to physical investigation of the historic colors in the "North Down Stairs, Rear Hall; First Floor East Hall; Second Floor East Hall; First Floor Front Hall and Stairway; Second Floor East Hall; First Floor Rear Stairway; and Second Floor Stairway."[60] In addition, a total of 902-man hours were expended in February and March 1952 in repairing and painting the walls and ceilings of the following rooms:

---

58. Haussmann to Truett, January 7, 1952 [misdated 1951], in PMDF 1950-54.

59. NCP List of Units Painted in the Custis-Lee Mansion, 1942-65.

60. Work sheet entitled, "Mansion Research 1/28/52 to 3/12/52," showing a total of 137 man hours spent and the rooms on which work was performed.

"Front Hall, including steps to landing between first and second floors " (probably Room 113)	232 hours
"Rear Stairway to Second Floor and Hallway first floor" (probably Room 110)	74 hours
"East Hall, first floor, including small Halls" (Room 111)	80 hours
"Stair way, front, ceiling, from attic to landing between first and second floors" (Room 113)	99 hours
"Conservatory" (Room 116)	299 hours
"Hallway between conservatory entrance and main hall (Room 114).	36 hours
"Second Floor Hall" (Room 201)	82 hours
February 3-March 20, 1952:	902 hours.[61]

Including the work on the Lee girls' room and research, approximately 1,267-man hours were devoted to study, repair, and painting room interiors in the Lee Mansion during the first quarter of 1952.

In a letter to former Congressman Louis C. Cramton, who had played a key role in the passage of the March 4, 1925, Joint Resolution of Congress, which authorized the restoration of the Lee Mansion, Park Historian Nelligan described the purpose and results of the study of room colors:[62]

> I am sure you will be pleased to know that we are continuing the development of this memorial along the lines you so wisely established twenty-seven years ago. For example, just this past winter we made what may be termed as archaeological exploration of the paint and wood finishes originally used in the interior of the Lee Mansion. Two of the

---

61. NCP List of Units Painted in Custis-Lee Mansion, 1942-65. There are detailed lists describing the work done in each room.

62. Nelligan to Cramton, August 18, 1952, in PMDF 1950-54.

upstairs bedrooms, the upstairs hall, both stairways, the main hall and the short halls running north and south of it were due to be repainted. Before this was done, however, we got down under the many many layers of mostly cream-colored and buff coats of paint that had been applied to the walls and woodwork since 1864. The results were most interesting. We found that the walls of the south hall had been originally a light gray with a sand finish; the main hall a slightly darker gray without the sand finish. Upstairs, the Lee bedroom was found to be a light green, the girls' room across the hall a darker, almost olive green. The hall itself was something of a peach color which the Lees had carried on down the north, or service stairs, and the small north hall just off the family dining room. All the woodwork and doors had been stained or painted walnut originally; but most of the woodwork had been painted white sometime before the Civil War, and some of the doors stained oak and artifically grained. We repainted accordingly with the result that the Mansion presents a more attractive, homelike atmosphere than heretofore, besides which it is of course more authentic. As other parts of the house are done over, we hope to do the same thing and thus get away from the institutional appearance of the hitherto mostly cream-colored walls.

The task of discovering and restoring the historic room colors continued into 1953-54. On November 12, 1952, Assistant Superintendent Gartside advised George Clark:

> The following rooms at the Lee Mansion are scheduled to be repainted by our regular forces, this winter: Drawing Room [Room 112], Pantry [Room 101], Inner Hall [Room 105], School and Sewing Room, [Room 104], Play Room [Room 202]. If possible the basement, Boys' Room [Room 206] and Miss Mary Lee's Room [Room 204] should also be repainted.

Continuing, Gartside wrote:

> Because of the opportunity presented of restoring these rooms to their original colors, as was done with the stairs and other rooms last winter, I would suggest that a painter be sent over to the Lee Mansion in the near future to remove old paint at selected spots on walls and woodwork in order to disclose the original colors, this to be done under the direction of Mr. Haussmann and Mr. Nelligan. By so doing, the actual work of painting will be expedited and a more accurate restoration obtained.[63]

---

63. Gartside to Clark, November 12, 1952, in PMDF 1950-54. Nelligan had suggested this project on September 11, 1952. Nelligan to Acting Superintendent, September 11, 1952, in PMDF 1950-54.

In his monthly report for November 1952, Park Historian Nelligan remarked of this paint research, "During the month arrangements were made to have an archaeological reconnaissance made of the paint on the walls and woodwork of several rooms in the Lee Mansion scheduled to be repainted this winter. . . ."[64]

Nelligan described the progress of this work in his monthly report for January 1953:

> The archeological reconnaissance of the paint on the walls and woodwork of the school room, inner hall and pantry of the Lee Mansion was continued, and brought to light some interesting information about not only the original colors in which these rooms were painted, but also the construction of the wing itself. More important was the discovery of evidence corroborating the hypothesis that the north wing was built as a unit, and partitioned off into three small rooms perhaps two or three years later. All this information has been recorded in the Restoration and Repair Records.[65]

The following month Nelligan reported:

> The drawing room of the Lee Mansion was repainted during the month and the furniture put back in place. Because of the importance of this room and the especially close association it has with General Lee, an information sheet giving its history . . . was brought to the attention of each guard. The reaction of visitors to the present appearance of the room has been highly favorable; the Lee associations have also proved of great interest. It can be expected to be even more handsome when the doors are restored to their original walnut stain color.
>
> In the north wing, some progress was made on scraping the walls and ceiling of the school room and inner hall, prior to repainting the ceiling of the school room, the plaster of which was badly cracked was reinforced with canvas.[66]

---

64. Monthly Report, December 5, 1952, in PMDF 1950-54.

65. Nelligan to Chief, National Memorials and Historic Sites Division, Monthly Report, February 4, 1953, in PMDF 1950-54.

66. Monthly Report, March 4, 1953, in PMDF 1950-54.

Work on rooms in the north wing continued in March 1953, and Historian Nelligan described progress:

> In the north wing, the work of scraping the walls and ceiling of the inner hall and school room, prior to repainting, was finished. Because this wing is the oldest part of the house and its unusual interior partition wall arrangement requires explanation to most visitors, it is the best place to tell the story of the construction of the house; hence, it was decided to restore the school to one of its earlier colors, a light, greyish green. The inner hall was restored to a light gray, with white trim, its color just before the Civil War. Because of the time and expense involved in scraping the walls and woodwork of the school room, it was decided to put off painting the north hall and playroom (upstairs) until next fall or winter.[67]

The work sheets indicate that the painters expended more than 106-man days between January 21 and April 11, 1953, as follows:

"Hall (north) in front of Custis Bedroom and Living Room" [Room 105]	36-1/2 man days
"School Room, First Floor including clothes closet and dressing closet [Room 104]	55 " "
"Doors on Second Floor grained on inside only"	15 " "[68]

Following heavy summer visitation,. work on the historical restoration of room colors resumed in the fall of 1953 and continued into the spring of 1954. On November 23, 1953, Assistant Superintendent Gartside informed Clark, "The following rooms of the Lee Mansion are scheduled to be repainted this winter by our regular forces: Playroom [Room 202], Pantry [Room 101], Miss Mary Lee's room [Room 204], Boys' Room ([Room 206], and the small linen room [Room 205]. If possible, the conservatory [Room 116], winter kitchen [Room BO-2] and the woodwork in the North Quarters should also be repainted." Continuing, he suggested:

---

67. Monthly Report, dated April 7, 1953, in PMDF 1950-54.

68. NCP List of Units Painted in Custis-Lee Mansion, 1942-65.

> In order to expedite the actual painting, I would suggest that a painter be sent over to the Mansion beforehand to remove old paint at selected spots on walls and woodwork of the first five rooms mentioned above.[69]

In his monthly report for February 1954, Historian Nelligan commented on his work, writing:

> Information was recorded regarding paint colors, plaster, woodwork, etc., disclosed in the process of preparing the Play Room, Boys Room, Linen Room, Miss Mary's Room and the Pantry Hall, at the Lee Mansion. Work accomplished was recorded, also.[70]

During the period January 18 to February 4, 1954, the National Park Service put in 31 man days on the following rooms in the Lee Mansion:

"Mary Lee's bedroom" [Room 204]	9 man days
"Guest or Linen Room, Second Floor" [Room 205]	4 " "
"Lee Boys' Room, Second Floor" [Room 206]	10 " "
"Basement-Souvenir Room" [Room BO-2?]	8 " "
	31 man days[71]

The painting and physical investigation of the mansion room colors declined after 1954.

On March 23, 1956, however, Park Historian Agnes M. Downey urged that 13 rooms in the mansion be repainted and, in regard to establishing historic room colors, wrote:

---

69. Gartside to Clark, November 23, 1953, in PMDF 1950-54.

70. Monthly Report for February 1954, dated March 29, 1954, in PMDF 1950-54.

71. NCP List of Units Painted in the Custis-Lee Mansion, 1942-65.

> In accordance with past policies and practices, archeological reconnaissance is recommended for all the rooms where it has not been completed. It is especially important in the Large Dining Room, the Family Dining Room, Family Parlor and in the Entrance Hall. Inconclusive paint samples are all that remain as evidence of work done in 1949. No further archeological reconnaissance has been completed. Working papers are now being prepared for archeological reconnaissance based on the formula used by Historian Nelligan and Architect Haussmann in 1952. Contemplated repairs in these rooms would give opportunity to do extensive research.
>
> Archeological reconnaissance is recommended for the Custis-Guest Room, the Pantry and the Winter Kitchen and Inner Hall of the North Wing, where none has been completed to date. However, if time doesn't permit research of this type at this time, the present colors in these room [sic] are acceptable and should be used until archeological evidence indicates a change is necessary.
>
> In 1952 Architect Haussmann and Historian Nelligan collected archeological evidence in the South Hall, Center Hall, Upper Hall, North Hall and Stair well. The present paint colors are based on these findings. It is recommended that these halls be repainted in accordance with these findings.[72]

Despite such recommendations by the historical staff of the park, only three rooms were painted in the mansion from March 1954 to November 1957. These were the conservatory (Room 116), repainted in April 1955; the "Office" (Room 117), repainted in December 1956; and "the State Dining Room" (Room 115) was repainted in January 1957.[73] Interest in "archeological reconnaissance," however, revived in late 1957, when Park Historian Paul Swartz of the Custis-Lee Mansion requested that the following nine rooms be painted in January 1958: family parlor (Room 108); family dining room (Room 109); center hall (Room 111); south hall

---

72. Downey to Haussmann, March 23, 1956, in PMDF 1950-54. She noted that the large dining room (Room 115) had not been painted since 1946; the family parlor (Room 108) and family dining room (Room 109) had not been painted since 1948. The Custis guest room (Room 107) had not been painted since 1951. The repairs necessary to each room were also described.

73. NCP List of Units Painted in the Custis-Lee Mansion, 1942-65.

and stairwell (Room 113); north hall and stairwell (Room 110); pantry (Room 101); Custis guest room (Room 107); Custis bedroom (Room 106); and the school room (Room 104). Continuing, Swartz requested:

> The remaining rooms in need of painting should be completed as soon as possible after the opening of the Museum.
>
> In accordance with established policy archeological reconnaisance [sic] is recommended for those rooms where it has not been completed. It is requested that the historian in charge be notified in advance in order to have this research carried out.[74]

In her monthly report for the period November 15 to December 15, 1957, Historian Downey reported, "Research was initiated prior to major restoration at the Custis-Lee Mansion. Paint reconnaissance in the Mansion and South Servants' Quarters in consultation with Mr. Roberts and Mr. Swartz was begun and stopped before completion."[75]

Rooms painted as a result of this program included:

1. "South Hallways painted from 2nd floor to first floor" (Room 113)--(repainted), December 11, 1957.
2. "North Hallway" (Room 110) painted from second floor, northern hallway going to office, March 7-8, 1958.
3. "Entrance Hallway" (Room 114?) and "conservatory" (Room 116) painted, March 7, 1958.
4. "First Floor, Rear Halls to Basement" (Room 101) repainted March 7, 1958.
5. "Main Hall" (Room 111), "first floor" repainted March 7, 1958.
6. "Main Hall, second floor" (Room 201), "stairway down to first floor repainted," March 7, 1958.
7. "First Floor vestibules, small halls on west side of building repainted," March 7, 1958.

---

74. Swartz to Chief Park Historian, November 26, 1957, in PMDF 1957-59.

75. Monthly Report, January 23, 1958, in PMDF 1957-59.

8. "Rear Stairway to second floor" (Room 110) and "hallway first floor repainted," March 7, 1958.

9. "First Floor rear halls to basement" (Room 101) repainted, March 7, 1958.[76]

4. Restoration of Original Lee Mantels in Drawing Room (Room 112), 1952-53

As a result of his extensive historical research into original documentary sources, Park Historian Nelligan had been able by 1952 to reveal and provide documentary evidence that Col. Robert E. Lee had made many improvements in Arlington House during the period 1855-61 and that most of these "Victorian features" had been removed as "non-historic" by the War Department in the "restoration" of 1928-31.

The 1855 improvements included finishing the unfinished drawing room (Room 112), installing two Victorian marble mantels in this room and a similar one in Room 115. The woodwork in Room 112 was also grained in imitation of oak or walnut, and a central heating system was installed in the basement under the center hall (Room 111 and in basement Room BO-6). In 1857 Room 205 was also remodeled from two small dressing rooms into its present form as a small chamber.[77] Historian Nelligan located two of the three 1855 marble mantels stored in the basement of the mansion, where the War Department had deposited them in March 1932. The third mantel was missing and had never been found.

Nelligan described the restoration of the two mantels in their 1855 locations in his monthly report for November 1952: ". . . plans were made for the installation of the original Lee mantels, now in the

---

76. NCP List of Units Painted in Custis-Lee Mansion, 1942-65.

77. Charles W. Snell, "Historic Structure Report, Historical Data Section, Arlington House," and Nelligan, "Old Arlington," pp. 376-80, 388.

basement, in their original locations in the Drawing Room [Room 112], a recommendation to this effect having been approved by the Acting Director, National Park Service."[78]

He reported this task finished in January 1953, writing, "Early in the month the work of installing the Lee mantels in the drawing room [Room 112] of the Lee Mansion was completed. The work was well done, and because of their association with the Lees, the mantels should prove of great interest to visitors."[79]

On June 29, 1955, in Public Law 107, the 84th Congress changed the official name of the site from the "Lee Mansion National Memorial" to the "Custis-Lee Mansion," so as to give appropriate recognition to the illustrious family in which General Lee found his wife, and dedicate the mansion as a permanent memorial to Robert E. Lee.[80]

On January 27, 1956, after having inspected the mansion, Associate Superintendent Thompson directed that the following repairs should be made to the Lee Mansion:

1. Correct hazardous conditions in the brick walks by relaying and leveling up spots.

2. Re-lay the exit steps from the basement to the exterior by making 4 risers in place of the existing 3, each to be 7-1/2" high. This will require one additional step slab. . . .

3. Re-lay the brick flooring in the rear hall in the basement. It is in many places unsightly, being full of irregular areas, holes and broken bricks which could make walking unsafe. The new work must be in the spirit of the old work and old bricks are to be used for it [Room B0-1].

---

78. Nelligan, to Chief, National Memorials and Historic Sites, Monthly Report, December 5, 1952, in PMDF 1950-54.

79. Monthly Report, February 4, 1953, in PMDF 1950-54.

80. Public Law 107, 84th Congress, Chapter 223, 1st Sess., J. Res. 62, 69 Stat. 190-91, in PMDF 1955-56.

4. Re-lay the hearth in the large dining room [Room 115], and at the same time, make an effort to replace the existing mantelpiece with one of the proper design and materials as established by the records, if funds permit. (This would involve replacing the 1930 restored "colonial period mantel" by a reproduction of the Lee 1855 marble Victorian mantel).[81]

5. Electrical System Revised, 1954

In September 1954, a contract was let, 14-10-028-548, to make "Revisions to the Electrical System in the Lee Mansion."[82]

J. IMPROVEMENTS TO ARLINGTON HOUSE IN 1958-1960

1. Plans to Restore the Roofs on the North and South Wings

On January 27, 1958, Haussmann, Chief, Architectural Branch, informed the Chief of the Division of Design and Construction that there was $37,030 available in construction funds for rehabilitation projects at the Custis-Lee Mansion. He wrote:

> (a) Rehabilitation of specific items within the main house including, but not limited to, the front wall of the basement and roof of the north wing, the chimney in the south wing, and several ceilings, particularly on the second floor . . . .
>
> (b) The out-buildings to the west, particularly the southernmost one are in need of extensive rehabilitation. . . .[83]

Working under a contract with the National Park Service, Walter G. Peter, A.I.A., inspected the Custis-Lee Mansion in April 1958 and his

---

81. Thompson to Bartel, January 27, 1956, in PMDF 1955-56. As has been noted, the state dining room (Room 115) was painted in January 1957. Historian Agnes M. Downey recommended the replacement of the mantel in Room 115 in her letter of March 23, 1956.

82. The "Specifications for Revisions to the Electrical System in the Lee Mansion," September 23, 1954, Contract 14-10-028-548, and blueprints of NCP Drawing 2.3-90, "Revisions to Electrical System in Lee Mansion" are in the park's "Restoration and Repair Records" file drawer.

83. Haussmann to Chief, Division of Design and Construction, January 27, 1958, in PMDF 1957-59.

report and working drawings for the restoration and rehabilitation of the Custis-Lee Mansion were transmitted by Robert C. Horne, Chief, Division of Design and Construction, National Capital Parks, to the Chief, Division of Design and Construction for the National Park Service on August 13, 1958.[84] In his memorandum, Horne commented, "Actually we do not consider the work which we are undertaking on these . . . structures to be 'restoration' in the fullest sense of the word. The south building in the forecourt of the Custis-Lee Mansion was . . . 'restored' by the War Department some years ago. The far greater part of the work which we propose to do there is concerned with repair and rehabilitation. . . ."[85]

Contract 14-10-028-1606, Drawing 2.3-97, was let in January 1959.[86] On July 1 of that year, Superintendent Thompson requested permission from the director to restore the roofs of the north and south wings of the mansion to their appearance in 1853:

> The roofs on the north and south wings of the Custis-Lee Mansion have so deteriorated that major repairs are necessary. We have carefully researched the appearance of these roofs at the time when the Custis-Lee Mansion had attained its optimum development architecturally, c. 1853, as the residence of Robert E. Lee. It is our intention to replace these roofs as nearly as practicable to their appearance at that time including the substitution of the parapets on the east front in place of the existing unauthentic balustrades.

---

84. Horne to Chief, Division of Design and Construction, August 13, 1958, in PMDF 1957-59. The Monthly Report of Historian Agnes M. Downey, April 15 - May 15, 1958, indicates that Peters and his assistant, Macumber, had visited the mansion and been shown the repair and restoration log. See Jett, Chief, Division of Public Use and Interpretation, National Capital Parks, to Chief, Architectural Branch, May 8, 1958, in PMDF 1957-59.

85. Horne to Chief, Division of Design and Construction, National Park Service, August 13, 1958.

86. "Specifications for Repairs to Mansion [Roof] and the South Building [South Slave Quarters, Custis-Lee Mansion]," January 22, 1959, Contract 14-10-028-1606, in South Slave Quarters File, "Restoration and Repair" records in the park library.

This decision was reached after careful consideration among ourselves and in consultation with Messrs. Kahler and Peterson of your staff.

Our unanimous opinion is that in authorizing the restoration of the Lee Mansion (H.J. Res. 264, March 4, 1925), the Congress intended that "practical" considerations should govern. We feel it would not be in the best interests of the Government to replace the cheap tar and gravel roof of 1861--an economy measure at the time--but to restore the more permanent roof and parapet as designed by Hadfield, the architect, which we know existed at least as late as 1853. Thus the roofs of the house would present an appearance more typical of Lee's occupancy than of that immediately prior to the Civil War when, for sake of expediency, temporary repairs had been made.

Funds for these repairs have been programmed and the work will be getting underway in the near future.[87]

Acting Director E.T. Scoyan replied on July 15, 1959, writing:

. . . We share your views that it would be desirable to reconstruct the roof and parapet as designed by Hadfield. We suggest that the Historic Structures Report (Part I) be submitted in accordance with the attached instructions. This report may be brief, but should contain relevant material for the record.[88]

2. Plans to Restore Wing Roofs

No one prepared the required historic structure report thus apparently ending the project. This was fortunate, as Colonel Lee had removed the parapets from the roof when he had the roofs of the north and south wings covered with tar and gravel in 1858.[89] The mansion had no park historian on its staff at this time to prepare such a report.

---

87. Thompson to Director, July 1, 1959, in PMDF 1957-59.

88. Scoyan to Superintendent, National Capital Parks, July 15, 1959, in PMDF 1957-59.

89. Charles W. Snell, "Historic Structure Report, History Data Section, Arlington House.

On September 30, 1960, Acting Superintendent Sutton Jett informed the director that after further study of problems it had been determined that the July 1, 1959, plan was in error, as the parapets on the roof wings had been removed prior to the Civil War. It was now planned to remove the "restored roof parapets" that the War Department had placed on the roofs in 1929-30, thus "restoring" wing roofs to their appearance of 1858-65. Jett explained:

> In a memorandum dated July 1, 1959 we informed your office of our intent to replace the roofs on the north and south wings of the Custis-Lee Mansion as nearly as possible to their appearance as designed by the architect of the house, George Hadfield. We pointed out that this decision was reached after careful consideration by our own staff and in consultation with Messrs. Kahler and Peterson of your staff. We proposed at that time to replace the existing parapet with one more nearly in keeping with the probable Hadfield design.
>
> The expressed intent of the Congress was that the building be restored as nearly as practical to its appearance just prior to the Civil War. We are now about to begin the repairs on the roofs of the north and south wings and upon reviewing our previous research and conclusions it has seemed to us that we should not have recommended the replacement of the parapet. It is now our feeling that the parapet should be omitted altogether and that the roofs should be made to appear "as nearly as may be practical" to their appearance just prior to the Civil War. That parapets existed on these roofs at an earlier date is brought out by documentary evidence in the form of a water color made in 1853 by Benson Lossing and a pencil sketch made by Markie Williams in 1843. We also know that the parapets were removed and the roofs, which were wood shingles, coated with a layer of tar and gravel. We know further that the present slate roofs and balustrades were put on in 1929.
>
> In reviewing this evidence it is demonstrated that the roofs just prior to the Civil War were wood shingled and that there were no parapets. We propose, therefore, to carry out the intent of the Congress by replacing the existing roofs with simulated wood shingles similar to those recently installed on the roof of the south servants quarters. We propose also to remove the existing balustrade and not to replace it. That this was their appearance is borne out by a series of photographs dated 1864 in which it is also shown that the roof of the "conservatory" was also of wood shingles.[90] We propose to restore this appearance also. . . .

---

90. Jett to Director, September 30, 1960, in PMDF 1960-62.

On October 7, 1960, Director Conrad L. Wirth again prevented the execution of the plan by informing the Superintendent of National Capital Parks, "This sounds reasonable, but we should like to reiterate our suggestion of July 15, 1959, that the Historic Structures Report (Part I) be submitted. . . ." (Drawing 2.3-102, New Roofs for North and South Wings, December 1960, two sheets).[91]

This ended the correspondence on the subject. Just why National Capital Parks did not have a historic structure report, Part I, prepared for the project is not clear, as such a report had been prepared on the north servants' quarters at the Custis-Lee Mansion in August 1960 and was approved by Acting Director Scoyen on November 16, 1960.[92]

3. Painting the Mansion

On September 29, 1959, Cornelius W. Heine, Chief, Division of Public Use and Interpretation, made a detailed inspection of the Custis-Lee Mansion and made the following recommendations with regards to painting and repairs:

> Conservatory (Room 116), paint peeling and leak in ceiling.
>
> General Lee's bedroom (Room 207), ceiling and wall paint have peeled and present a deplorable condition.
>
> Hole in floor outside Lee's bedroom presents a serious safety hazard (Room 201).
>
> Lee girls' room (Room 203), paint peeling in this bedroom. Also on walls and ceiling. A portion of the canvas ceiling is sagging.
>
> Custis bedroom (Room 106), paint peeling on outside of wall. Paint has chipped off around frame looking into bedroom.
>
> Children's playroom (Room 202), paint starting to peel.

---

91. Wirth to Superintendent, National Capital Parks, October 1960 in PMDF 1960-62.

92. Lessig, Acting Chief Architect, Division of Design and Construction to Superintendent, National Capital Parks, November 17, 1960, with approval of report. Paul C. Swartz and John G. Roberts, "Historic Structure Report, North Servants' Quarters, Custis-Lee Mansion, Virginia (Part I)," (typescript, National Capital Parks,) August, 1960. They prepared Part II of this report in 1961.

Schoolroom (Room 104), paint peeling on corners of wall and ceiling

Drawing room (Room 112), paint peeling over the mantels, both chimneys are peeling.[93]

On October 14, 1959, Associate Superintendent Jett instructed his chief of maintenance to execute the following work in the mansion, writing, "You are instructed to program the following services from Maintenance funds during the winter months. Work on the Second floor should be initiated immediately:

1. Miss Mary's Room--remove all loose paint and repair ceiling cracks and repaint. [Room 204]

2. Linen Room--same [Room 205]

3. Boys Bedroom--same and install crickets behind chimney [Room 206]

4. Girls Room--Repair canvas on ceiling where loose; replacing it if necessary, and repaint entire ceiling; remove loose paint and repaint walls. (It may be necessary to put canvas on one or more of the walls before repainting.) [Room 203]

5. Play Room--remove loose paint, repair cracks and repaint walls and ceiling. [Room 202]

6. Col. and Mrs. Lee's Bedroom--strip ceiling, replace plaster over metal lath, canvas over whole ceiling and repaint; remove all loose paint on walls and repaint, provide crickets behind chimney. [Room 207]

7. Upstairs Hallway--remove all loose paint on ceiling, repair cracks, install canvas where necessary and repaint, repaint walls after repairing cracks and removing plaster where necessary; repaint woodwork; do no touch [illegible]rs. [Room 201]

8. Rear Stair Hall, upper [illegible]el--remov[illegible] all loose plaster and replaster where necessary; r[illegible]e loose paint and repaint walls and ceiling. (If funds allo[illegible] strip all plaster on walls and replaster.)

9. Rear Stair Hall, lower level--strip off plaster above and below railing; replaster and repaint (in areas where badly cracked.)

---

93. Heine to Chief, Interpretation Branch, September 30, 1959, in PMDF 1957-59.

10. North Hall--remove loose paint; repair cracks in plaster; repaint walls and ceiling; paint woodwork around Guard's Room. [Room 110]

11. School Room--repair plaster; remove paint, repaint walls, ceiling and woodwork. [Room 104]

12. North Wing--wait until roof is repaired before doing work outlined in Sections 10 and 11 above.

13. Custis Bedroom--okay as is [Room 106]

14. North Inner Hall--repaint walls, ceiling and woodwork [Room 105]

15. Family Dining Room and Parlor--repair hole in wall at baseboard below thermostat; touch up woodwork, walls and ceiling in both rooms. [Rooms 108 and 109]

16. Main Hallway--remove paint to bare wood, where paint is patched, and repaint; touch up other woodwork as needed. [Room 111]

17. Drawing Room--touch up walls, ceiling, and woodwork as necessary. [Room 112]

18. Entrance Hall--repaint door behind Guard's desk.

19. State Dining Room--touch up as necessary. [Room 115]

20. Hall and window near under-stair closet - repair plaster on west wall where bulged and under window where affected by water, and repaint; strip paint on window sill and on the woodwork, such as baseboards, as necessary, to bare wood and repaint. [Rooms 113-114]

21. Conservatory Area--patch and touch up, temporarily, and re-do completely when new roof is installed. [Room 116]

22. Repaint basement hall, walls and woodwork as necessary . . . .

Before work is undertaken, please consult Mr. Haussmann who desires to make some further investigations regarding the kind of paint we have been using which has become brittle and has chipped. It may be necessary to canvas over some of the walls before repainting. Crickets should be installed behind all chimneys.[94]

---

94. Jett to Chief, Division of Maintenance, October 14, 1960, in PMDF 1957-59.

On December 1, 1959, Park Historian Swartz, who had just been reassigned to the Custis-Lee Mansion, also requested that the following repairs be made:

> 1. Repair damage of conservatory door facing, caused by infestation of termites and lay stone slab or course of bricks under wood supporting door sill in order to prevent re-occurrence of infestation. [Room 116]
>
> 2. Replace the following door sills:
> a. two in south hall [Room 113]
> b. four in center hall [Room 111]
> c. two in north hall [Room 110]
>
> 3. Remove large circular black spot from pantry floor. [Room 101]
>
> 4. Remove obsolete fire call box and conduit from center hall. [Room 111]
>
> 5. Repair step to school and sewing room. [Room 104]
>
> 6. Replace broken window between inner hall and pantry. [Rooms 101 and 105]
>
> 7. Stabilize lower steps of north stairs.
>
> 8. Repair or replace floor matting in large dining room. [Room 115][95]

The painting and repairs described above were presumably carried out during the winter of 1959-60; no record of it, however, was placed in the park's "Restoration and Repairs" file.

On April 1, 1960, Park Historian Swartz informed the Chief, Branch of Interpretation:

> The second story hall floor of the Mansion is in critical condition. Wood putty cannot be supported between wide gaps of the boards. Under use the boards splinter and the cracks are widened. The entire original floor, under continued heavy use will soon be ruined. Accidents to visitors will increase.

---

95. Swartz to Chief, Branch of Interpretation, December 1, 1959, in PMDF 1957-59.

> Haphazard patch work would ruin this floor faster than normal use. If money is not available to re-lay the entire hall floor at this time, I suggest a temporary floor covering (plywood sheets?) be laid over it for its preservation and for the prevention of accidents.

A note added to this memorandum indicates that rubber runners were used temporarily in the upper hall and in the lower hall by the dining room doorway to solve this problem.[96]

On March 23, 1961, Park Historian Swartz informed Architect Haussmann that the painting in the following rooms had been damaged by the leaking of the roofs on the wings:

1. Large dining room (Room 115)--east wall
2. South entrance hall--extent of painting needed to be determined by inspection after scraping of west wall and ceiling
3. Pantry (Room 101)--in north wing
4. Inner Hall (Room 105)--in north wing[97]

On August 16, 1961, Superintendent Jett informed a visitor to the Custis-Lee Mansion who had not found the mansion in as good condition as expected, ". . . We have just now completed major repairs, including completely new roofs over the north and south wings, repainting of the exterior, replacement of steps, and other external improvements. Now that this has been done, it will be possible to move inside during the next few months and complete the interior decorating. . . ."[98] The wood steps of the east portico were reconstructed for the second time in their 1864 format.

---

96. Swartz to Chief, Branch of Interpretation, April 1, 1960, in PMDF 1960-62.

97. Swartz to Haussmann, March 23, 1961, in PMDF 1960-62.

98. Jett to Buckly, August 16, 1961, in PMDF 1960-62.

In May 1961 repairs were made to the roofs of the north and south wings, and in June the conservatory roof (Room 116) was also repaired.[99]

K. SUMMARY OF RESTORATION AND REPAIR ON MANSION, 1942-61

1. Painting the Mansion

a. Painting the Exterior (Using Non-Historic Colors)

1942--exterior trim and eight columns on portico, but not stucco painted by NPS paint crew.

1943--two west (rear) porches painted

1947--front and rear porches painted

1948--reported exterior had not been painted since 1942, but record of exterior painting found for 1949-50 1960-61 - exterior of mansion painted

b. Interior Painting Using Non-Historic Colors in Rooms

1942--painted by NPS paint crew: Rooms 104, 106, 107, 109, 115, 114, 117, and probably 112 1943--Rooms 104 and 116

1944--floors in mansion refinished, first time since 1929-30

c. Interior Painting Using Non-Historic Colors

1945--painted Rooms 116, 201, 113, 110, 111, 107, 105. Basement rooms in north wing whitewashed.

1946--Rooms 104, 115 and railings and treads on stairways

d. Interior Painting Attempting to Restore Historic Colors

November 8, 1946--first study done to attempt to establish historic room colors

1948--first painting with historic colors: Rooms 117, 110, 207, 109, 108, 113, 115, and 109

1951--Rooms 106, 109

1952--canvas ceiling put in Room 203 and then painted. Painted Rooms 113, 110, 116, 201, and 114

1953--Rooms 112, 105, and 104

---

99. Sketch plans and a description of the work done will be found in Vol. 1 of the "Restoration and Repair" records in the park library.

1954--Rooms 204, 205, 206, and BO-2
1955--Room 116
1956--Room 117
1957--Room 115
1958--Rooms 113, 110, 114, 116, 101, 111, and 201
1959--Rooms 204, 205, 206, 203, 202, 201, 104, 105, 106, 108, 109, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, and 117

2. Repair and Alteration of Electrical System
1954--electrical system revised, Contract 14-10-028-548

3. Fire Detection System
1949 and 1951--fire alarm system apparently revised

4. Conservatory Roof
1961--roof of aluminum rafter and glass, built in 1935, removed and replaced by a new roof

5. Water Supply for Protection
1942--larger pipes apparently laid to hook up with Arlington Memorial Cemetery pipes

6. Exterior Steps, East Portico
1961--historic 1861 wooden steps, reconstructed in 1935, built in same style in 1961

7. Interior Stairway
1948--main stairways in Room 113 inspected

8. Heating Plant
1945--plant repaired
1949--heating plant revised, Contract I-28NP-663, shifted from coal burning to oil

9. Mansion Roof

1945--three leaks in mansion roof require extensive repairs

1958--Walter G. Peters, A.I.A., makes study and drawings of mansion roof, April

1959--Contract 10-10-028-1606 - repairs to mansion roof and south building let. Wooden balustrades, based on Benson J. Lossing's 1853 painting of Arlington House, reconstructed by the War Department and placed on the roofs of the north and south wings in 1930, removed from the two roofs as historically inaccurate as these had been removed by Robert E. Lee in 1858.

1961- roofs of north and south wings repaired

10. Drawing Room Mantels, Room 112

January 1953 - restoration of two 1855 marble mantels in Room 112 installed by Robert E. Lee in 1855 and removed by the War Department in 1932, to their original fireplaces. They had been stored in the basement since 1932.

11. Inspection of the Mansion for Insect Damage

1948 - inspection report, looking for termite damage

1951 - inspection report of basement beams under Rooms 111 and 12. Some damage reported.

12. Hall Floor, Second Floor

1960 - flooring in second floor hall reported to be in very poor condition. The flooring on the second floor dated from 1855 period.

III. ARLINGTON HOUSE, 1962-1971

A. PAINTING OF ROOMS 1962-1963

During the winter of 1961-62 and spring of 1962, the following rooms were painted in the Custis-Lee Mansion: dining room (Room 115), the Custis bedroom (Room 106), the guest room (Room 107), the school and sewing room (Room 104), and several of the "hallways." On August 16, 1962, Director, National Capital Region, Jett informed his assistant regional director of operations and maintenance, "Due to the heavy visitor load (more than 300,000 persons have visited the mansion so far this year), much of the area of the peach colored walls and white trim of the hallways has become soiled and dirty from constant contact by these visitors. Continued washing has worn the paint thin or made it bare in some places. Retouching or feathering in a portion of the walls may be all that is necessary, especially in the hallways." Continuing, Jett wrote:

> It is requested that the following painting be done at the Custis-Lee Mansion as soon as feasible:
>
> Office and Study [Room 117]
> Lower west wall and doorway of Conservatory [Room 116]
> Entrance hallway [Room 111]
> Wall of both stairs to second floor and also steps on sides of stair treads
> Ceilings of upstairs bedrooms where scaling has taken place
> Balustrades of outside stairways on west face
>
> In the winter or early spring, consideration should be given to painting the Family Parlor, the Family Dining Room, and the upstairs rooms of the Museum building. In order to keep the Mansion presentable to the visiting public, some painting or retouching of the hallways and areas subject to constant contact and wear will be required at least in the spring and again in the autumn.[1]

The latter part of the proposed painting program was apparently carried out in the spring of 1963. President John F. Kennedy visited the Custis-Lee Mansion from about 4:05 to 4:20 p. m., Sunday, March 3, 1963. In a detailed report on this visit Cornelius W. Heine, Assistant Regional Director, Conservation, Interpretation and Use, National Capital Region, commented in part:

---

1. Jett to Assistant Director, Operations and Maintenance, August 16, 1962, in PMDF 1960-62.

. . . from your report, it would seem that Park Guide Paul Q. Fuqua, who was on duty in the central hall [Room 111], did an excellent job in conducting the President through the Mansion. The renovation of the Mansion, the painting of the Family Parlor [Room 109] and Family Dining Room [Room 108] being particularly noticeable, gave Mr. Fuqua the opportunity to introduce the MISSION 66 program, which was unknown to the President, and led him to compliment the National Park Service in restoring the Mansion. . . .[2]

B. RESTORATION OF EXTERIOR OF ARLINGTON HOUSE, 1964-65

On September 18, 1964, Rudolph R. Bartel, Assistant Regional Director, Operations and Maintenance, directed the Division of Facilities Maintenance to begin the project of "Refurbishing the exterior of the Custis-Lee Mansion by sandblasting the exterior surfaces." Bartel wrote:

> You are hereby authorized to proceed with the refurbishing of the exterior of Custis-Lee National Memorial. The cost of the work to be accomplished is chargeable to Job No. 56-151B. The scope of the work shall be essentially that outlined in Mr. Hinkle's memorandum of February 17.
>
> This project has been discussed with Mr. Charles W. Lessig who has concurred in and approved the sandblasting of the exterior surfaces excluding the small portion of what is thought to be the original stucco finish. Mr. Lessig has also approved the use of a waterproof decorative-white resurfacer known as Re-Nu-It. You may proceed with procuring sufficient quantities of this material in order to proceed with the project as soon as the sandblasting is completed.
>
> While I recognize the fact that no estimate has been made for masonry and carpentry repairs, you are authorized to proceed with such repairs as may be found necessary in the progress of the work. There are sufficient maintenance funds available to cover the cost of masonry and carpentry repairs. Mr. Lessig has assigned Mr. Don Myer to work with us on this project. We have asked that Mr. Myer visit the work site for the purpose of gaining firsthand knowledge as to conditions revealed, scope of the work, work methods, etc. We have also notified Mr. Lessig that he would be promptly informed should sandblasting reveal anything which may appear to be the closure of window and door openings or other structural alterations in the mansion itself.

---

2. Heine to Jones, March 27, 1963, in PMDF 1963-67.

Work was to commence on September 21 and the regional chief was requested "to provide me with a brief written narrative report outlining what has been accomplished, conditions encountered, or any other matter which may be of interest or historical importance. . . ."[3]

On September 24, Stanley W. McClure, Chief, Branch of National Memorials, requested the assistance of J. Edgar Hoover, Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, in analyzing the historical paint sequence on the exterior of the Custis-Lee Mansion. McClure explained:

> The National Park Service is preparing the exterior of the Custis-Lee Mansion for restoration. In the past, your bureau has assisted us in analysis of paint sequences used in the interior and on some portions of the exterior of this house. The present work at the Mansion will remove all the exterior paint. This will be our last opportunity to check the original paint sequence.
>
> We would like to test two samples in an effort to establish the color sequence of layers and the color of the marbleization streaking which should appear in the 1861-1864 paint layer. We are pressured by contract deadlines and will appreciate any assistance you may be able to give us.[4]

On September 30, 1964, the "refurbishing" project became converted to a "restoration" of the exterior, when Regional Director Jett informed the assistant regional director, operations and maintenance, National Capital Region:

> The bill which established the Lee Mansion as a National Memorial (Pub. Law 74, H.J. Res. 164, 68 Cong., approved March 4, 1925) directed that it be restored to look as it did in 1861. Presently the outside paint is being removed by sand blasting to the original surface. This offers us an excellent opportunity to apply our knowledge of the exterior finish so that we may fulfill our obligation to restore the house to its 1861 appearance.

---

3. Bartel to Regional Chief, September 18, 1964, in PMDF 1963-64.

4. McClure to Hoover, September 24, 1964, in PMDF 1963-67.

Documentary Evidence: There is extensive documentary evidence establishing the 1861 exterior appearance of Arlington House. For example, in a letter home (copy in files), a Civil War soldier described the house as being white in color. It is believed that the ground coat which was streaked to resemble marble was an off-white color. At the distance of the troop encampments, the house's marbleized exterior would have appeared to be white.

Pictographic Evidence: In 1861 the Union Army of the Potomac trained on Arlington Estate. Arlington House was used as headquarters and frequently formed a background for photographs of soldiers. Civil War photographs show definite designs resembling marble on the columns, pilasters, and cornices of the portico, and on the east side of the building. The first five of the photographs listed below show details of the marbleization. The last two show that the chimneys and the west wall were not plastered (stuccoed) and a different design of the steps leading to the center door including a canopy. A list of the photographs follows in chronological order.

1861 General McDowell and Staff	B 6246 N.A.
1862 General Heintzelman and Staff	B 1762 N.A.
1864 East Front and South Side	CN 5654
1864 East Front	BA 1502 N.A.
1864 South Side	CN 972 N.A.
1864 South Side and West Front	CN 969 N.A.
1864 West Front	CN 6799 N.A.

Physical Evidence: Some of the original plaster remains in place on the exterior walls. Samples from these are being analyzed by the F.B.I. Laboratory. The first color put on these walls, ca. 1817, was French ochre. This color was followed by a series of yellows and off-whites. The exact date for the application of each cannot be established. No trace of the color of the marble streaking has been found. The small number of coats of paint suggest that the house has been scraped since 1861.

Restoration of outside paint based on evidence at hand: Following sand blasting and repair to the plaster (stucco), please paint the exterior of the house an off-white color; the columns, pilasters and the entire east front should be streaked dark grey to produce a marbleized effect. Use the photographs listed above to guide the restoration of the marble design. Please consult with Donald Myer, Architectural Historian, NCDC for exact color.

Since Congress stipulated that the Mansion be restored to its 1861 appearance, decisions regarding the color of the marbleized cornices of the portico, removal of the plaster (stucco) on the chimneys and on the west wall of the central portion of the

Mansion, and reconstruction of the west steps and canopy to the center hall will be deferred and will be the subjects of subsequent memoranda.[5]

On October 22, the concerned Washington Office intervened and Acting Director A. Clark Stratton informed the Regional Director of the National Capital Region:

> We are anxious that any work affecting the appearance of this most important and famous building be adequately documented and recorded. We suggest that you institute historic structures procedures by preparing and submitting the standard historic structures report adopted by the Service and described in the Historic and Prehistoric Structure Handbook. This will (1) provide a basis for review, (2) insure correctness by seeking out and presenting the historical facts, (3) provide justification and data against possible criticism, and (4) provide a written record of the proposed work for future reference. The doctoral thesis of Murray Nelligan, "Old Arlington," is an invaluable collection of source material and historical information and should provide most or all of the references necessary for the report. To this should be added information derived from the evidence in the structure itself and the FBI reports on paint samples and stucco material in your memorandum of September 30.
>
> The marbleization must be very capably done if it is to be historically and aesthetically convincing. We would appreciate knowing your thoughts regarding the achieving of an acceptable application. Painters' manuals of the period should prove helpful. You may wish to experiment on another similar surface before applying the technique to the historic building itself.
>
> We understand that the patching and painting now underway will seal the building surface for the winter months, and that the marbleization will not be begun until spring. This schedule will allow time for the preparation and approval of an historic structures report in accordance with approved procedure.[6]

---

5. Jett to Assistant Regional Director, September 30, 1964, in PMDF 1963-67.

6. Stratton to Regional Director, National Capital Region, October 22, 1964, WASO Research Files.

The progress of this work was described by Assistant Regional Director Heine, to a visitor in a letter dated May 11, 1965. Heine wrote in part:

> The National Park Service is in the process of extensively renovating the exterior of the building [the Custis-Lee Mansion]. Beginning in the fall of 1964, the paint on the outside walls was removed. The entire structure was restuccoed with the exception of the center portion of the back of the house. It was then necessary to allow the walls to thoroughly dry before repainting. . . .
>
> Extensive research has been done to determine the color of the house during Lee's time. Within the next few months, it will be repainted to appear as it did in 1861, the last year the Lees resided here. The urns on the portico are being repaired, as well as the portico step which was damaged. . . .[7]

In June 1965, the staffs of the National Capital Region and National Capital Office of Design and Construction completed a "Historic Structures Report, Parts I and II, Exterior Repainting of the Custis-Lee Mansion," which was approved by the Assistant Director of the National Park Service on July 20, 1965.[8]

Work on the exterior of the mansion and marbleizing of the portico columns continued during the summer of 1965. On September 16, William H. Hendrickson, Acting Superintendent, Prince William Forest and George Washington Memorial Parkway, who was administering the Custis-Lee Mansion, explained to another visitor the restoration work taking place at the mansion:

> The National Park Service is restoring the interior and exterior of Arlington House to appear as it did in 1861, the last year the Lees lived there. Our only source of information on the exterior appearance of the House are photographs taken during the Union occupation of 1861-1865. A photograph, believed to have been taken in 1861, shows marbleization of the

---

7. Heine to Gollin, May 11, 1965, in PMDF 1963-67.

8. The original draft of this letter may be found in the "Restoration and Repair" records in the park library.

columns. Later war-time photographs show this same effect. Our very substantial information concerning troop operations in the area during the war, includes no mention of the repainting of Arlington House or marbleization of the columns betweeen 1861-1865. It therefore appears that the columns were marbleized prior to May, 1861, when the Lees resided there.

On the basis of the best available information gained from this extensive research, the National Park Service is restoring the exterior of the House to appear as we believe it did when Lee lived there in 1861.[9]

C. PAINTING OF ROOMS, 1965-66

While the exterior was being restored, the following rooms in the mansion were also painted in January and February 1965: north hall and stairs (Room 110); pantry (Room 101); center hall (Room 111); south hall and stairs (Room 113); conservatory (Room 116); upper hall (Room 201); cellar hall (Room BO-1); and cellar stairs.[10]

Invitations to bid on the contract to paint the exterior of the mansion were issued on November 3 and the bids were opened on November 16, 1965. On November 22, 1965, Superintendent Floyd Taylor of George Washington Memorial Parkway recommended that the contract be awarded to the low bidder, Apex Decorating Company of Silver Spring, Maryland, for $11,850.[11]

Painting of the exterior was still in progress and additional rooms in the mansion were being painted during the spring of 1966. Superintendent Taylor informed a visitor:

---

9. Hendrickson to Stanley, September 16, 1965, in PMDF 1963-67.

10. Typed notes giving paint colors used, etc., are filed under each room painted in "Restoration and Repair" records, Vols. I and II, in the park library.

11. Invitations to bid, with specifications, November 3, 1965; Taylor, Chief, National Capital Office of Design and Construction, to Superintendent, George Washington Memorial Parkway, November 18, 1965 and Superintendent Taylor to Regional Director, National Capital Region, November 22, 1965, in park "Restoration and Repair" records.

> You will be pleased to know that extensive painting is being done this spring. The hallways and stairways have been repainted and the exterior of the house, which has been restuccoed, is scheduled for painting. Throughout the year, repainting is done whenever necessary.
>
> The National Park Service is restoring the Custis-Lee Mansion . . . . Consequently, electrical lighting, in any form, has not been introduced into the rooms. On dark days candles and lamps are lighted as they would have been in 1861.

Work on the exterior and marbleizing was completed in August 1966.[12]

D. INVESTIGATION OF HISTORIC PAINT COLORS, 1967

In January 1967 Architect E. Blaine Cliver submitted his report entitled, "Preliminary Report of Interior Paint Investigation, Custis-Lee Mansion," with copies of designated colors and Munsell chips. Tests were made on the south entrance, back and main hall, north staircase (Rooms 110, 111); pantry (Room 101); south staircase (Room 113); upstairs hall (Room 201); and an outside shutter.[13]

E. ESTABLISHMENT OF REGULAR SCHEDULE FOR PAINTING INTERIOR OF MANSION, 1965-83

Beginning in 1965 and continuing to date, the National Park Service established the following schedule for the planned repainting of rooms in the Custis-Lee Mansion:

1. Hallways and rooms heavily utilized by visitors while passing through the house have had touch up painting every two years.

---

12. Taylor, Superintendent Prince William Forest, George Washington Memorial Parkway, to Spiker, April 11, 1966, in PMDF 1963-67. Also see Taylor to Gamboro, February 13, 1967, ibid., for completion date.

13. This report is filed in the "North Stairway File" in the "Restoration and Repair" file drawer in the park library. Invitation, bid, and award forms for "Painting of Exterior of Custis-Lee Mansion, IFB 3053," November 3, 1965, including specifications on Arlington House-Building, are also on file in the same drawer.

2. The interior of the historic rooms in the mansion have been repainted regularly at seven-year intervals.[14]

F. EFFORTS TO INITIATE MAJOR RESEARCH PROGRAM ON ARLINGTON HOUSE, 1966-1968

On October 27, 1966, Floyd B. Taylor, wrote to the Regional Director of the National Capital Region in an effort to enlist his support in instituting a major historical research program to study the Custis-Lee Mansion. Taylor explained:

> In a recent reassessment of the research, restoration, and interpretative needs of the Custis-Lee Mansion, it has again become obvious that an accurate and professional restoration of the mansion and an effective interpretative program can be accomplished only, by the completion of (1) an Historic Structures Report, (2) an Historic Grounds Report, and (3) a Furnishings Plan . . . .
>
> The fact that the Custis-Lee Mansion appears structurally sound and has its rooms furnished to such an extent that it can be opened to the public seems to work to its disadvantage in competing for research priority with newly acquired and still undeveloped historic areas elsewhere in the National Park System. If the Custis-Lee Mansion did not have the outstanding historical significance it does, and its annual visitation was not one of the largest among historic houses in the National Park System, it might be possible to justify delaying research for it in favor of new and undeveloped areas. This justification is, however, not possible, and therefore the site certainly merits recognition of serious research needs which would allow the most accurate restoration.
>
> Though extensive research has been done, particularly by Mr. Murray Nelligan and Mrs. Agnes Downey Mullins, there are great gaps in our knowledge of the appearance of the structure in 1861 and the manner in which it was furnished. A

---

14. Personal interview with Arlington House Site Supervisor Ann Fuqua on April 19, 1983, by author of this study.

comprehensive structural survey has never been completed. The War Department, for its work begun in 1925, did a structural survey but did not have access to the historical documentation Mr. Nelligan was to provide much later. Now, on the basis of Mr. Nelligan's and Mrs. Mullins' research and additional research which must be done, a team of architects, archeologists, and historians could produce the necessary comprehensive reports for the structure and the grounds.

After pointing out that the lack of information on the type of furnishings at Arlington in 1961 was a serious problem and demanded further research, Superintendent Taylor continued:

> The Custis-Lee Mansion, located adjacent to the National Capital and thereby very much before the public eye, could be the showcase house of the National Park Service. It has the potential in its extremely interesting and significant history. With extensive sound research accomplished, the work necessary to complete the restoration of the structure and its grounds and the acquisition of appropriate furnishings can proceed. Even if it takes several years, we will be moving in the right direction. At present, with the exception of recent exterior painting, the restoration of the mansion is at a standstill. Lack of documented information may well have permitted repairs to the structure and alteration to the grounds which may now be almost irreversible. Opportunities to acquire appropriate furnishings may have been passed up because of the lack of information which would be in a Furnishings Plan. Much curatorial and management time is expended in considering the individual proposals of would-be-donors because the one good authority of a Furnishings Plan is not available for reference.
>
> We feel that the Park Service cannot afford to neglect its responsibility for the restoration of the Mansion. This home has been contained in the system for 33 years, and an honest evaluation can only reveal that research and restoration has proceeded at an extremely slow pace.
>
> The three major research projects recommended above are recognized as needed in the Master Plan for Custis-Lee Mansion which has been reviewed by the Region, has the recommendation of the Service Center, and now only awaits the approval of the Assistant Director, Cooperative Activities. These projects are surely needed to fulfill the National Park Service's obligation for the restoration and preservation of this site.[15]

---

15. Taylor to Regional Director, National Capital Region, October 27, 1966, in "Restoration and Repairs" records in the park library.

Acting National Capital Regional Director Robert C. Horne, forwarded these three projects, and supported Superintendent Taylor's Assistant Director, Resource Studies, responded on November 22, 1966, writing in part:

> We recognize the need for further historical research at the Custis-Lee Mansion. We have received [three] Resource Study Proposals (RSPs) . . . . We understand that these projects, proposed for FY 1968, are to be supported by M & P (Maintenance Preservation) funds.
>
> Since the end result of these projects must be to serve as a basis for future development and construction at the Custis-Lee Mansion, they are essentially construction-related and should, we believe, be programmed accordingly.[17]

Superintendent Taylor responded on February 2, 1967 to the Assistant Director's memorandum. He wrote:

> We appreciate the point made in a subject memorandum of November 22 by the Assistant Director, Resource Studies . . . to support not only the physical work of accurately restoring the house and grounds at Custis-Lee but, more importantly, at this moment, the detailed historical and architectural research necessary to do the work.
>
> This approach seems most appropriate for the grounds at the mansion for the reason that we are reasonably certain that, with the exception of a south garden (still in the process of restoration), the grounds are not correct; a reasonable conjecture can be made as to the amount of work required to bring the grounds into a restored condition; a principal feature to be developed would be the vegetable garden which was known to be present in 1861. . . .

---

16. Copy in research file for Arlington House. The three historical resource proposals, dated April 25, 1966, and March 9, 1966, were prepared by Ann A. Fuqua and W. Hendrickson, copies of which are in the "Restoration and Repair" records at the park.

17. Stagner to Acting Regional Director, National Capital Region, November 22, 1966. Copy in WASO research file on Arlington House.

The mansion restoration is something different, however. The mansion appears restored and, in fact, may be nearly 100 percent accurate. The restoration has been done on a piecemeal basis dating to the army program begun in 1925. The thing to propose is that there be an adequate review of the historical record to produce plans of the house as it appeared in 1861. The restoration work that has been accomplished would then be weighed against this evidence. The job to be programed [sic] here is research. . . .

The idea of programing [sic] research first and of following the research report with a construction program is advisedly presented in the light of the work done on the north servants' quarters at Custis-Lee. Here, it appears that construction, in time, too closely followed research. New evidence which came to light during the construction period may not have been adequately considered so that the floor level and number of rooms in the "restoration" may not be correct. The finished product seems too bright and clean, so much so in fact that the rooms were easily pressed into temporary service for visitor accomodation [sic] simply by adding appropriate modern furnishings.

Furnishings to implement a furnishings plan, of necessity, would probably be acquired over a long period. Again, to the uncritical observer, the work [of furnishing the mansion] appears to have been done. What is needed, however, is review to provide an accurate-as-possible plan of the furnishings in place in the mansion in 1861 so that the job of selective retirement, installation, and replacement of furniture pieces can proceed.

To insure that some progress is made, we propose submitting [proposals for six studies] . . . . The asterisked ones, however, seem to us to be the ones to recommend for adoption.

* 1. Restoration of the grounds including historical and landscape research to implement it.

2. Historical research only for a Historic Grounds Report, parts 1 and 2.

3. Restoration of the mansion including historical and architectural research to implement it.

4. Historical and architectural research only for a Historic Structures Report, parts I and II.

5. Authentic refurnishing of the mansion including historical research to implement it.

6. Historical research only to provide a Furnishings Plan.[18]

On March 21, 1967, Superintendent Taylor requested research for three studies: "Custis-Lee Mansion Historic Structure Report, Part II," "Historic Grounds Report," and "Furnishings Study." Continuing, Taylor wrote:

> The implementation of all three is needed to enable the park staff to knowledgeably manage the site on a daily basis and make effective decisions regarding long range plans. Currently, the clearest case is provided by the need for a completed Historic Structure Report.
>
> The mansion should have an interior painting and this was recently arranged for but in the process of doing this we consulted with the Acting Chief Architect, Historic Structures and HABS, WSC, (Historic American Buildings Survey, Washington Service Center) who advised against the painting . . . .[19]

As a result of this programming, the Division of History, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation, assigned Historian Charles H. McCormick to conduct the research and write the documented research reports. McCormick produced the following studies:

> 1. Historical Resource Study Proposal . . . " Custis-Lee Mansion Furnishings Study," (July 20, 1968), which presented documentary evidence on room use and original furnishings.
>
> 2. Historical Resources Study Proposal . . . . "Custis-Lee Mansion Historical Data for Grounds," (June 1, 1968). The study attempted to document as fully as possible both with direct and comparative evidence the appearance of the 3.5-acre portion of the old Arlington estate on which the Custis-Lee Mansion was situated as it was when the Lees left it

---

18. Taylor to Regional Director, National Capital Region, February 2, 1967, in PMDF 1963-67.

19. Taylor to Acting Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation, March 21, 1967 and Judd, Historic Structures and HABS, Washington Service Center, to Superintendent Taylor, February 13, 1967, in PMDF 1963-67.

in May 1861. This report provides the documentary evidence necessary to produce an 1861 historical base map for the site.[20]

3. Historical Resources Study Proposal "Historic Structures Report, Part I, Historical Data Section, Custis-Lee Mansion," (July 1968). This study includes a summary of history, 1802-61 and outlines additional research required for the mansion's history period 1861-1968. Historian McCormick never commenced the projected "Historic Structures Report, Part II. Historical Data Section for the Custis-Lee Mansion." In 1968, he left the National Park Service.[21]

G. REPLACEMENT OF PLASTER SOFFIT IN CEILING OF MAIN PORTICO, 1968

In October 1968 a contract in the amount of $2,495 was awarded to Fitzgerald and Company, Inc., of East Riverdale, Maryland to replace the plaster of the ceiling of the main portico of the Custis-Lee Mansion. Under the contract the work consisted "of removing [the] existing plastered ceiling to the point of intersection of the soffit and the plaster cornice at its borders." The cornice was to be preserved and protected from damage, and the ceiling was then replastered and the historical effect restored. Work under this contract was accepted on November 7, 1968.[22]

---

20. In March 1964 the staff of the National Capital Region and National Capital Office of Design and Construction prepared the "Historic Grounds Report, Part II, The Custis-Lee Mansion Flower Garden," (typescript, including plans to permit the restoration of the garden located to the south of the south wing of the Custis-Lee Mansion).

21. Memorandum of Roy E. Appleman to files, August 6, 1968, in materials left by Charles McCormick for Part II report, in WASO research files.

22. Copies of contract and specifications, with acceptance of work, November 7, 1968, in file "Custis-Lee Mansion, Plaster Ceiling-Portico-Fitzgerald and Company, Inc., Contract 14-0-10-960-195, H30," in "Restoration and Repair" records in the park library.

H. SEARS, ROEBUCK AND COMPANY'S PROPOSAL TO PAINT INTERIOR OF ARLINGTON HOUSE AND NEED FOR FURTHER RESEARCH, 1970

On November 17, 1970, Dr. Ernest A. Connally, Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation, wrote to the General Superintendent, Office of National Capital Parks, regarding the Custis-Lee Mansion:

> We understand that negotiations are now underway with the Sears, Roebuck and Co. for the interior painting of the Custis-Lee House, a project Sears initiated for its advertising value.
>
> Mr. [Henry] Judd visited the house on November 9 to see what would be involved before the painting could proceed. First, we must determine the correct colors for the historic period. Although layering of paint has been done, it was poorly done and inadequately protected, so much further study is needed and the results matched to a standard such as the Munsell Color System which we use. Nearly all evidence was destroyed by the Park Service when the house was painted some 15 years ago.
>
> We also need to determine why some walls are so wet and to correct that condition before repainting. We should also conduct a badly needed architectural investigation before repainting or the new paint job will be badly scarred when it is done. All this is more than a casual study and will require some time and funds to complete. We suggest that a full study be programmed as in the next possible fiscal year and the repainting be delayed until that is completed.[23]

On December 29, 1970, Superintendent Taylor commented on Dr. Connally's letter:

> I discussed the scope of the Custis-Lee Mansion project with Dr. Connally and with Mr. Judd, individually, via telephone. I concurred in the essential significance of Dr. Connally's November 17 memorandum at the outset. After further appraisal, I now fully and unequivocably support the position that the National Park Service abide his recommendation

---

23. Connally to General Superintendent, National Capital Parks, November 17, 1970, WASO research files.

that we not proceed with this generous offer of a "free" paint job, which could possibly result in permanent destruction and loss of opportunity to obtain authentic architectural and historic information which the Service does not have at present.

In my contact with Dr. Connally's office, I explored to some degree what would be involved from the standpoint of "time and money" in developing the information to be obtained from architectural and historic research. The best estimate is that it will take approximately 3 to 4 months for the architectural research. This will, of course, include the examination of each significant area of the interior, as well as other determinations pertaining to the structural condition of the mansion. There is some concern over certain unexplained conditions apparent, such as moisture appearance on the walls in some areas, etc. This segment of research will cost from $8,000 to $10,000.

Historic research should be accomplished simultaneously with, or before, the architectural research. There is need to assemble, correlate, and coordinate all the available facts possible pertaining to the residence. As a minimum, this should cover the period from immediately prior to the Civil War through the years of military occupation and use of the structure by the War Department as headquarters office for the national cemetery, as well as documentation of work accomplished since NPS administration. Without this research, it will be impossible to authenticate with any degree of certainty the color scheme of any given period, or when and by whom or to what extent architectural changes were made. We are currently assigning the historic research aspect to Mrs. Ann Fuqua, of our staff, and arranging through Mr. Ralph Lewis for periodic (perhaps one day a week) assistance from Mrs. Agnes Mullins, whose background research on various aspects of the mansion is highly regarded.

In presenting the status of Custis-Lee Mansion at this date, we must come to your Office for important decisions which are most essential: (1) Consideration on behalf of scheduling the $10,000 for the architectural research study of Custis-Lee Mansion, and (2) An immediate appraisal by appropriate disciplines to provide guidelines and instructions on current maintenance needs for the interior until such time as the more desirable thorough restoration and painting may be accomplished.[24]

The exchange of letters ended plans to have Sears, Roebuck and Company paint the interior of the Custis-Lee Mansion in 1970, and it

---

24. Taylor to General Superintendent, National Capital Parks, December 29, 1970, copy in WASO research files.

probably led to a meeting that took place at the mansion on March 10, 1971. The east portico wood and stone steps were reconstructed in 1971, after having lasted some ten years.[25]

I. ARCHITECTURAL STUDY OF MANSION ROOF AND GUTTER PROBLEMS, 1971

On March 10, 1971, a meeting was held at the Custis-Lee Mansion in which problems affecting the structure's stability were presented. In attendance were Superintendent Taylor, and representatives of the Washington Office, Eastern Service Center, and park staff. Two problems were considered: (1) the water stains that were occurring at several locations within the mansion at the exterior walls--observations by NPS site personnel, over a period of time, indicated that the existing system of gutters and downspouts were inadequate for the roof areas they served. This had permitted excessive amounts of water to soak into the exterior walls, particularly on the eastern facade of the structure; and (2) the load capacity of the second floor structural system, which was being subjected to heavy loads due to heavy visitation of the mansion.

Architect Franzen was assigned to study the problems. His report was entitled, "Custis-Lee Mansion Structure Study." Using nine historical photographs of the mansion's exterior taken during the Civil War or shortly thereafter, and data from Nelligan's "Old Arlington--The Story of the Lee Mansion National Memorial," Franzen designed a system of enlarged gutters and downspouts that otherwise resembled the 1861 system. The installation of the new and heavier system, however, required lifting the existing slate roof on the north and south wings, and Franzen suggested that as a part of this work, the wing roofs should also be restored to their 1858-61 appearance. Franzen also made a limited structural inspection of the joist system on the second floor and found it

---

25. Personal interview with Site Supervisor Ann Fuqua, April 28, 1983 by the author of this study.

in excellent condition. In the basement he recommended that the brick walls be waterproofed on their exterior face below grade.[26]

The study was reviewed, and on October 29, 1971, Superintendent David Richie, George Washington Memorial Parkway, recommended approval to the Director, National Capital Parks, provided that certain alterations were made in the 1861 roof restoration plan. Richie wrote, "Since Mr. Franzen completed his report, information has been acquired [from the October 17, 1859, application that Lee filled out to purchase fire insurance on the Mansion from the Hartsford Fire Insurance Company] which documents the roof of the center section of the house as being covered with slate in 1859. The roofs of the two wings of the house are documented as being covered with gravel in 1859."[27] This memorandum saved the National Park Service from committing serious historical errors in plans to restore the roofs of the two wings to their 1858-61 appearance.

J. SUMMARY, RESTORATION OF ARLINGTON HOUSE, 1962-1971

More than $14,345 was expended on repairs and improvements to Arlington House between 1962-69.

1. Painting of the Mansion

a. Exterior Painting

1964 -- begin first study of exterior historical paint colors of mansion. Historic Structure Report "Exterior Repainting of Custis-Lee House," July 30, 1965.

---

26. All data extracted from Architect Franzen's report, copy of which may be found in park "Restoration and Repair" file. Rooms 107 and 104 in the north wing and Room 114 in the south wing had suffered extensively from this water damage, ca. 1969-71.

27. Richie to Director, National Capital Parks, October 29, 1971 in park "Restoration and Repair" file drawer. This fire insurance policy had not been acquired when Nelligan completed his study in 1953. Hence, Architect Franzen did not know of the 1859 information on the roof. Curators Ann Fuqua and Agnes Mullins were the persons who alerted Superintendent Richie to the existence of the 1859 data.

1964--paint is sandblasted to its original surface and the entire structure restuccoed except for the center portion of the back or west facade of the house.

1965--exterior repainted. "Historic colors" used.

1965-66--columns of east (front) portico marbleized. This work restored exterior to 1858-61 appearance.

b. Interior Painting (Historic Room Colors Used)

1962--painted Rooms 106, 107, 104, 115, and several hallways.

1963--painted Rooms 108 and 109

1965--painted Rooms 101, 110, 111, 113, 116, 201, BO-1, and cellar stairs

1965--following painting schedule instituted in 1965 and followed to date:

hallways and areas frequented by visitors given touchup painting every two years.

historic rooms only viewed by visitors, painted at seven-year intervals.

1967--E. Blaine Cliver, "Preliminary Report of Interior Paint Investigation." Studied Rooms 101, 110, 111, 112, 113, 201, and one outside shutter.

2. East Portico Ceiling and Steps

1968--plaster soffit in ceiling of east or front portico falls. This rebuilt under Contract 14-10-6-960-195 by Fitzgerald and Company of East Riverdale, Maryland, for $2,495 in October.

1971--wooden and sandstone steps, rebuilt in 1861-style in 1935 and rebuilt again in 1961, reconstructed for the third time in 1971. These steps have to be replaced at 10-year intervals.

3. Architectural Investigation of Arlington House

1971-April--Architect Archie W. Franzen completes "Custis-Lee Mansion Structure Study."

1971--1. Architect Franzen prepares plans to replace the copper gutters and downspouts that had been installed by the War Department in 1928 with an enlarged system modeled after the gutter and downspout system in use on the mansion in 1861.

1971 - 2. Recommends existing slate roofs of north and south wings be restored to 1861 appearance.

1971 - 3. Makes a limited structural inspection of the joist system of the second floor and finds it to be in excellent condition.

1971- Architect Franzen recommends basement brick walls be waterproofed on their exterior face below grade.

4. Historical Research

1968--Historian Charles H. McCormick completes two documentary studies: "Custis-Lee Mansion Historical Data for Grounds," June 1, 1968. A study of the appearance of ground and buildings in the 1855-61 period. "Custis-Lee Mansion Furnishing Study," July 20, 1968. Presents documentary evidence on Custis and Lee furnishings in mansion in 1855-61 period.

IV. ARLINGTON HOUSE, 1972-1979

Public Law 92-333, approved June 30, 1972, officially changed the name of the site from the "Custis-Lee Mansion" to "The Arlington House," The Robert E. Lee Memorial, thus restoring the historical name to the mansion. During the years 1972-79 more than $109,370 was to be expended for the repair and restoration of Arlington House.

A. RESTORATION OF 1861 APPEARANCE OF WING ROOFS

On September 12, 1972, a meeting was held at Arlington House to continue discussion of problems considered earlier on March 10, 1970. With regard to the roofs on the wings, those in attendance reported:

> Comments--Contract to slate the two wing roofs has been stopped. Two sources indicate that these roofs, for the restored period, were of a "gravel" type. The existing slope is approximately 4 in 12, but it has not been ascertained if the roof structure are original or if they had been altered.
>
> Recommended:
>
> 1. Contact a major roofing manufacturer to advise on a modern roofing system that would afford the appearance of the "gravel" roof of the mid 19th century.
>
> 2. Roof sub-structure be investigated to determine its originality. Harry Martin plans investigative probes into the attic area during the week of September 17 through 24 to undercover any evidence of structure change.
>
> 3. Protect the mansion with a roofing system which will be guaranteed by the manufacturer and closely resemble the "gravel" roof of the restoration period.[1]

James J. Redmond, Chief, Division of Maintenance, contacted John Morgan of the Manville Company in Denver, Colorado, regarding gravel roofs and Redmond reported on October 6, 1972:

---

1. Minutes of Meeting of September 12, 1972, Custis-Lee Mansion (copy in "Restoration and Repair" records in the park library.)

The Manville Company researched the construction of gravel roofs for the 1860 period and Mr. Roxbrough informed me that a cold tar or pitch was obtained from a local gas works. This was usually brought to the site and heated. Then heavy duty craft type paper was dipped several times into the tar pot and the excess was scraped off. When this paper dried, it was overlapped and nailed in place on the roof. The paper again was flooded with tar and a source of local gravel was spread over the flooded paper and rolled by hand.[2]

B. RESTORATION OF 1861 GUTTER AND DOWNSPOUT SYSTEM

At the September 12, 1972 meeting, the group commented on the gutter and downspout system:

Water damage has occurred in the exterior walls. This is evidenced by the water stains both on interior and exterior surfaces of the wall. The gutter and the downspout system, as it now exists, can not adequately accommodate the amount of roof runoff. The downspout locations differ from photographs of the period.

Recommended:

Replace water removal system for the roofs following Mr. Franzen's plan which includes relocation of downspout and enlarging the size of gutters and downspouts.[3]

In the annual report for 1972, Site Manager Fuqua reported:

With the completion of Archie W. Franzen's study of the immediate pre-Civil War appearance of the roof and gutters of the house, initial steps were taken to replace the existing gutter system and to lay tar and gravel roofs on the north and south wings. The new gutter system will alleviate a severe moisture problem which had developed in the wings of the house.[4]

---

2. Redmond to Dickson and others, October 6, 1972, in "Restoration and Repair" records.

3. Minutes of the September 12, 1972 meeting, in "Restoration and Repair" records.

4. Superintendent's Annual Report for 1972, in park subject files.

Specifications for the roof and gutter projects, together with invitations to bid, were issued on August 23, 1973, and bids were opened on August 29. The contract, in the amount of $46,000, was awarded to Prospect Industries, Inc., of McLean, Virginia, on October 29. An additional $4,000 was also paid to the contractor for the rental of scaffolding. The contract called for the following work: (1) removal of the existing tile roofs on the two wings and also the wing gutters; (2) inspection and recoding of the wing roof structures; (3) repair/modification of roof structural systems; and (4) installation of new gravel covered roofs to the wings of Arlington House and the required gutter system.[5]

The contractor was instructed to begin work on May 14, 1974, and an additional 21 calendar days extension of time was granted on July 3, due to inclement weather and delays caused by the government. Work was completed on July 24 and accepted by the National Park Service on November 11, 1974.[6]

In her annual report for 1974 Site Manager Fuqua described this restoration work:

> Roofing of the south and north wings was undertaken to solve major problems of rain water leakage. While reproducing the original tar and gravel roofs proved unfeasible, their general appearance was reproduced by using a waterproofing epoxy over which pea gravel was laid. New gutters were installed on the wings in conjunction with the roofwork. The slate roof on the center section of the house was checked for damage with some replacement necessary and repairs made to areas under the eaves which had suffered water damage.[7]

---

5. Specifications, including six sketches of gutter system with correspondence and bids in "Restoration and Repair" records. Also see Richie to Chief, Division of Budget and Programs, November 29, 1973, ibid.

6. Peacock to Prospect Industries, July 3, 1974, Redmond to Fuqua, November 11, 1974, in "Restoration and Repair" records.

7. Superintendent's Annual Report for 1974, in park subject files.

C. INTERIOR PAINTING OF THE MANSION, 1972

In her annual report for 1972 Site Manager Fuqua reported that Curator Agnes Mullins was conducting a paint study of the hallway areas of the mansion and the center hall (Room 111). The south hall (Room 113), and the second floor hallway (Room 201) had been repainted that spring.[8]

D. EXTERIOR PAINTING OF MANSION, 1972-1974

The meeting at the mansion on September 12, 1972, had also considered the problem of restoring the 1858-61 historic colors of the exterior of the mansion and recommended:

> Painting contracting companies involved in the restoration field be invited to submit bids for the exterior painting of the mansion.
>
> Studies be continued to ascertain correct paint colors and their proper location on the exterior surfaces.[9]

Relative to progress on this project, Site Manager Fuqua reported in her annual report for 1972:

> Specifications for painting of the exterior walls of the mansion were prepared, while further research on the colors to be used for the exterior woodwork and the marble treatment for the portico columns was begun.[10]

The specifications for restoring the historic colors on the exterior of Arlington House, were reviewed by architects in the Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation, and invitations to bid on the project were issued on May 10. The bids opened on May 22, 1973.

---

8. Superintendent's Annual Report for 1972, in park subject file.

9. Minutes of September 12, 1972 meeting, "Restoration and Repair" recprds.

10. Superintendent's Annual Report for 1972, in park subject file.

The contract to paint the exterior of Arlington House was awarded on May 29, 1973, to the lowest bidder, Apex Decorating Company of Silver Spring, Maryland, for $13,500. The contractor was instructed to begin work on June 11, 1973.[11] Change orders were issued by the National Park Service on August 10, and September 6, and the time of the contract was extended to September 15. The final inspection of the project was made on October 1, when it was reported that the work had been completed in accordance with the specifications on September 15. Total cost of the work, including additional work requested by the change orders, was $14,000.[12]

E. PLASTER MOLDING OF PORTICO CEILING REPLACED, 1972-1973

In her annual report for 1972, Site Manager Fuqua noted, "During the severe summer heat wave, a section of the ceiling molding of the portico fell. Recommendations for repair were drawn up but repair work did not get underway."[13]

On June 18, 1973, Architect Hugh Miller, Park Historic Architecture, WASO, met at Arlington House with several technicians, to discuss the plaster moldings on the soffit of the portico. Miller reported:

> Mr. Breen and I inspected the portions of plaster molding. There are two major areas that need to be replaced. Against the house where for a distance of approximately ten feet the upper portion of the cornice molding has fallen, and on the

---

11. Crellin to Peacock, April 13, 1973; "National Capital Parks Specifications, Exterior Painting, Arlington House, Arlington, Virginia;" and correspondence of Lucille B. Peacock, Chief, Branch of Procurement and Contracting, Contracting Officer, May 29, and June 11, 1973, in "Restoration and Repair" records.

12. Richie to Branch of Procurement and Contracting, National Capital Parks, re: Contract CX-3000-3-0918, October 30, 1973; and Cox, to Apex Decorating Company, November 1, 1972, in "Restoration and Repair" records.

13. Superintendent's Annual Report for 1972, in park subject file.

front portion of the soffit which has been repaired without following the molding profile. It appears that where the molding has failed it has been from external forces that have broken the keys. This may have occurred during the replacement of the soffit in the mid 60's. The wood lath seems to be sound, but the blocking for the cornice may have moved from its original position.

It is suggested that new moldings following existing profiles be run to repair these areas. This work will include cleaning out old plaster keys and cutting a sharp surface in the existing plaster for matching the new work. Existing blocking and lath should be securely fastened to the rafters. The addition of a hardware cloth or metal lath spaced away from the wooden lath is desirable for reinforcement in the new plaster work. Existing wooden lath should be adequately wet to prevent warping when new plaster is applied. The scope of the work should include extensive inspection of both the surface and the lath system of the entire cornice molding to assure that the existing work is sound. Where necessary, this should be reinforced with stainless steel wires tied into the back of the moldings or by removing old work and replacing by new if needed.[14]

The purchase order for this work, estimated to cost $1,800, was issued to Stephano Lozupone & Sons of Washington, D.C., on June 22, 1973. The work included specifications and two sketch plans.[15] The reconstruction was completed in 1973.[16]

F. PROPOSED WORK ON THE BRICK FOUNDATION WALLS, 1972

At the meeting held at Arlington House on September 12, 1972, the following comments were made:

There has been continuous deterioration of the brick foundation walls and fireplace bases. Moisture is being absorbed at this level which then affects the interior walls on the ground floor.

---

14. Miller to Chief, Park Historic Architecture, June 19, 1973, and Acting Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation to Director, National Capital Parks, [ca. June 20, 1973, transmitted Miller report], in "Restoration and Repair" records.

15. Copy of purchase order PX-3000-3-3901, June 22, 1973, with plans and specifications, in "Restoration and Repair" records.

16. The Site Manager's annual report for 1973 is missing, and there is no further correspondence on the subject in the park files.

Recommended:

Program for the rehabilitation of the Foundation Walls

1. Excavate the perimeter of the building.

2. Replace, point, and parge brick foundation walls.

3. Investigate and modify drainage system to prevent hydrostatic pressure around the walls and adequately provide for the downspout drainage.

4. Landscape and pave exterior areas around mansion.[17]

As a result of the meeting, George Washington Memorial Parkway Superintendent Richie wrote on October 6, 1972, to the Director of the Professional Support Service, requesting assistance to prepare specifications and a cost estimate "to correct and eliminate the drainage problem around the base of the mansion and to correct the damage that has occurred to the foundation and other structures of the house." This information was necessary to program the work for the 1974 fiscal year 1974.[18] No assistance was provided, and no further effort was made to correct this problem in 1972-73.

G. RESTORATION OF 1864 SNOW GUARDS ON MAIN ROOF, 1973

On July 17, 1973, a purchase order in the amount of $1,978 was issued to the Virginia Roofing Corporation of Alexandria, Virginia, for performing the following work on the slate roof of the main structure of Arlington House: (1) remove existing butterfly and bar type snow guards and fabricate and install new wooden snow guards, similar to the type used in 1864--$788; and (2) remove existing copper flashing at chimneys on high roof only and furnish and install new 16-ounce copper base and counterflashing--$1,190.[19] This work was to be completed by August 2, 1973.

---

17. Minutes of the September 12, 1972 meeting at Arlington House, in "Restoration and Repair" records.

18. Richie to Director, Professional Support Service, October 6, 1972, in "Restoration and Repair" records.

19. Purchase Order PX-3000-4-0588, July 17, 1973, in "Restoration and Repair" records.

H. MARBLEIZATION OF EXTERIOR OF ARLINGTON HOUSE, 1972-1974

In her annual report for 1972, Site Supervisor Fuqua noted that "further research on . . . the marble treatment for the portico columns was begun" during the year.[20] On June 11, 1973, Architect Miller, Park Historic Architecture, met with regional and park personnel to discuss proposed projects. With regard to Arlington House, Miller reported, "The specifications for the marbleizing have been prepared, and I suggested that you may want to add Munsell numbers for the various colors. . . ."[21] The invitations to bid, together with "National Capital Parks Specifications for Marbleization--Arlington House, Arlington, Virginia," were issued on September 12, and the bids opened on September 21, 1973. The contract was awarded to the low bidder, Apex Decorating Company of Silver Spring, Maryland, for $13,950, on October 29, 1973. The contractor was ordered to proceed with the work on December 4. The following day change order 1, which added $1,500 to the sum agreed upon, was issued as was stop order 1, which directed the Apex Company to suspend all work until about April 15, 1974.[22] The contractor was instructed to resume work on April 22, 1974, and 50 calendar days were added, extending the time of completion to June 11, 1974.[23]

---

20. Annual Report for 1972, and Fuqua to Firsbee, August 17, 1973, in "Restoration and Repair" record.

21. Miller to Chief, Park Historic Architecture, June 15, 1974, in "Restoration and Repair" records.

22. Copies of specifications, invitation to bid, and orders, signed by Lucille B. Peacock, Chief, Division of Contracting and Procurement, Contracting Officer to Apex Decorating Company, December 4 and 5, 1973, and letter October 26, 1973, awarding contract, in "Restoration and Repair" records.

23. Peacock to Apex Decorating Company, April 1, 1974, in "Restoration and Repair" records.

Change order 2, increasing the amount to be paid to the contractor in the amount of $2,980 for additional work, was issued on July 26, 1974, and 31 calendar days were added to the contract, making the final day July 31, 1974.[24] The contractor completed the work on time and the final inspection was made on August 12, 1974. The letter of final inspection and acceptance of the contract, with payment of the $18,430 approved, was issued on August 13, 1974.[25]

From 1972 to 1974 approximately $86,208 had been expended to restore the 1858-61 exterior appearance of Arlington House. Site Supervisor Fuqua thus commented on this progress in her 1974 annual report:

> Highlighting 1974 were two major restoration and preservation projects. The wings of the house were reroofed to give their 1861 appearance and the exterior of the building was repainted to give the marble effect it originally had . . . .

Of the marbleization project in particular, she reported:

> Painting of the north, east, and south facades of the house to reproduce the original marble effect was the major restoration project for the year. While this difficult job had been undertaken by the National Park Service in the late 1960's, the time changes in the specifications were necessary to reflect further research. The overall effect of this paint job more closely resembles the original treatment, documented by photographs taken in 1964.[26]

I. FUMIGATION OF THE MANSION, 1974

One additional project, the fumigation of Arlington House, completed the restoration and preservation projects undertaken from 1972 to 1974. In November 1973 the Terminix Company of Maryland and Washington,

---

24. Peacock to Apex Decorating Company, July 26, 1974, including two 1864 photographs of portico columns, in "Restoration and Repair" records.

25. Veitl, to NCP Contracting Officer, August 14, 1974--Final Inspection Report; Peacock to Apex Decorating Company, April 13, 1974, in "Restoration and Repair" records.

26. Annual Report for 1974, in park subject files.

Inc., of Hyattsville, Maryland, inspected Arlington House for insect damage and reported:

> Our findings revealed wood borer damage to numerous areas of the structure. Much of the damage is from prior wood worm infestation which seems to be no longer active. On the other hand, there are active infestations in several areas of the structure, including the understructure and attic area.
>
> As indicated in Mr. Freund's letter to you, fumigation to the entire structure and its contents and treatment of the attic area with a wood preservative is a certain solution to eliminating the infestation. If left unchecked, it will become more severe in the presently infested areas and, of course, spread to areas not now infested. Fumigation, therefore, eliminates immediately these wood borers in all stages of their metamorphosis. What remains thereafter is the necessity for a program of treating future items prior to their introduction into the Mansion so that the insect is not again allowed to develop.
>
> Accordingly, our proposal is for the total fumigation of the Mansion except the area of the attic which cannot be sealed. This area would be treated with a wood preservative to accomplish the same results.[27]

Acting Superintendent Redmond confirmed the agreement with the Terminix Company to fumigate the mansion on January 29, 1974, and informed them that the work was to be done March 11-15, when the house would be sealed. He also commented, "We . . . appreciate your calling in the Dow Chemical Company representative, Dr. Porteous, for an on site inspection of this project. We understand that the Dow Chemical Vikane is safe to use on fragile, historic fabric provided it is applied properly."[28]

Five days were necessary to complete the fumigation. On March 15, 1974, Clifford S. Chadderton, Chief, Division of Safety Management,

---

27. Edwards to Fuqua, November 20, 1973 in "Restoration and Repair" records.

28. Redmond to Edwards, January 29, 1974 in "Restoration and Repair" records.

National Capital Parks, reported the findings of his inspection of the work:

> On March 13, a safety inspection was made at Arlington House to determine if safety measures were taken for exterminating....
>
> A deadly poison gas titled, "Vikane Sulfure Fluoride" was used for a period of 24 hours through various hoses placed in several rooms in the basement and main floor. All cracks and chimneys were sealed tight and signs placed around the house reading "Deadly Poison." There was a 24-hour guard outside the house at all times and four employees from Terminix were bivouacked in a trailer during the night to monitor the concentration of gas to be used for a period of 24 hours.
>
> All safety measures were taken to assure safety for all unknown visitors that might invade the area.[29]

In her annual report for 1974 Site Supervisor Fuqua noted of this project, "Discovery of insect infestation was followed up with massive fumigation which seems to have solved the problem."[30]

J. INSTALLATION OF SMOKE DETECTING FIRE ALARM SYSTEM, 1975-1976

On December 18, 1974, Superintendent Charles A. Veitl, George Washington Memorial Parkway, wrote to the Chief, Professional Support, National Capital Region, with regard to Arlington House:

> We request that every effort be made to assure completion of the specifications for the Arlington House smoke detection system by the middle of February. The present inadequate heat detection system, coupled with the necessity of laying 4800 feet of hose to get adequate water pressure, almost assures that any fire starting at night would be well underway before the fire department arrives. With the installation of the early warning system, there will be at least a fighting chance that the fire department can get here in time to do some good.[31]

---

29. Chadderton to Acting Superintendent, George Washington Memorial Parkway, March 15, 1974, in "Restoration and Repair" records.

30. Annual Report for 1974, in park subject files.

31. Veitl to Chief, Professional Support, December 18, 1974, in "Restoration and Repair" records.

On December 19, 1974, Superintendent Vietl informed Dallas Steele, Wells-Fargo Alarm System, Inc., Washington, D.C., of the condition of the existing fire alarm system in Arlington House:

> The test of the equipment revealed that both systems in the mansion were not functioning properly and were in a sad state of disrepair. The inside-outside alarm and the relay to the Fort Myer Fire Department are not responding to the electrical or the heat test. However, the break-glass alarm was functioning properly and some indicators for the system functioned on occasion. The system for the potting house (museum) was also not adequate, although only two of the seven units did not function properly. We are insisting that you make the necessary repairs as efficiently and quickly as possible in order to protect this historical and irreplaceable resource.[32]

M.R. Cutler, Chief of Design Services, National Capital Parks, had his men prepare the specifications and drawings for the fire detection system for Arlington House and submitted them for approval to Superintendent Veitl on February 21, 1975.[33] Invitations to bid, together with the specifications and drawings 855-8001, dated February 18, 1975, "Arlington House Fire Detection System," were issued on May 16 and the bids were opened on June 3, 1975.[34]

The contract, dated June 5, 1975, was awarded to the low bidder, C.G. Esterbrook, Inc., of Arlington, Virginia, for $20,666.68.[35] C.G. Esterbrook, Inc., was instructed to begin work on July 11 and the project was to be completed by October 8, 1975. Work on the installation of the new fire detection system was completed on March 12, 1976, and the final letter of acceptance was issued on April 14, 1976.[36]

---

32. Veitl to Steele, December 19, 1974, in "Restoration and Repair" records.

33. Cutler to Veitl, February 21, 1975, in "Restoration and Repair" records.

34. All documents may be found in the "Restoration and Repair" records.

35. The contract may be found in the "Restoration and Repair" records.

36. Sutfin to C.G. Esterbrook, Inc., April 14, 1976, in "Restoration and Repair" records.

In her Annual Report for 1975, Site Supervisor Fuqua noted of this project, "During 1975 major strides were taken toward the protection of the historical resources at the site. A contract was let and construction begun on the installation of a smoke detecting fire alarm system for all buildings within the site. This system will be a major improvement over the current system, which operates on heat."[37]

In her report the following year, she reported:

> Institution of a smoke detection system providing protection for all buildings has proven highly effective, particularly in detecting visitors smoking in the house and in the museum. Defective parts in the main panel and in a detection unit caused a series of false alarms during the summer and it took several weeks to pinpoint the problem. On the whole the system has functioned smoothly and does provide highly adequate protection.[38]

K. LIGHT FILTERING FILM ON MANSION WINDOWS, 1975

On July 22, 1975, W.B. Slater of Slater's Glass Tinting, Glen Allen, Virginia, completed the application of a light filtering polyethylene grey-tinted film to the windows at Arlington House. The inside surface of all exterior windows of the mansion were cleaned, conditioned, and tinted except the windows in the conservatory (Room 116). The windows of the south servants' quarters and the museum exhibit were all treated with this film. The cost was $1,761.[39] The tinted film was reported to

---

37. Annual Report for 1975, in park subject files.

38. Annual Report for 1976, in park subject files.

39. Description of work and cost from requisition, George Washington Memorial Parkway 75-231, May 29, 1975; and Staff Curator Nicolas F. Veloz, Jr.'s report to Chief, IRRM, George Washington Memorial Parkway, July 29, 1975, in "Restoration and Repair" records. In the latter document Veloz stated, "All exterior windows, except those in the wine cellar, conservatory, and non-public portion of the basement were so treated" and "also the windows of the south servants' quarters and museum area were so treated."

remove approximately 85 percent of the ultraviolet light and 56 percent of the visible light passing through the film.[40]

L. STRUCTURAL WEAKNESSES IN MANSION 1975-1978

On April 17, 1975, Superintendent Veitl requested the historical architect of National Capital Parks to have a survey made of the floors and stairways in Arlington House:

> We would like to request your time to make a survey of the conditon and carrying capacity of the hallway floors and stairways at Arlington House. We particularly need your recommendations at this time on repairing the floor[41] in the pantry [Room 101] which is weakening in spots. . . .

> We would like to request your time to make a survey of the condition and carrying capacity of the hallway floors and stairways at Arlington House. We particularly need your recommendations at this time on repairing the floor[41] in the pantry [Room 101] which is weakening in spots. . . .

In her annual report for 1975, Site Supervisor Fuqua reported:

> Structural weaknesses were found in the second floor of the mansion, which are still being evaluated and corrected. As a temporary measure, visitor access to the second floor has been limited to 15 persons at a time. Along a similar note, guided tours were implemented throughout the remainder of the house to improve interpretation and lessen the extreme impact on the structure of large groups.[42] At times over 150 persons arrive at one time from Tourmobile.

---

40. Veloz, to Chief, IRRM, George Washington Memorial Parkway, July 29, 1975. Report of Stone, Museum Specialist (Paper Conservation) to Chief, Division of Museum Services, July 22, 1975, in "Restoration and Repair Records." A purchase order, dated August 26, 1975, in the amount of $450, was also entered into with Slater's Glass Tinting to "scrape and clean the outside of all exterior windows and clean the film on the inside of all exterior windows at Arlington House."

41. Veitl to historical architect, National Capital Parks, April 17, 1975, in "Restoration and Repair" records.

42. Annual Report for 1975, in park subject files.

At the request of Paul Goeldner, Historical Architect, Professional Services, John J. Longworth, Civil Engineer, Professional Services, National Capital Parks, made a series of investigations into the structural stability and condition of Arlington House. In his report, dated January 8, 1976, Longworth wrote:

1. The windowed passageway formerly used as a greenhouse [Room 116]. Lower sash and window frames subjected to high humidity and moisture conditions in the past developed damp rot which eroded most of the wood material at the junction of all sash frames and sills. This resulted in movement of window framing and loss of support for the arched framing and the masonry above it. The windows had become unable to close or move and masonry arches were beginning to crack and subside.

2. Flooring in the smaller bedrooms developed a two inch sag and the partition wall developed cracks showing subsidence. To date, limited floorboards and baseboards have been removed. They indicate:

   a. Floor joists have cracked and subsided at their junction with the main beam intended to support the partition.

   b. The main beam indicates a maximum deflection of three inches.

   c. The partition framing which should lie directly on the main beam remains relatively level while the beam has deflected the three inches mentioned above.

   d. Placement of an electrical system sometime in the past resulted in uncontrolled drilling of the beam, as did hanging of a massive chandelier.

   The problem is being evaluated by:

   1) Investigations at the bearing points of the main beam.

   2) Removal of the chandelier which was not there originally.

3. Stairways leading to the second floor.

   a. Extremely long wooden horses have deflected due to a combination of span length and loading conditions.

   b. One stair has been supported by a door lintel which has or is failing.

   Restriction of persons on the stairs has been advised until repair and strengthening have been accomplished.

4. Stairwell and framing leading to kitchen. Stairs, framing and floor have subsided and vibrate with passage.

a. Framing beams have deflected and cracked under load. Poor framing practices, small beam size and heavy post loading appear to have been the cause of the failure which could become worse in time.

Replacement of and relocation of short posts is advised together with placement of a bearing mat under the brick flooring.

We do not recommend restoring the floor to its original level on a short term basis. It may be possible to do so over a three to six month period.

5. Door lintel at kitchen entrance. A major beam extending the full length of the kitchen landed above a door lintel. The door lintel and frame are bent and cracked. Replacement of the lintel is required after shoring and stabilization of the beam. Passageway through and at the doorway should be restricted.

6. First floor joists above the kitchen area have split or broken at bearing points.

Flooring is sagging and joists show continuing debility because of poor framing practices in original construction and excessive live loads. Shoring, replacement and reframing is required in about three to five beams. Work will be difficult because of existing construction, movement of replacement material, existing framing and confined work areas.

None of these conditions are beyond repair and major construction should not be involved. We would recommend use of a small group of experienced carpenters (say two to a maximum of four) assigned on a continuing basis until repairs are completed. Replacement of plaster, paint and trim will also be needed after completion of stabilization. Work is estimated to take from six to eight months depending on factors which are presently not known.

Until the work is completed, we would recommend limitation of loads including the number of visitors in each area in order to prevent loss or further damage to the structure.

We consider removal of the chandelier of prime importance and a major item in safeguarding the structure.[43]

---

43. Longworth to Superintendent, George Washington Memorial Parkway, January 8, 1976, in "Restoration and Repair" records.

In her annual report for 1976, Site Supervisor Fuqua reported:

> A preliminary survey of the house made by NCR Engineer Jack Longworth revealed several developing structural weakness from overloading and age. The major problem was a weakened floor joist beneath the wall between the Lee Boys' Room [Room 206] and the Colonel and Mrs. Lee's Bedroom [Room 207] on the second floor. Stabilization work on the joist was successfully completed by Wallace Spencer . . . Carpenter, with only minimal alterations to the original fabric of the building.
>
> The pantry [Room 101] and spots had to be braced with posts. The weakened lintel over the doorway to the winter kitchen [Room BO-2] was replaced and braced backed with steel. Until further structural investigation could be done, overloading of the structure during July and August was brought under control by giving guided tours to all visitors. Groups limited to 25 persons entered the house at 15 minute intervals. . . .[44]

On April 28, 1977, Superintendent Veitl requested that Engineer Longworth prepare a survey of the carrying capacity of Arlington House, including both the first and second floors.[45] Longworth made this survey during the fall of 1977. It was determined that the first landing on a main stairway was dangerously weak. This weakness was indicated by plaster failure on the ceiling underlying the landing. Based on this information, Paul Goeldner, Chief, Historic Resource Services, National Capital Region, permitted entry into the framework to determine the cause of weakness. The cause was found to be a bearing surface that was too small on two joists that supported the landing. About two square meters of plaster ware removed to expose the framework. This plaster dated from the Army restoration of 1928-30. An external prop was then installed to support the landing. No decision was made in 1978 on the permanent stabilization of this landing as a Historic Structure Report on Arlington House was scheduled to begin in the fall of 1978, and proposals

---

44. Annual Report for 1976, in park subject files.

45. Veitl to Chief, Professional Support, National Capital Region, April 18, 1977, in "Restoration and Repair" records.

for permanent stabilization of the landing were to be offered in the study.[46]

M. WALLPAPERING AND PAINTING MANSION ROOMS, 1976

In her annual report for 1976 Site Supervisor Fuqua reported, "Eight rooms in the house were wallpapered with Wall-Tex protective paper which prevents paint build-up on the plaster walls, and then were painted. Five other rooms in the house were also painted."[47]

N. THREATS TO SAFETY OF ARLINGTON HOUSE RESULTING FROM THE USE OF MANSION FOR SOCIAL FUNCTIONS, 1970-1979

Beginning in 1970, because of its convenient location, attractive setting, and ample space, Arlington House began to be used on a fairly regular basis for social functions sponsored by either the Secretary of the Interior or the Director of the National Park Service. Sixteen such events took place in the mansion during the period January 1970 to December 1974.[48] Smoking was permitted throughout the historic house at these parties, and this alarmed Site Supervisor Fuqua, Superintendent of George Washington Memorial Parkway Ritchie, and the officials of National Capital Region who were responsible for the preservation of the mansion.

In a memorandum to the Chief, Legislative Services, National Park Service, dated June 22, 1973, regarding "Guidelines for special events at Arlington House," National Capital Regional Director Russell E. Dickenson wrote in part:

> In the last few years, a few receptions and dinners in the mansion have been authorized by the Secretary or the Director of the National Park Service, on the basis that the importance or significance of the occasion warranted an exception to the

---

46. Data from Draft letter to State Preservation and Historical Office, Virginia, on Arlington House, March 14, 1978, in "Restoration and Repair" records.

47. Annual report for 1976, in park subject files.

48. In 1975 a list of social events, 1970-74, at Arlington House was compiled. It may be found in the WASO research files.

general rule. These exceptions will be increasingly difficult to accommodate as implementation of the furnishings plan for the mansion proceeds. Even at the present time, there is a high risk of damage to carpets and furnishings that have to be moved to accommodate dinners or receptions. Some larger objects that cannot be moved have been damaged.

With regard to smoking, Director Dickenson recommended:

> Smoking in the mansion should not be permitted. Old, very flammable, window dressings present a major hazard. The fireplaces contain dry wood and represent a special hazard because smokers tend to treat fireplaces as ash trays.
>
> Cigarette burns on flooring and furnishings have resulted from previous exceptions to the "no smoking" rule.[49]

Thomas N. Crellin, Acting Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation, also commented on these problems, writing to the Director on August 2, 1973:

> We have been asked to suggest means of protecting Arlington House from damage arising from special events at the mansion. In the past, these events have included candlelight tours, sit-down dinners, and cocktail parties. We will limit our comments to our concern for the fabric of the building and will not comment on the philosophical question of privilege use of public property held in trust.
>
> It is obvious that the major concern during these events is the danger from fire. We assume that an adequate staff schooled in emergency procedures is on hand during all these events. One staff member should be assigned to monitor each space where there are candles.

---

49. Dickenson to Chief, Legislative Services, National Park Service, June 22, 1973, in WASO research files. Also see in same file, Richie to Dickenson, May 25, 1973, expressing concern of Ann Fuqua over smoking at swearing-in ceremonies and setting of glasses on old furniture in Arlington House. On May 30 Dickenson also sent a copy of the Richie letter to Ernest A. Connally, Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation, for advice on how to correct the situation.

No smoking should be a condition for all uses of the house. The "no smoking" rule must be enforced not only by the staff but by the sponsors of the event. Failure on the part of the participants in these events to adhere to the "no smoking" rule should be adequate justification not to honor subsequent requests for the use of the building by the sponsors.

While it is technically impossible to assess the amount of physical wear to the fabric of the building that results from a special event, it is apparent that this loading of the building must be considered with the total visitation and public use. Every effort must be made to protect surfaces from wear including the installation of barriers to keep people away from walls and openings and mats or carpets on the floors and stairs. The number of people permitted in the building at any one time should be developed from the loading capacity of the floors and number of people that can easily go through the passages and stairways (the loads developed by the Franzen report assumed people would not be in the rooms).

The movement of furniture out of the rooms to accommodate events also damages the building since wall and door surfaces are inevitably marred and scratched in the process. Movement of the house collection of furniture and objects should not be permitted.

Management decisions to limit or eliminate special uses may appear arbitrary, but it must be remembered that the house and its contents are nonrenewable resources. Once worn out, they can only be replaced by reproduction. Our responsibility as managers of historic preservation is to protect and preserve these irreplaceable remnants of our heritage. We will support your policy to meet these objectives.[50]

No further progress was apparently made in 1973 and 1974, for Site Supervisor Fuqua warned in her annual report for 1974, "Smoking within the house during social functions sponsored by the Director of the National Park Service continued to present the major fire hazard to the structure. . . ."[51]

On May 7, 1975, Ernest A. Connally, Associate Director, Professional Services (former Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation) again turned to the problem, writing the Director:

---

50. Crellin to Director, August 2, 1973, WASO research files.

51. Annual Report for 1974, in park subject files.

For some time Arlington House has been used for special social functions hosted by Members of the Cabinet and other high government officials. Such use has required extensive preparations on the part of the park staff, the removal or use of irreplaceable and valuable furnishings, and the closing of portions of the building to the public. During such gatherings guests are permitted to wander freely in the area opened to them and to smoke and to partake of food and beverages there. A listing of such functions held since January 1970 is attached [see Appendix 4].

This use of Arlington House thus has resulted in unusual wear and serious danger to both the house and to its furnishings. Such use provides a precedent for similar uses of other historic properties and is a source of potentially great embarrassment for the Service and the Department.

The above use of Arlington House, though not inconsistent with former Administrative Policies, is in direct conflict with the Management Policies recently approved and soon to be in effect. This fact, together with the appointment of a new Secretary, would appear to make this an appropriate time for a reconsideration of the use of Arlington House for special social functions and the banning of such use. We recommend that this action be taken.[52]

The problem was then referred to the Director's Policy Council for consideration and on August 5, 1975, Chairman Dickenson informed the Director:

Over the past several years Arlington House has been used for dinner parties, cocktail receptions, evening buffets, and other gatherings. These uses have required extensive preparations, including the moving, or use, of irreplaceable furnishings and the closing of the building to the public. In most cases, smoking has been permitted. It is clearly evident that the particularly fragile nature of the Arlington House and its furnishings is threatened by these arrangements.

It is the conclusion of the Policy Council that requests for use of Arlington House for social functions which might endanger the building and its contents[53] or substantially interfere with visitor use, should be denied.

---

52. Connally to Director, May 7, 1975, in WASO research file.

53. The draft document may be found in WASO research files.

National Park Service Director Gary Everhardt approved the statement recommended by the Policy Council on August 6, 1975. On August 13, 1975, Russell E. Dickenson, who had become Deputy Director of the National Park Service, informed the Director, National Capital Parks, and all other regional directors of this decision and provided them with copies of the council's policy statement on Arlington House.[54]

This action ended the threat. In her annual report for 1975, Site Supervisor Fuqua commented as follows:

> Social functions, which for several years have posed a potential of serious damage to the structure and furnishings, were greatly curtailed under guidelines received from the Director's Policy Council: requests for social functions which might endanger the buildings and its contents or substantially interfere with visitor use are to be denied.[55]

No more social functions of this nature were held in Arlington House from 1975 to 1980.[56]

O. STUCCO REPAIR WORK ON EXTERIOR OF ARLINGTON HOUSE, AND WEST PORCH, 1977

During August 1977 a total of approximately $735 was expended for "Stucco Restoration" at Arlington House on two projects:

> "West Porch replacing Stucco with Galvanized Metal Lath, clean washed sand, Portland Cement," estimated cost $350.[57]

---

54. Ibid.

55. Annual Report for 1975, in park subject files.

56. Statement based on a check of the site supervisor's annual reports for 1975-80, in park subject files.

57. Memorandum of Charles and John Kakor to Fuqua, July 11, 1977, indicating this work will begin on August 19 or 20, 1977, if she approves it. No further data on this project was found. In addition $385 of similar work was to be done to the stucco on the exterior walls of the south servants' quarters. In "Restoration and Repair" records.

2. "North Wing Porch, Replacing Stucco, Galvanized Metal Lath, washed sand, Portland Cement. Lined to match existing walls," estimated cost $385. The work was performed by John Kakos of Mt. Rainier, Maryland. The west porch of the mansion was also reconstructed during 1977 to resemble its appearance in 1864.[58]

P. REPAIRS TO WINDOWS IN ARLINGTON HOUSE, 1978

During the spring of 1978, Wallace Spencer made repairs to the windows in the following Arlington House rooms:

Wine Cellar (Room BO-3)

The east window of the wine room in the basement of the mansion was repaired.[59]

Conservatory (Room 116), South Wing

Repairs were made to the window frames and exterior sill in the conservatory.[60]

In her annual report for 1978, Site Supervisor Fuqua described the status of work on Arlington House:

> Stabilization of structural weaknesses was limited in scope pending the historic structures report scheduled to get underway in 1979. That report will make a thorough survey and provide funding for repairs. Minor stabilization completed included repairs to window frames in the house and the west door frame into the center hall.
>
> Exterior paint on the house continued to seriously flake and moisture problems were evident in the school room [Room 104] and morning room [Room 115] walls.[61]

Q. PREPARATION OF FURNISHING PLAN FOR ARLINGTON HOUSE, 1972-1979

A preliminary report for the furnishing study for Arlington House was completed by Harpers Ferry Center Museum Curator Agnes Mullins

---

58. Personal interview with Site Supervisor Fuqua, April 26, 1983 by the author of this study. 1976 drawings used in rebuilding the west porch are in the "West Porch" file in "Restoration and Repair" records.

59. Photographs and negatives of this work are filed in "Wine Cellar Folder" in "Restoration and Repair" records.

60. Photographs and negatives of this work are filed in the "Conservatory File Holder" in "Restoration and Repair" records.

61. Annual Report for 1978, in park subject files.

and submitted for review to the Division of Museums at Harpers Ferry Center on June 1, 1972.[62] Work on the study for the plan was continued by Mullins during 1973 and 1974. In her annual report for 1974, Site Supervisor Fuqua commented on the project:

> Work continued on the furnishings study. Most of the time was spent in continuing study of the Lee family papers at the Virginia Historical Society in Richmond and the Custis-Lee portraits owned by Washington and Lee University.[63]

In 1975 she noted that "a complete and comprehensive inventory of furnishings was taken. This inventory included notations on the condition of the furnishings and provides a basis for future restoration needs."[64]

In October 1976, Curator Mullins submitted her preliminary draft of the furnishing plan for Arlington House to the National Capital Regional Office for review. That same year "the large south wing room [Room 115], furnished as a dining room since the restoration of the building by the War Department in 1930 began, was initially changed . . . to begin to exhibit its 1861 appearance as Mrs. [Robert E.] Lee's morning [room] . . . ."[65]

In her annual report for 1978, Site Supervisor Fuqua reported with regards to the furnishing plan:

> The final draft of the furnishing plan was submitted for review by the park and Region by Agnes Mullins . . . . That division made available $20,000 to begin implementing the plan and detailed Ms. Mullins to Arlington to do this work.[66]

---

62. Annual Report for 1972, in park subject files.

63. Annual Report for 1974, in park subject files.

64. Annual Report for 1975, in park subject files.

65. Annual Report for 1976, in park subject files.

66. Annual Report for 1978, in park subject files.

The plan was approved in 1979 and Site Supervisor Fuqua noted:

> The furnishing plan for Arlington House was approved this year. Division of Museum Services allotted $20,000 to get implementation underway. This marked the first time since the 1920s that major budgeted funds have been available for acquisition of furnishings for Arlington House. By the end of the year research and final specifications for ordering reproduction carpeting for the center hall, south stairway, and second floor hallway were completed. During the year, 204 furnishings for the house were received as gifts or purchases.[67]

R. ADDITIONAL BRACING FOR FIRST FLOOR ROOMS, 1979

Following the computation of load ratings of the first floor framing system by Dean Robinson of Arthur Bear Engineers, Inc., in March 1979, additional temporary supports were added to those in the basement. A beam and five posts were placed in the winter kitchen (Room BO-2) under the north wing (Rooms 106 and 105). In the south wing a beam and two posts were wedged beneath the header facing the segmental arch under the morning room (Room 115).[68]

S. NATIONAL CAPITAL TEAM, DENVER SERVICE CENTER, UNDERTAKES STUDIES OF PHYSICAL HISTORY OF ARLINGTON HOUSE, 1979-1982

In her annual report for 1979, Site Supervisor Fuqua noted that, during fiscal year 1979, "$100,000 was received through the Denver Service Center for emergency stabilization and repair to the house. By the year's end, stabilization of the north wing roof was at about the halfway point."[69] The work from 1979 to 1982 was conducted under the direction of Architect Harry Lee Arnest, III of the Branch of Historic Preservation, National Capital Team, Denver Service Center.

---

67. Annual Report for 1979, in park subject files.

68. See "Historic Structures Report, Historic Data Section, Supplementary Material, Arlington House," Appendix M, for a detailed description of this work in 1979.

69. Annual Report for 1979, in park subject files.

1. PRELIMINARY HISTORICAL CHRONOLOGY OF MANSION, 1979

On instructions from Architect Arnest, Historian Charles W. Snell was given 15 working days to conduct a survey of the physical history data to be found in Arlington House's park master research files. The files are a series of some 50 loose-leaf notebooks in which information on all phases of Arlington House's history from 1800 to August 1967 has been filed in chronological order. Nelligan's massive report "Old Arlington," was also researched for similar information. The data extracted from the master research files and the Nelligan study were presented to Architect Arnest in February 1979.[70]

2. PRELIMINARY ARCHITECTURAL REPORT, 1979 [71]

The report was comprised of four sections: I.A Chronology of Structural Changes (based on the data collected by Historian Snell); II. A Statement or Description of Existing Conditions in the Mansion; III. Recommendations; and IV. Assessment of Effects. Sections II and IV were prepared by Historical Architect Arnest and John Sligh, of the National Capital Team.

The preliminary architectural report was enhanced by two projects.

A second edition was written in July 1979.[72] and a fifth section written by Frank G. Matero, Architectural Conservator, North Atlantic

---

70. Charles W. Snell, comp., "A Collection of Materials in Three Parts for a Historical Data Section for the Arlington House, George Washington Memorial Parkway, Virginia" (typescript, National Capital Team, Denver Service Center, Febriary 1979).

71. Arnest, "Historic Structures Report, Architectural Data Section, Arlington House," preliminary draft.

72. Ibid.

Historic Preservation Center, North Atlantic Regional Office, was prepared in July 1979.[73]

3. PRELIMINARY HISTORICAL REPORT, 1980

In April 1980 Historical Architect Arnest issued the document, "A Collection of Materials in Three Parts for the Historic Data Section, The Arlington House, George Washington Memorial Parkway." Part I of this document was comprised of xerox copies of Historian Snell's "Survey of Data Relating to the Physical History of the Custis-Lee Mansion, Arlington House," from the master files of the park, 1800 to August 1967, February 1979, plus six attachments also collected by Snell. Part II was comprised of xerox copies of Architect Arnest's long-hand notes, taken as he examined Record Group 92, Records of the Quartermaster General, at the National Archives (Entry 576, Box 131-32, containing War Department records on Arlington House from 1865 to September 15, 1885.) Not searched, however, were the War Department records from 1885 to 1935. Part III of the report consisted of xeroxed documents that Historian Snell had copied from two loose-leaf notebooks in the park research library, entitled "Restoration and Repair Records," Volumes I and II, February 1979--a file established by Historian Nelligan in 1948-54.

While useful to facilitate the writing of a historical data section, this document represented only a first preliminary step in the research necessary to write an adequate report. The April 1980 volume is thus a collection of documents and not a historic structure report, historical data section.

4. PAINT STUDY, 1980

During the week of October 20-24, 1980, David Arbogast, Historical Architect of the Southwest/Southeast Team, Denver Service Center, collected paint samples of the interior of the entire mansion, with an emphasis on the north wing rooms. He was assisted and directed by Historical Architects Harry Lee Arnest, III, and John Sligh of the National

73. Frank G. Matero, "Report on the Investigation of the Exterior Paints, Conditions, and Treatments, Arlington House, Arlington, Virginia," (July, 1979).

Capital Team of the Denver Service Center. Some 290 paint samples were collected. The areas receiving the greatest attention were the woodwork and plaster cornices. Because the walls and ceilings had been extensively restored, minimal sampling of these areas was undertaken. Architect Arbogast reported, "In the light of documentary evidence presented in the Historical Data Section of the Historic Structures Report on the painting and repair of Arlington House from 1861 to 1979, not written until March 1982 and April 1983, however, the assumptions made about the state of the walls and ceilings may have been erroneous."

On February 5, 1981, Arbogast returned to Arlington to collect samples of paint taken from the exterior of the building. In addition, samples were taken from two wooden shutters, which were believed to be from the historic period. In all, twenty-one paint samples were studied for the exterior color scheme.[74]

Due to limited time and selected sampling this study fails to give a comprehensive and integrated paint analysis and must be supplemented by further analysis before any paint restoration is implemented.

5. ARCHEOLOGICAL STUDY, 1981

This report by John F. Pousson describes the extensive excavations, in the basement of the north wing of the mansion, and the limited excavations in the basements of the main or center house and the south wing.[75]

---

74. David Arbogast, "Arlington House Paint Study, George Washington Memorial Parkway, Arlington, Virginia," (typescript, February 1981).

75. John F. Pousson, "Archeological Excavations at Arlington House, The Robert E. Lee Memorial, Arlington County, Virginia," (typescript, National Capital Team, Denver Service Center, August 1981).

6. ARCHITECTURAL DATA SECTION, HISTORIC STRUCTURE REPORT, 1981

Historical Architects Arnest and Sligh conducted a structural investigation of the north wing and spot studies of the fabric of the main house and south wing from 1979 to 1981.[76]

The architectural and archeological investigation of the structure of the north wing produced new physical evidence that established the complicated physical history and challenged the previously held theories (1924-80) on the architectural evolution of the north wing. Similar investigations of the structures of the main house and south wing, however, were limited in comparison with the studies made of the north wing.

7. HISTORIC DATA SECTION, HISTORIC STRUCTURE REPORT, 1981-1983

The historical data section of the historic structure report, based on research in documentary sources, was prepared after these reports had been completed. More than 1,000 pages of documents in the National Archives relating to the physical history of the mansion from 1864 to 1933 were copied and a set of these was presented to the park to be included as part of its research data files. The documents filled two volumes, and were entitled as follows:

1. "Data Compiled from Record Group No. 92--Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, U.S. Army, in the National Archives, Washington, D.C., Relating to the Alteration, Repair, and Use of Arlington House (The Custis-Lee Mansion), in Arlington National Cemetery, Virginia, From 1864 to 1915." Charles W. Snell, Compiler, December 1981-January 1982.

---

76. Harry Lee Arnest, III, and John Sligh, "Historic Structures Report, Archictural Data Section. The Arlington House, George Washington Memorial Parkway, Virginia," (handwritten draft, National Capital Team, Virginia," Denver Service Center, September 1981).

2. "Data Compiled from Record Group No. 92, Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, U.S. Army, in the National Archives at the Washington Federal Records Center At Suitland, Maryland, and also from The Arlington House National Park Service Research Files, Relating to the Alteration, Repair, Restoration, and Use of Arlington House from 1916 to 1935." Charles W. Snell, January 1982.

Because of the amount of "new" and detailed documentary evidence uncovered relating to the repair, maintenance, alteration, use, and restoration of the mansion by the War Department during the years 1864 to 1933, the amount of money available for the project did not permit the completion of a history for the entire 1802-1979 period as originally planned. Thus, the story and study in Volume I ends on August 10, 1933, the date when the War Department transferred Arlington House to the National Park Service. The results of Historian Snell's 1981 research efforts were issued in the following two studies:

(1) "Historic Structures Report, Historical Data Section for Arlington House (The Custis-Lee Mansion), Virginia--George Washington Memorial Parkway--(typescript, National Capital Team, Denver Service Center, March 1982), Vol. I.

(2) "A Summary of the Physical History of Arlington House, 1802-1933, Based on Documentary Evidence Presented in the Historical Data Section of the Historic Structures Report for Arlington House (The Custis-Lee Mansion), George Washington Memorial Parkway, Virginia." (typescript, National Capital Team, Denver Service Center, March 1982). Vol. II.

Little new documentary evidence was added for the 1802-64 period but knowledge of the War Department's use, maintenance, and repair of the mansion from 1864 to 1933 was greatly expanded. In particular, the planning and execution of the War Department's 1928-30 "restoration" of Arlington House were presented in detail for the first time.

Additional funds were requested and received to complete the physical history of Arlington House from 1933 to 1979, the period during

which it has been under the administration of the National Park Service. The funding made possible twenty working days to research and write Volume II of the Historical Data Section for Arlington House during April 1983.

T. VISITATION TO ARLINGTON HOUSE, 1972-1982

Arlington House has been open to visitors and exhibited as an historic house of the 1855-61 period from 1933 to the present. The statistics which follow indicate the number of visitors going through the mansion and do not include the grounds visitation. Guided tours were instituted in July 1976 and continued until the end of August 1980 in order to prevent the floor support system of the mansion from being overloaded. The guided tours were terminated once the system had been renovated. The number of visitors to Arlington House during 1972-82 was:

1972	527,429	
1973	536,015	
1974	445,558	
1975	468,126	
1976	437,642	July and August guide tours of 25 at 15 minute intervals
1977	476,773	" " " " " " " "
1978	472,038	" " " " " " " "
1979	459,346	" " " " " " " "
1980	411,504	" " " " " " " "
1981	416,558	Guided tours ended during summer months
1982	462,439	" " " " " " " "

U. SUMMARY OF IMPROVEMENTS TO ARLINGTON HOUSE, 1972-1979

1. Painting of Mansion, Exterior

1973--Exterior of mansion painted "historic" colors by Apex Decorating Company of Silver Spring, Maryland.

1974--Marbleization of east portico by Apex Decorating Company of Silver Spring, Maryland.

1979--Architect Frank G. Matero prepared "Report on the Investigation of Exterior Paints, Conditions, and Treatments," in July 1979.

2. Interior Painting of the Mansion, Historic Colors Used

1972--Rooms 111, 113, and 201 painted

1976--Eight rooms were wallpapered with Wall-Tex protection paper and then painted. Five additional rooms were painted.

3. Fire Alarm System Replaced

1975-76--A new smoke detecting fire alarm system installed June 5, 1975, by C.G. Esterbrook, Inc. of Arlington, Virginia.

4. Plaster Molding of Ceiling, East Portico

1972--Plaster moulding of ceiling of east (front) portico falls.

1973--This plaster molding rebuilt by Stephen Lozupone & Sons of Washington D.C.

5. Fumigation of the Mansion

1974--Terminix Company of Maryland and Washington, Hyattsville, Maryland, fumigated mansion to prevent damage using deadly poison gas known as "Vikane Sulfure Fluoride."

6. Light Filtering Film on Windows

1975--Polyethylene grey-tinted film installed on inside of mansion windows except in Room 116, the conservatory, by Slater's Glass Tinting Company of Glen Allen, Virginia. Purpose to eliminate about 85 percent of ultra-violet and 50 percent of visible light to protect the historic furnishings.

7. Window Repairs

1978--East window in basement wine cellar (Room BO-3) and conservatory (Room 116) window frames and exterior door sill repaired.

8. Exterior Stucco Repair and Porches

1977--West porch reconstructed in 1864 plan, and stucco at west porch replaced.

1977--North wing porch replaced stucco.

9. Mansion Roof, 1861 Appearance Restored

1974--War Department slate tiles removed and 1861 appearance restored by covering the north and south wing roofs with simulated gravel roofs. Work done by Prospect Industries, Inc. of McLean, Virginia.

1928--Copper gutters and downspouts also replaced by new enlarged system designed after the system in use in 1861. This work restored the 1861 appearance of the exterior of the north and south wings.

1973--Main mansion roof had reconstructed 1861-type snow guards installed by Virginia Roofing Company of Alexandria, Virginia.

1973--The copper flashing of the chimneys of the main mansion roof, laid down by the War Department in 1928, was renewed with 16 oz. copper flashing by the Virginia Roofing Company of Alexandria, Virginia.

1974--Slate roof of the main house repaired.

10. Structural Weakness Problems

1975--Because of apparent structural weakness on second floor, number of visitors limited to 15 at one time.

1976--Civil Engineer Longworth completed study of mansion on structural stability and condition on January 8, 1976.

1976--In 1929 the War Department introduced a truss in the partition wall between second floor Rooms 206 and 207, which are located above Room 112. The weight of the second floor partition had caused the ceiling of Room 112 to sag nearly 5 inches. Cracks had appeared in the ceiling of Room 112 and also in the partition wall between Rooms 206 and 207. The introduction of the truss corrected this problem in 1929. NPS carpenters repaired the 1929 truss in 1976. Heavy chandelier (not of period) in Room 112 was taken down.

1976--Room 101 flooring was braced with posts, placed in basement.

1976--Weakened lintel over doorway in basement room (Room BO-2) replaced, braced, and backed with steel.

1976-Because of continued worry over structural safety, during July

and August, the months of heavy visitation, a system of guided tours was introduced. Each group was limited to 25 people, and there were 15 minute intervals between each tour. The guided tour system was utilized every summer from 1976 to 1980.

1978--Additional posts placed in basement to brace first floor. Three beams with two posts each placed under north stair hall (Room 110) and similar system of beams and post under south stair hall (Room 113). Posts placed in winter kitchen (Room BO-2), under Rooms 101 and 112.

1979--Additional bracing for first floor installed. A beam with five posts in Room BO-2, under Rooms 105 and 106, in north wing; in south wing, a beam and two posts under segmental arch under Room 115.

From 1972 to 1979 more than $109,370.68 was spent for repair and restoration of Arlington House. During fiscal year 1979 $100,000 was received for the emergency stabilization and repair of the mansion.

V. SUMMARY OF THE REPAIR AND RESTORATION WORK ON ARLINGTON HOUSE, 1933-1979

A. FUNDING FOR REPAIR, RESTORATION, AND IMPROVEMENT AT ARLINGTON HOUSE, 1933-1979

1. 1933-41

Under the Public Works Program, $12,470 was provided for restoration work on Arlington House and Grounds in Federal Project 374 on October 2, 1933. Of this total $9,170 was earmarked for work on the mansion and $3,330 for ground projects. From October 1933 to June 30, 1938, a total of $12,304.91 was expended under Federal Project 374. In addition, the National Park Service made available approximately $6,900 from its appropriations for the following three projects: the heating plant, 1938 - $3,000; painting the mansion, 1939 - $2,700; and 1940 - $1,200 for revising the fire detection system in the mansion. Total money spent for restoration, repair, and improvement at Arlington House thus totaled approximately $19,370 during the period 1933 to 1941.

2. 1942-61

Not determined, but limited to repairs and work on utilities.

3. 1962-71

More than $14,345 was expended on repairs and improvements to Arlington House between 1962 and 1969.

4. 1972-79

From 1972 to 1979 more than $109,370.68 was spent for repair and restoration of Arlington House. During the 1979 fiscal year $100,000 was received for the emergency stabilization and repair of the mansion.

B. WORK ON THE EXTERIOR

1. Painting

Non-historic paint colors used during this period.

Exterior painted two coats by War Department in 1929.

Exterior painted two coats in 1934 at a cost of $1,080, including interior, under contract by Clarence W. Gosnell, Inc. of Washington, D.C.

Wooden steps of portico on east or front elevation painted in 1936.

Exterior painted two coats in 1939 at a cost, including interior, of approximately $2,700.

a. Painting Exterior, 1942-61

Non-historic paint colors used during this period.

1942 - exterior trim and eight columns on portico, but not stucco painted by NPS paint crew.

1943 - two west (rear) porches painted.

1947 - front and rear porches painted.

1948 - reported exterior had not been painted since 1942, but no record of exterior painting found for 1949-50.

1960-61 - exterior of mansion painted.

b. Painting of Exterior, 1964-79

Efforts made to restore historic colors used, 1855-61.

1964 - begin first study of exterior historical paint colors of mansion. Historic Structure Report, "Exterior Repainting of Custis-Lee House," July 30, 1965.

1964 - paint is sandblasted to its original surface and the entire structure restuccoed except for the center portion of the back or west facade of the house.

1965 - exterior repainted, "historic colors" used.

1965-66 - columns of east (front) portico marbleized under contract with Apex Decorating Company of Maryland, let November 1965 for $11,850. This work restored exterior to 1858-61 appearance.

1973 - exterior of mansion painted historic colors by Apex Decorating Company of Silver Spring, Maryland, under Contract CX 3000-3-0918 for $14,000.

1974 - Marbleization of east portico by Apex Decorating Company of Silver Spring, Maryland, under contract CX 3000-4-0997 for $18,430.
1979- Architect Frank G. Matero, "Report on the Investigation of Exterior Paints, Conditions, and Treatments," July 1979.

2. Mansion Roof 1929 - the War Department thoroughly repaired the existing slate roofs of the mansion and two wings. These dated from 1908.
June 1934 - some new slate replaced on the roof.
October 1936 - several small leaks in roof repaired.
1940 - estimate prepared to place about 1,500 new 10 inch by 20 inch slates on mansion roof at cost of $500.
1945 - three leaks in mansion roof require extensive repairs.
1958 - Walter G. Peters, A.I.A. makes study and drawings of mansion roof.
1959- Contract 10-10-028-1606, repairs to mansion roof and south building let. Wooden balustrades, based on Benson J. Lossing's 1853 painting of Arlington House, reconstructed by the War Department and placed on the roofs of the north and south wings in 1930 at a cost of $3,200; removed from the two roofs as historically inaccurate as these had been removed by Robert E. Lee in 1858. 1961 - roofs of north and south wings repaired.
1974 - War Department slate tiles removed and 1861 appearance restored by covering the north and south wing roofs with simulated gravel roofs. Work done by Prospect Industries, Inc. of McLean, Virginia, under Contract CX 3000-4-1067 for $50,000.
1973 - the copper flashing of the chimneys of the main mansion roof, laid down by the War Department in 1928, was renewed with 16 oz. copper flashing at a cost of $1,190. The work was done by the Virginia Roofing Company of Alexandria, Virginia.
1974 - slate roof of the main house repaired.

This work restored the 1858-61 appearance to the roof of the mansion.

3. Conservatory (Room 116) Roof

1929 - the War Department rebuilt the glass roof of the conservatory.

1934 - minor repairs

1935 - roof reconstructed at a cost of $2,290 using aluminum painted to look like wood under contract with Redmond Concrete Company, Inc. of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

1961 - conservatory roof of aluminum rafter and glass, built in 1935, removed and replaced by a new roof.

4. Gutters and Downspouts

1928 - War Department installed new copper gutters and downspouts and 6 inch tile drains were laid to carry off the water from the downspouts. 1934 - repairs made to gutters and downspouts. 1974 - copper gutters and downspouts replaced by new enlarged system designed after the system in use in 1861. This work restored the 1861 appearance of the exterior of the north and south wings.

5. Snow Guards

1973 - main mansion roof had reconstructed 1861-type snow guards installed at cost of $788, work by Virginia Roofing Company of Alexandria, Virginia.

6. Exterior Stucco

1928 - War Department pointed and repaired exterior stucco.

March-April 1934 - minor repairs made to stucco

1939 - stucco repaired

1964 - paint and stucco sandblasted to its original surface and the entire structure restuccoed except for the center portion of the back or west facade on the main house.

1977 - west porch reconstructed on 1864 plans; stucco at west porch replaced at estimated cost of $350.

1977 - north wing porch, replaced stucco, cost about $385.

7. East Portico

a. East Portico Steps

1929 - War Department repaired and painted the existing wooden steps.

1935 - after great debate with War Department over whether to rebuild steps of stone or wood, the east portico steps were reconstructed in an historically accurate manner of wood and sandstone so as to resemble their 1861 appearance. Work under contract by J. George Bensel of A Baltimore, Maryland, cost $1,690.

1936 - east portico steps painted

1961 - east portico steps, reconstructed in 1935 to resemble 1861 wooden steps, are rebuilt in the same style in 1961.

1971- wooden and sandstone steps, rebuilt in 1861-style in 1935 rebuilt again in 1961, reconstructed for the third time in 1971. These steps have to be replaced at ten-year intervals.

b. East Portico Ceiling

1968 - plaster soffit in ceiling of east or front portico falls. This rebuilt under Contract 14-10-6-960-195 by Fitzgerald and Company of East Riverdale, Maryland, for $2,495.

1972 - plaster moulding of ceiling of east (front) portico falls.

1973 - this rebuilt at estimated cost of $1,800 by Stephan Lozupone & Sons of Washington, D.C.

c. East Portico Floor

1930 - the War Department reconstructs the original (1851) brick floor of the east portico, cost of $450.

8. West (Rear) Porch, Main House

1977 - west porch reconstructed on the 1861 plan.

1977 - exterior stucco replaced at west porch.

9. North Wing Porch

1977 - stucco at north wing porch replaced.

10. Exterior Shutters

1930 - all exterior shutters repaired and painted.

11. Chimneys

1929-30 - all chimneys were opened up down to their fireplaces and their tops closed by means of slate slabs to keep out birds and squirrels.

The four large chimneys on the main house, because of badly deteriorated brick, were taken down to the level of the second floor ceiling and rebuilt according to their original dimensions and reusing the old brick as far as possible. Portland cement was used to rebuild the chimneys.

12. Exterior Doors and Window Frames

1929-30 - all exterior rotten and damaged window sash, doors, and frames renewed at a cost of $2,900.

13. Exterior Basement Windows and Doors 1928 - new doors and frames were provided for three basement entrances.

1929 - new casement sash and iron bars, replacing old ones, were placed on all basement windows.

1929 - many original soft bricks in the basement walls had crumbled and had to be replaced.

C. WORK ON THE INTERIOR OF THE ARLINGTON HOUSE

1. Interior Painting

a. 1933-41

Non-historic paint colors used during this period.

1929-30 - interior of mansion painted two coats by War Department.

1934 - interior of mansion painted two coats by contractor Clarence W. Gosnell, Inc. of Washington D.C.

1939 - interior painted two coats.

1937 - murals in first floor hall (Room 111) "retouched" by the NPS Museum Division, cost of work $51.11.

b. 1942-47

Non-historic paint colors used during this period.

1942 - painted by NPS paint crew: Rooms 104, 106, 107, 109, 115, 114, 117, and probably 112. 1943 - Rooms 104 and 106 painted

1944- floors in mansion refinished, first time since 1929-30.

1945 - painted Rooms 116, 201, 113, 110, 111, 107, 105. Basement rooms in north wing whitewashed.

1946 - Rooms 104, 115, and railings and treads on stairway

c. 1948-79

Interior painting attempting to restore historic colors:

November 8, 1946 - first study done to attempt to establish historic room colors.

1948 - first painting with historic colors: Rooms 117, 110, 207, 108, 113, 115, and 109.

1951-- Rooms 106 and 109

1952 - canvas ceiling put on Room 203 and room then painted. Painted Rooms 113, 110, 111, 116, 201, and 114.

1953 - Rooms 111, 105, and 104

1954 - Rooms 204, 205, 206, and BO-2

1955 - Room 116

Era of attempting to restore historic room colors:

1956 - Room 117

1957 - Room 115

1958 - Rooms 113, 110, 114, 116, 101, 111, 201

1959 - Rooms 204, 205, 206, 203, 202, 201, 104, 105, 106, 108, 109, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, and 117 painted.

1962 - painted Rooms 106, 107, 104, 115, and several hallways.

1963 - painted Rooms 108 and 109

1965 - painted Rooms 101, 110, 111, 113, 116, 201, BO-1, and cellar stairs

1965 - following painting schedule instituted in 1965 and followed to date:

hallways and areas frequented by visitors given touchup painting every two years

historic rooms only viewed by visitors, painted at seven-year intervals.

1967 - E. Blaine Cliver, "Preliminary Report of Interior Paint Investigation," studied Rooms 101, 110, 111, 113, 201, and one outside shutter.

1972 - Rooms 111, 113, and 201 painted

1976 - eight rooms are wallpapered with Wall-Tex protection paper and then painted. Five additional rooms are painted.

2. Interior Plaster Walls and Ceilings

1929 - War Department spent approximately $1,600 to repair plaster walls, ceilings, and cornice throughout the mansion.
March-April 1934 - repairs made to walls and ceilings, minor.

3. Interior Woodwork and Hardware

1929-30 - the War Department spent $1,600 to reconstruct "Colonial Period" hardware throughout the mansion. Only two of the original door locks, located on the east and west entrances of Room 111, were found to be still in place. The reconstructions were apparently modeled after the two original locks. A third original door lock was returned to the mansion and restored to its original location on the hall door on the north side of Room 111 and opening into Room 109. The War Department also repaired or duplicated the existing interior millwork.

March-April 1934 - minor repairs were made to woodwork and hardware.

4. Room Guards, Interior of Mansion

1929-30 - War Department installed metal guard rails and screens at all doors of rooms open for viewing to visitors. These were modeled after the guard rails used at Mount Vernon, cost $796.

1936- approximately $170 was apparently spent to improve and heighten the room guards.

5. Mansion Flooring

1929 - War Department reconstructed the flooring of the first floor, duplicating what existed in 1928. Intact pieces of original flooring from first floor used to patch and repair the second floor flooring. Second floor flooring was largely original and in good condition in 1929.

1944 - floors in mansion refinished for first time since 1929-30.

1960 - flooring in second floor hall reported to be in very poor condition. The flooring on the second floor dated from 1855 period.

6. Mantels: Drawing Room Mantels, Room 112

January 1953 - the two 1855 marble mantels in Room 112 installed by Robert E. Lee in 1855, and removed by the War Department in 1932, because they were of the "wrong historical period," are restored to their original fireplaces. They had been stored in the basement since 1932.

7. Insect Damage to the Mansion

1948 - inspection report, looking for termite damage.

1951 - inspection report of basement beams under Rooms 111 and 112. Some damage reported.

1974 - Terminix Company of Maryland and Washington, Hyattsville, Maryland, fumigates mansion to prevent insect damage. Uses deadly poison gas known as "Vikane Sulfure Fluoride."

8. Window Film to Filter Out Ultraviolet Light Rays

1975 - polyethylene grey-tinted film installed on inside of mansion windows except in Room 116, the conservatory, for $1,781 by Slater's Glass Tinting Company of Glen Allen, Virginia. Purpose to eliminate about 85 percent of ultraviolet and 50 percent of visible light to protect the historic furnishings.

9. Work in Basement Rooms

1934 - about 2,000 old bricks were used to pave the earthen floors in basement Rooms BO-1, BO-2, and BO-3. A lack of old brick prevented five additional rooms from having their earth floors paved with brick as had been planned.

1976 - weakened lintel over doorway in basement Room BO-2 replaced, braced, and backed with steel.
1978 - east window in wine cellar (Room BO-3) repaired.

10. Conservatory (Room 116)
1978 - window frames and exterior door sill repaired in the conservatory.

11. Work on Interior Stairs
1929-30 - War Department spent $600 to repair the interior stairs.
a. Stairs in Room 113
September 1935 - stairs inspected for safety.

b. Stairs in Room 110
September 1935 - stairs inspected for safety.
1936 - stair repaired

c. Steps from Room 114 to Room 116
1935 - steps repaired
1948 - main stairway in Room 113 inspected.
1978 - first landing on main stairway (Room 113) found to be dangerously weak. An external prop installed NPS carpenters to brace the two joists which supported the landing.
1978 - three beams with two posts each placed in basement under north stair hall (Room 110).
1978- similar system of beams and posts installed in basement under south stair hall (Room 113).

12. Structural Problems, 1975-79
1975 - because of apparent structural weakness on second floor, number of visitors limited to 15 at one time on second floor.
1976 - Civil Engineer John J. Longworth completed study of mansion, January 8, 1976, on structural stability and condition.
1976 - in 1929 the War Department introduced a truss in the partition wall between second floor Rooms 206 and 207, which are located over Room 112. The weight of the second floor

partition had caused the ceiling of Room 112 to sag nearly 5 inches. Cracks had appeared in the ceiling of Room 112 and also in the partition wall between Rooms 206 and 207. The introduction of the truss at a cost of $850 corrected this problem in 1929. NPS carpenters repaired the 1929 truss in 1976. Heavy chandelier (not of period) in Room 112 taken down.

1976 - Room 101 flooring was braced with posts, placed in basement.

1976 - because of continued worry over structural safety, during July and August, the months of heavy visitation, a system of guided tours was introduced. Each group was limited to 25 people and there were 15 minute intervals between each tour.

The guided tour system was utilized every summer from 1976 to 1980.

1977 - Civil Engineer Jack Longworth completes a survey of the carrying capacity of both the first and second floors in fall.

1978 - additional posts placed in basement to brace first floor. Three beams with two posts each placed under north stair hall (Room 110) and similar system of beams and posts under south stair house (Room 113). Posts placed in winter kitchen (Room BO-2), under Room 101 and under Room 112.

1979 - additional bracing for first floor installed; a beam with five posts in Room BO-2, under Rooms 105-06, in north wing; in south wing, a beam and two posts under segmental arch under Room 115.

D. WORK ON ARLINGTON HOUSE UTILITIES

1. Electrical System

1929 - the War Department rewired the mansion at a cost of $1,500 and an additional $1,000 was spent to lay better electrical lines from Fort Myer to the mansion.

1934 - minor repairs made and some electrical circuits altered.

April 17, 1934 - inspection and report describing system.

April 8, 1936 - first electrical meter installed at mansion.

May 1937 - inspection of wiring system

1954 - electrical system revised, Contract 14-10-028-548.

2. Heating System

1929-30 - the War Department spent $12,000 to erect an outside boiler house, guard room, and public comfort station. An additional $4,500 was spent to install a new concealed heating system of pipe in the mansion. Grills and hidden radiators served the new hot water heating system.

1935 - approximately $3,115 was expended under contract with Tenuis F. Collier to reconstruct and repair the existing heating system.

1945 - plant repaired

1949 - heating plant revised, Contract I-28NP-663, shifted from coal burning to oil.

3. Fire Alarm System

1929-30 - War Department expended $1,842.70 to install an automatic fire alarm system in the basement, first, second, and attic floors of mansion, also in three outbuildings, Atmo alarm system.

April 17, 1934 - inspection and description of existing system.

1940 - about $1,200 spent under Contract I-28NP-35 to reconstruct and repair existing fire alarm system.

1949-51 - fire alarm system apparently revised.

197-76 - a new smoke detecting fire alarm system installed under Contract CX 3000-5-1224, June 5, 1975, by C.G. Eastbrook, Inc. of Arlington, Virginia, for $20,666.68.

4. Water System for Fire Protection

The existing (1933) water mains, 4-inch cast iron pipes and fire hydrants has been installed by the War Department in 1907 at a cost of $1,880.

April 17, 1934 - inspection report and description of existing water supply system for fire protection purposes.

1940 - project proposed at estimated cost of $2,000 to install 1½-inch standpipe and hose connections on each floor of mansion.

1941 - four standpipes ordered at estimated cost of $344.60. Six-inch water pipe to be installed at 4-inch water pipe to be linked to Arlington National Cemetery system. These plans not executed in 1941 for parts and pipes do not arrive in time.

1942 - larger pipes apparently laid to hook up with Arlington National Cemetery pipes.

E. Research on Arlington House

1. 1928-30

War Department conducted limited documentary research (family papers not available to them). They recorded histories from major articles and prints published in the first half of the 19th century, as a basis for restoration of Arlington House in 1928-30 at an approximate cost of $110,000, including furnishings. On the advice and insistence of Dr. Charles Moore, architect and Chairman of the Commission of Fine Arts, the War Department initially "restored" the mansion to the 1804 or Custis period rather than the Lee (1861) period as Congress had directed. Some Victorian features of the Lee period were thus removed and replaced by reconstructed "Colonial Period" features. Use of rooms was established in large part by testimony of former slaves. Fuller documentation of room use was not then available from Lee family documents.

2. 1933-48

The National Park Service administers the Custis-Lee Mansion for 15 years without conducting any historical research on the mansion or the Custis-Lee families.

3. 1948-53

Murray H. Nelligan, Park Historian, conducts first extensive historical research program in documentary sources on the history of the families and the mansion and opens up a whole new era; he was permitted to use restricted Lee family papers and information contained in them was brought to bear on the restoration of Arlington House; history of the 1800-61 period is revealed in full detail. Dates of construction of the mansion, 1802 for north wing, main house 1817-19, were established for the first time, as were Robert E. Lee's alterations made to the mansion in the 1855-61 period.

4. Architectural Investigations of Arlington House

April 1971 - Architect Archie W. Franzen completes Custis-Lee Mansion Structure Study."

1971 - Architect Franzen prepares plans to replace the copper gutters and downspouts that had been installed.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

It is recommended that historical data sections of the historic structure report be programmed for the north and south outbuildings, namely the winter kitchen and south servants' quarters. Research on the two historic structures should be conducted jointly as data on both buildings is to be found in the same depositories. Nelligan collected much of the available data on the 1802-61 history of these two structures in 1948-53. The history of these buildings from 1861 to 1933, however, has never been researched. The records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, U.S. Army, National Archives Record Group 92, (Entries 576, 568, and 579, and 642, under heading of "Arlington National Cemetery, Virginia,") contains the documentation for the 1915-35 period, and are at the Washington Federal Record Center in Suitland, Maryland. The Office of the Quartermaster General Correspondence Geographic File, 1922-35, has 16 boxes of documents relating to Arlington National Cemetery from 1922 to 1935 (Boxes 60 to 75). Boxes 66-69 contain the documents relating to the 1928-30 restoration of Arlington House outbuildings by the War Department.

It is also recommended that the site continue to survey and update documentary collections in public and private depositories to bring this material to bear on the continuing restoration and interpretation of Lee's life at Arlington. Appropriate funding should be provided to the site to continue research and documentation should be added to the Historic Structure Report where appropirate.

The major depositories being surveyed and monitored:

Stratford Hall, Westmoreland, Co., Virginia
Virginia Historical Society, Richmond, Virginia
State Library and Archives, Richmond, Virginia
Alexandria Library, Alexandria, Virginia
Washington & Lee, Library and Museum Collection, Lexington, Virginia
Huntington Library, Los Angeles, California

Valentine Museum, Richmond, Virginia
Private collections of the family of General and Mrs. R. E. Lee
Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
Mt. Vernon, Mt. Vernon, Virginia
Tudor Place, Washington, D.C.
Woodlawn, Mt. Vernon, Va.
Fairfax County Historical Society
Alexandria Historical Society
Fairfax County Park Authority

VII. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Because the NPS files for the Arlington House during the years 1933 to 1979 in the National Archives at Washington, D.C., and also at the Washington Federal Record Center at Suitland, Maryland, are centralized under the heading of National Capital Parks, and not collected in a geographical file for Arlington House, it was found to be impossible to locate and examine the necessary documents. All NPS documents cited in the two volume study came from the following depositories:

1. Arlington House's Park Master Data File of loose-leaf notebooks for the years 1933 to 1967, on file in the Park Research Library.

2. Arlington House's Subject File, in drawer labeled "Restoration and Repair File," in Arlington House Park Office.

3. Cultural Resources Repository, Cultural Resources Management, (Office of Chief Historian), National Park Service, Washington D. C., Arlington House File, three boxes, 1933-81.

National Park Service Studies

Arbogast, David. "Arlington House Paint Study, George Washington Memorial Parkway, Arlington, Virginia." Typescript, February, 1981.

Arnest, Harry Lee, III, and Sligh, John. "Historic Structures Report--Architectural Data Section, The Arlington House, George Washington Memorial Parkway, Virginia," (Handwritten draft, 2 vols., September 1981).

Matero, Frank G. "Report on the Investigation of the Exterior Paints, Conditions, and Treatments, Arlington House, Arlington Virginia," July 1979.

McCormick,Charles H. "Custis-Lee Mansion, Historical Data for Grounds." Division of History, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation, June 1, 1968.

Mullins, Agnes Downey. Arlington House Furnishing Plan, July 1979.

Nelligan, Murray H. Custis-Lee Mansion, The Robert E. Lee Memorial, Virginia, National Park Service Historical Handbook Series No. 6. Washington, D.C. 1950: revised 1962).

_____. "Old Arlington, The Story of the Lee Mansion National Memorial," typescript, National Capital Parks, ca. 1953.

Pousson, John F. "Archeological Excavations at Arlington House, the Robert E. Lee Memorial, Arlington County, Virginia," (Typescript, , National Capital Team, Denver Service Center, August 1981).

Powell, B. Bruce; Skillman, Leroy; and Mullins, Agnes D., "Historic Grounds Report, Part II, The Custis-Lee Mansion Flower Garden", Typescript, March 1964.

Snell, Charles W., "A Collection of Materials in Three Parts for a Historical Data Section for The Arlington House, George Washington Memorial Parkway, Virginia." Typescript, National Capital Team, Denver Service Center, February 1979).

Swartz, Paul C., and Roberts, John G. "Historic Structure Report, North Servants' Quarters, Custis-Lee Mansion, Virginia," Typescript, National Capital Parks, August, 1960, and Part II, 1961.

The writer is also greatly indebted to information provided by Site Supervisor Ann Fuqua and Curator Agnes Mullins during discussions of various problems. These professionals, historians by training, have been associated with Arlington House since 1953. Errors or omissions in this report, however, are the responsibility of the writer.

As the nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has basic responsibilities to protect and conserve our land and water, energy and minerals, fish and wildlife, parks and recreation areas, and to ensure the wise use of all these resources. The Department has also major responsibility for American Indian reservation communities and for people who live in island territories under U.S. administration.

Publication services were provided by the graphics and editorial staff of the Eastern Team, Denver Service Center. Publication number 855-D39/1

CUSTIS-LEE MANSION

Material for use in the Historic Structures Report, Part II, Custis Lee Mansion.

Research File

August 6, 1968

Memorandum for Files:

From: Roy E. Appleman

Subject: Historic Structures Report, Part II, Custis-Lee Mansion

The enclosed copies of materials have been left with me by Charles McCormick as items that should be used in the preparation of Historic Structures Report, Part II, Custis Lee Mansion whenever it is undertaken.

Mr. McCormick has finished the Historic Structures Report, Part I, Historical Data Section for the Custis Lee Mansion, and he has also just completed the furnishing study for the house.

Accordingly, I am placing this material in the research files, History Division, and a copy of this memorandum in the RSP file as a reminder when the Historic Structures report can be undertaken.

Roy E. Appleman

Enclosures

RESEARCH PROGRESS

25, D. C.

June 20, 1952

Memorandum

To: The Superintendent

Through: Chief, National Memorials and Historic Sites Division

From: Acting Chief, Public Use Section

Subject: Report of progress made on Research and Interpretive Program for the Lee Mansion National Memorial from July 15, 1948 to date.

1. Research, General. To date, all the principal repositories, private and Government, have been searched for official records, manuscripts, newspapers, maps, plans, prints and photographs. Rubbings have been made of the inscriptions on some family tombstones and the inscriptions on others copied.

The greater part of the research was done at the Library of Congress, where one privately owned collection of Custis and Lee family manuscripts (the De Butts-Ely Collection) took me five weeks to examine carefully and copy pertinent information. In addition, much information was gathered from a number of less important collections. The library's large collection of travel accounts, old newspapers and periodicals, and miscellaneous published material were found to contain many references to Arlington; its prints and photographs collection and map division proved less valuable.

Besides the Library of Congress, the large collection of Custis and Lee family manuscripts and the Virginia Historical Society, the Virginia State Library, the University of Virginia, and Mount Vernon were searched and pertinent material copied. Minor collections at Harvard University, the Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston Public Library, New York Historical Society, New York Public Library, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, William and Mary College, Washington and Lee University, and the Robert E. Lee Memorial Foundation, Inc., were also examined and found to contain much valuable information. Photostat copies of important Lee letters at Duke University were obtained. A

Copy to: files (2)
Mr. Truett
Mr. Halligan

small number were donated by their owners to the Lee Mansion. Searching out of town collections was done on both regular duty hours and off-duty hours, and at my own expense; travel involved was at my own expense.

Courthouse records of Arlington, Fairfax and Alexandria Counties proved less rewarding than expected, partly because the records themselves are not entirely complete, but largely because the old D. C. records which were not destroyed in a fire which occurred many years ago are boxed up in the basement of the District Building and are not available for examination. No large single collection of official records of the restoration of the Mansion by the War Department could be found in the National Archives or the records of the Quartermaster General's Office, but I am confident that further search will disclose their whereabouts. Not having them proved no great lack on this phase of the history of the Mansion for a large number of miscellaneous papers on the subject were found at the Lee Mansion itself, some additional material in the attic of the Administration Building of Arlington National Cemetery, and the Luther M. Leisenring, who was architect-in-charge of the restoration turned over a large personal collection of papers and drawings (including a piece of early wall paper found on the wall of one of the rooms) as an outright gift and allowed the papers he wished to retain to be photostated.

So many prominent persons of the nineteenth century had associations with Arlington at one time or another, it proved impossible to search the existing papers of each of them. Therefore, I compiled a list of such persons and examined the papers of those whose associations were the closest, leaving the papers of the remainder to be examined when time permits in the future. Likewise, it was found necessary at the outset to limit the scope of the research to Arlington and the events that occurred there, going beyond it only for the more important events in the lives of the principal habitants of Arlington House. No effort was made to get information on the lives of lesser personalities, relations and friends beyond essential facts needed for reference purposes, though incidental information come across during the research was of course noted and filed. A considerable amount of information relating to other historical sites, National Park Service or otherwise, was discovered also. If it was deemed especially important, copies were sent to the area involved, such as Washington's Birthplace National Historic Site at Wakefield, Va., or else filed for possible future use. This required little time or effort and was amply repaid by in several instances. Thus, in return for the large number of citations turned over to Mr. Charles Wall, Resident Superintendent at Mount Vernon, typewritten copies and photostats of important papers bought recently by the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association were made and given to the Lee Mansion free of charge, besides which free access was given to the large collection of Custis and Lee family papers owned by the association. The cooperative relations fostered by this policy resulted in my being informed when a large daguerreotype of G. W. P. Custis (made about 1846 and the earliest known) was discovered in the Library of Congress some months after I had finished my research on their accessible collections.

In summary, it is roughly estimated that about 90% of the basic research has been completed, though it may be expected that important material will be turned up in the future as new documents are discovered or promising leads explored.

2. Master File. In some respects, finding historical information presents less difficulty than organizing it for practical use. After experimenting with various filing systems, I decided finally that the simplest and most practical method was to file all documentary material in chronological order in large loose-leaf notebooks, notes being typed double-space on standard size sheets of paper instead of being single-spaced on 5x8 inch cards. By this method, notes could be kept like bound volumes on shelves, and hence could be examined more easily than if on cards in drawers. Being double-spaced made them more easily read, checked and corrected; also, notes could be of any length and not be unwieldy. Having a master file of notes in chronological order also required far less copies of a particular note than would have been necessary if a subject classification system were used. A single letter, for example, might contain references to a half dozen or more people, tell something about the Mansion or grounds, mention a piece of furniture or a picture, and tell of an event - all of which would require that many separate copies for a subject classification file. But the same letter filed chronologically would necessitate only one copy to which reference could be made by means of a card index and subject headings listed on the upper right hand margin of the note itself. In practice, this sytem has worked out well even though only a start has been made on the card index. It is planned to put the notes in permanent form by typing them on good quality rag paper. At present the Master File consists of roughly 3600 separate notes, varying in length from one sentence to several pages, taken from manuscripts, official records, a bibliography of 534 books and periodicals, and 55 newspapers from 14 cities - filed chronologically by decades in fifteen, two-inch capacity loose-leaf notebooks. The file includes some 350 photostats of lengthy or especially important documents, most of which will be copied at a future date in order that the more perishable photostats may be put aside and used for check purposes.

3. Supplementary Files. Material which is too large or otherwise unsuited for the Master File has been set up in the following supplementary files:

Map File. Photostats of about fifty maps of the Arlington estate and Arlington National Cemetery. Arranged chronologically.

Portrait File. Likenesses of members of the Lee and Custis families and persons associated with the history of Arlington. Approximately 150 photographs arranged in alphabetical order according to the subject, together with information relating to the original picture, its whereabouts, etc.

Arlington House Print and Photograph File. Photograph copies of about 100 pictures of Arlington House - prints, engravings, drawings and photographs - arranged in chronological order from the earliest (1826) down to the present. This file has proved most useful in establishing the sequence of construction of various sections of the Lee Mansion, its grounds, fences, and exterior finish, etc.

Restoration and Repair File. In order to assemble, correlate, and evaluate all existing information regarding the physical structure of the Lee Mansion from a variety of documentary, iconographic, and archaeological sources, a Restoration and Repair File has been set up. A standard outline for recording information has been worked out to include findings and recommendations regarding the restoration of any particular room or feature of the Mansion, dependencies or grounds. Also, the degree of authenticity achieved in the restoration of any particular room or feature can be determined quickly by consulting the Restoration Record, a sheet summarizing the restorations recommended, on which astericks indicate the items accomplished to date.

4. Duplicate Files. Duplicates of notes in the Master File, or information derived from that file, arranged for convenient reference as follow:

Alphabetical File. Especially lengthy or important articles filed alphabetically under the name of the author.

Chronological File. A day by day account of events and whereabouts of important members of the Lee and Custis families, kept on 3x5 inch blank index cards filed chronologically. This file has proved especially helpful in determining such things as, for example, how much time Robert E. Lee actually spent at Arlington.

Descriptive and Architectural File. All descriptions of the house, attributions, architectural details and criticisms.

Calendar of Custis Family Letters.

Calendar of Lee Family Letters.

Inventory of Original Furnishings.

5. Special Files. Several files on related subjects and events, but not closely enough associated with the history of the Lee Mansion to be included in the Master File:

directly to Arlington and arranged alphabetically by subject and chronologically under the subject heading.

George Hadfield File. About 175 items covering the life and works of the architect of the Lee Mansion, some of which are duplicates of notes in the Master File.

Roosevelt Island File. About 100 items about Analostan Island and Gen. John Mason, some of which are duplicates of notes in the Master File.

Arlington National Cemetery File. A file of about 350 miscellaneous items (descriptions, newspaper accounts, personal letters, official records and photographs) pertaining to the historic events, monuments and graves in the cemetery. Arranged in two sections, one chronological and the other alphabetical, this file is used as the basic reference for the guided tours of the cemetery conducted by the National Capital Parks and for answering verbal or written inquiries addressed to National Capital Parks by the public.

Fort Washington File. A file of approximately 300 items, mostly from newspaper and travel accounts, pertaining to the present fort, Warburton Manor, Fort Warburton, and the Digges family.

6. Arlington House, A History of the Lee Mansion National Memorial. Voluminous files are absolutely essential to sound planning and development of a historic site, but unless the information in them is correlated, evaluated and put in some convenient form, it can be of only limited use to members of the staff concerned with the operation, administration and interpretation of a historic house. The history of the Lee Mansion, more than that of many historic houses, is lengthy, comparatively complex, and in parts highly emotional or controversial in nature. Also, little if anything was known about many phases of its history, so that interpretation was based on weak, controversial, or even contradictory sources. Therefore, it was early decided that a full-length narrative history, rather than a manual, was necessary before the Lee Mansion could be interpreted to the public in a dignified, factually correct, but interesting manner in keeping with the importance of the subject and worthy of the great American in whose honor the Mansion is now maintained. In writing it, I have endeavored to keep these standards in mind, in keeping with the high standards expected of and by the National Park Service. I have tried to be accurate, fair, objective and understanding in regard to every phase and every person involved in the history of Arlington.

A considerable amount of information pertaining to the structure itself, its furnishings and decorations, and its grounds and outbuildings has been worked into the narrative. However, since this is a history of a home, the emphasis throughout has been on the lives of those who once lived at Arlington and the significant events that occurred there. A large number of direct quotations have been used throughout the narrative, partly to make them a matter of record, as it were, since many came from obscure sources which may be lost in the passage of time, but the chief aim in using them was to give the reader the flavor of the times described as well as the opportunity of judging events and personalities for himself. Though quotations have a tendency to slow up a narrative, I felt this policy was justified and tried to work quotations in in such a manner that they did not interfere more than necessary with the movement of the narrative.

All of the manuscript submitted herewith has been rewritten at least once, and a large part of it twice or more. Since it is to be retyped and put into final form for publication by fall, together with a large number of illustrations, two maps, and an index, the draft submitted with this report has only been scanned for errors and the more obvious corrected.

In closing, I wish to express my appreciation to Mr. T. Sutton Jett, Special Assistant to the Superintendent, National Capital Parks, for conceiving the value of such a study as this in the first place and the assistance he has given me in bringing it thus far towards completion by his never flagging interest, friendly encouragement, and the innumerable helpful suggestions and pertinent observations he has made at one time or another during the course of many conferences and discussions.

Murray H. Nelligan
Acting Chief, Public Use Section

Attachment

MHNelligan:vwv

Delivered by Mr. Nelligan

JUN 23 1 13 PM '52
NATIONAL CAPITAL PARKS

REST DRAWINGS

ORIGINAL DRAWINGS OF ARLINGTON (LEE) MANSION
TRANSFERRED TO NATIONAL CAPITAL PARKS, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR

DRAWING NUMBER	TITLE	DATE
6608-14	Sketch of Buildings and Walks At Lee Mansion, Arlington National Cemetery.	Aug. 22, 1931
6608-37	Steam Heating For Lee Mansion, Arlington National Cemetery.	Oct. 1906
6608-38	Details of New Trusses Over Porch at Lee Mansion.	Undated
6608-101	Layout for Revision About Lee Mansion	Mar. 25, 1920
6608-109	Vicinity of Mansion	Apr. 1902
6608-115	Plan for Remodeling Grounds About The Lee Mansion	Feb. 23, 1921
6608-117	Planting Plan For Grounds About Lee Mansion	Feb. 26, 1921
6608-136	Arlington Cemetery, Va. New Work at Lee Mansion	Jul. 16, 1923
6608-138	Plan of Work To Be Done Around Lee Mansion	Aug. 16, 1923
6608-213	Old Well, Lee Mansion, Arlington National Cemetery	Undated
6608-218	Arlington National Cemetery, Restoration of Arlington Mansion, Details of Proposed Pedestals, RM. #4.	May. 25, 1931
6608-231	Arlington Mansion, Seating Diagram - Front Lawn	Mar. 22, 1932
6608-1031	Plan of Lee Mansion, Arlington National Cemetery	Aug. 4, 1922
	Custis & Lee Mansion - Drawn by Rodier & Kundzin, Archts.	
6608-1032	First Floor Plan	Undated
6608-1033	Second Floor Plan, Plot Plan & West Elevation	"
6608-1034	East Elevation	"
6608-1035	North & South Elevation	"
6608-1036	Section & Detail	"
6608-1037	Elevation of Details of Rooms #7 & 8.	"
6608-1038	Details of Stair Hall	"
6608-1039	Elevations & Detail of Room #4	"
6608-1040	Scale Elevation of Stair Hall	"
6608-1041	Slave Quarters in Rear of the Mansion	"
6608-1042	Elevations & Detail of Room #2	"
6608-1043	General Details	"
6608-1044	Marble Mantel in Room #7	"
6608-1045	Marble Mantel in Room #8	"
6608-1046	Marble Mantel in Room #14	"
6608-1070	Custis Lee Mansion, Arlington, Va. Restoration	Sept 21, 1928

Robert W. Burgett

FURNISHINGS

October 20, 1952

Memorandum

To: The Superintendent

From: Acting Chief, Public Use Section
Through: Chief, National Memorials and Historic Sites Division

Subject: Drawing Room mantels, Lee Mansion National Memorial

History of the two mantels now in storage in basement of Lee Mansion

Unlike many aspects of the structural history of the Lee Mansion, that of the above mantels is reasonably complete, with copies of the pertinent letters in the Lee Mansion National Memorial Records. Up until the summer of 1855, the large room on the first floor, just south of the main hall, was unfinished. According to Agnes Lee's manuscript diary entry for September 2, 1855, the walls had not even been plastered until that summer. Then, having been ordered from West Point to service on the frontier with the 2nd Cavalry, Colonel R. E. Lee decided to finish off this room as part of what he termed the "renovation" of the house. This last was a general overhauling of the house with a view to making it more comfortable and suitable for his wife and children during the indefinite period he expected to be away, as well as to ensure its preservation on account of the close and dear associations it held for his family (Lee to Mrs. Lee, July 9, 1855).

Accordingly, Lee ordered three marble mantels of contemporary design from a company in New York - S. Young, 611 Hudson Street. To pay for the mantels, he enclosed a check for $105 in a letter he wrote Mrs. Lee from Jefferson Barracks, Mo., July 1, 1855; this she was to send to Young if the mantels had arrived "perfect & agreeable to order" (also entry for July 23, 1855, in Lee Memo. Book No. 5). "I hope the mantels have come," he wrote Mrs. Lee on July 3, 1855. Apparently they arrived in good condition and were installed sometime in July or August of 1855.

Copy to: Mr. Hausmann
Mr. Truett

for Agnes Lee mentioned them in her diary as being in place, [illegible] 1855. Of the three mantels ordered, two of identical size and design were installed in the drawing room or "large room," as the Lees termed it. The other, of a similar size but minus any carving, was put in place in the adjoining room, replacing an earlier mantel which was probably the counterpart of the wooden mantel in the Custis Sitting Room in the North Wing.

The following spring the new mantels in the drawing room were remarked by a young lady visiting the Lees (Blanche Berard to Mrs. Mary Berard, Apr. 18, 1856). There they remained until 1931, when they were removed and stored in the basement during the restoration of the mansion by the War Department.

The decision to take out the Lee mantels and replace them with replicas of two mantels at Woodlawn is an example of how restoration can go astray when basic principles are disregarded. In this instance, there was a serious departure from the policy and period set forth in the legislation establishing the Lee Mansion National Memorial; insufficient historical research was done before acting in the matter; existing evidence was disregarded; and, above all, personal taste was substituted for historically correct restoration.

H. J. Resolution 264, 68th Congress, approved March 4, 1925, established the Lee Mansion National Memorial, and directed the Secretary of War "as nearly as may be practicable, to restore the Lee Mansion ... to the condition in which it existed immediately prior to the Civil War ...." It also stated that the house was to be furnished with articles in use in the mansion during that period, or replicas of such articles, "with a view to restoring, as far as may be practicable, the appearance of the interior of the mansion to the condition of its occupancy by the Lee family."

Disregarding this explicit directive, the "Advisory Board" appointed by the Quartermaster General to direct the restoration recommended in a report dated April 18, 1929, that new marble mantels be installed in the drawing room, these to be similar to those in the double parlors across the hall. No reason was given for this recommendation. A few months later, in a report dated Nov. 26, 1929, the board established as its policy in regard to the acquisition of furniture that all such, other than pieces originally at Arlington, or replicas of such original pieces, should be of the colonial period, and in no case later than 1830. The inconsistancy between this policy and the policy established by Congress can only be accounted for by inferring that the advisory board was motivated by personal taste rather than the desire for historical accuracy, and had decided to move the restoration back in period and stress the Custis occupancy of Arlington, instead of that of the Lee family,-a most serious deviation in regard to the correct historical interpretation of the house, in that it is the Lee association, not the Custis, that makes the mansion historically important and worthy of preservation. This decision was reached without any research having been done to definitely determine

Robert W. Burgett

Lee's associations with Arlington.

Likewise, no effort was made to find out whether or not the Lee mantels antedated the Civil War. Dr. Charles Moore, Chairman of the Fine Arts Commission which had final approval on all aspects of the restoration, testified at a hearing on H. J. Resolution 264, held May 28, 1924, that the mantels "never were used in the Custis time or the Lee time." He was also of the opinion that the drawing room had not been finished off prior to the Civil War. Moore gave no reasons for his opinions, even though Gilbert Rodier, an architect who had made measured drawings of the house in 1924 (used in the restoration of the mansion by the War Department), had pointed out in an article published in the Architectural Forum, March, 1924, that many of the details in the house, such as some of the mantels and woodwork, were definitely early Victorian, and assumed that they were pre-Civil War. Two years later, historian J. G. de Roulhac Hamilton, in an article on the mansion published in Current History, August, 1926, stated correctly that the Lees had had the drawing room plastered and painted and "the mantels put in" in the 1850's. In a letter to Representative Louis C. Cramton, dated Jan. 24, 1929, Charles Moore receded from his earlier position to the extent of conceding that the mantels had been installed (inferentially by the Lees) subsequent to Mr. Custis' death in 1857.

In spite of this and similar evidence that the mantels were indeed original pieces, and so of historic importance, those in charge of the project continued to enlarge on the policy of "colonial" restoration established by the advisory board. Once committed to that policy, the Army officers and architect in charge of the restoration logically found it necessary to remove all traces of what they loosely termed "a later period" throughout the house. This included the removal of the two marble mantels in the drawing room, the one in the adjoining room, those in the upstairs bedrooms, and a wooden one in the basement kitchen (Col. L. H. Bash to Quartermaster Supply Officer, May 29, 1929). About this time Gen. W. E. Horton, Chairman of the advisory board, wrote Mrs. Oscar W. Underwood (June 25, 1929) for permission to inspect Woodlawn in order to ascertain the type of dining room and mantels used in "early Virginia homes." It was probably at this time that Horton heard of the close resemblance between the two marble mantels in the dining room at Woodlawn and those in the double parlors at Arlington and the story that Lafayette had given the four mantels to G. W. P. Custis, who in turn had given two of them to his sister, Mrs. Lawrence Lewis, for Woodlawn. At any rate, the story seems to have been accepted at its face value (there is no evidence whatever for it) and it was decided that replicas of the Woodlawn mantels should be made and installed in the drawing room at Arlington.

In subsequent months the decision to remove and replace all the mantels on the second floor was changed to removing only the marble mantel in the Lee bedroom and replacing it with a wooden replica of that in the Custis Sitting Room (Col. C. C. Mortimer to Quartermaster General, Sept. 24,

Robert W. Bridgett

1929). Those in the drawing room and large dining room were to be taken down and stored pending a decision as to whether they should be replaced (Gen. L. H. Bash to Quartermaster Supply Officer, Sept. 30, 1929). Whether or not the drawing room mantels were actually taken down at this time and subsequently put back in place is uncertain. An item for $2,000 for replicas of the Woodlawn mantels to replace them was included in an estimate submitted to the Cemeterial Division, Quartermaster Corps, April 4, 1930, but consideration of this item was postponed, according to a memorandum from General Bash to the Quartermaster Supply Officer, dated April 9, 1930.

Chairman Moore of the Fine Arts Commission continued to press for the removal of the Lee mantels. "Every time the members of the Commission ... go to the Arlington Mansion they ask when the mantels in the south room are to be changed to make them harmonious with the rest of the house," he wrote Gen. Bash, July 17, 1930. He made much the same comment a year later in a letter to Bash, dated Oct. 1, 1931. "I understood you to say you had taken up the question of having the old mantels .../in the double parlors/ duplicated but that the expense was prohibitive. There are two mantels of the period in the Y.M.C.A. home on E Street. Will you not look at these mantels and see if they will answer your purpose?" In reply to this last letter, General Bash informed Moore that a contract had been let for replicas to be made of the mantels in the double parlors, the medallions in the center of each replica to be like those at Woodlawn "which were originally ordered for the house by Major George Washington Park Custis ...." The new mantels, he said, would be installed in the drawing room by the end of the year. About this time, Colonel Mortimer, the officer directly in charge of the restoration, stated in an interview "The large reception room never received the mantelpieces intended for it, but years later two so-called 'up-to-date' Victorian mantles were installed. We hope to replace these with two of the design and material of those originally ordered for this room by Mr. Custis" (An Old Mansion Becomes a New Shrine, American Motorist, October, 1931). From his statement, it is apparent that a myth with absolutely no factual basis had become established as a fact in the minds of those charged with the restoration. According to Mr. L. M. Leisenring, architect in charge of the restoration (statement to M. H. Nelligan, June 17, 1949), the advisory board recognized that the mantels to be discarded had originally been installed by the Lees when they finished off the drawing room, but decided to replace them "because they were Victorian." For the same reason, it was decided to drop the plan of copying certain furniture owned by Dr. George Bolling Lee (for which arrangements had already been made with the owner and W. J. Sloane).

Accordingly, the new mantels were made and installed in the spring of 1932. (Mortimer to Bash, Mar. 24, 1932). The old ones from the drawing room were stored in the basement, where they are now; but what became of the others which were replaced (large dining room, Lee bedroom and winter kitchen) is unknown. Fortunately, the woodwork, particularly the door frames, which is also "Victorian," was not removed from the drawing room.

Robert W. Burgett

The above constitutes a case history of restoration of an historic house. There was no reasonable excuse to deviate from the basic restoration policy intended by Congress. Such a restoration was practicable since there was enough information available on which to base it. To compound the error, once it had been decided to "improve" on the original by taking out the Lee mantels, the opportunity was lost of copying, and perhaps later acquiring, the original furniture of the room owned by Dr. G. B. Lee, relics which are now on display at the Virginia Historical Society. The large sum of money spent on what are essentially fake mantels might instead better have been spent on copying furniture or portraits that were originally in the room. As it is, the "restored" room little resembles the one with which Robert E. Lee was familiar and of which he was justifiably proud.

However interesting to the professional historian the life and services of G. W. P. Custis may be, it is because of its associations with Robert E. Lee that the Lee Mansion is significant to the visiting public. This is as it should be, for the associations were real, many, and close, and it was in recognition of this fact and appreciation of Lee's services to the nation, as well as to the South, that Congress established the Lee Mansion National Memorial. Therefore, I recommend that the Lee mantels, now stored in the basement, be reset in their original positions in the drawing room, preferably this fall, before the room is repainted. With the mantels, the sofa recently donated by Mrs. Gerald M. Drew of Omaha, and the portrait supposedly of Mildred Lee, now awaiting cleaning and retouching, as a nucleus, a start can be made on gradually returning the room to its original appearance. More is known about this room, the details of its furnishings, colors, etc., than any other room in the house, and it will require little in the way of funds to accomplish its correct restoration. The result will be the gradual transformation of what is today an essentially meaningless room into one charged with significance as the one Lee was primarily responsible for finishing off, decorating and furnishing.

Murray H. Nelligan
Acting Chief, Public Use Section

Enclosures 3

MHNelligan:vcv
Enclosure (1) Elevations & details of mantels and s. wall, drawing room, Rodier & Kuntz, 1924.
(2) Photograph of Lee mantels in place in drawing room, c. 1930.
(3) Photocopy of drawing room in Anderson House, Savannah, Ga., showing mantel of similar period and design as the Lee mantel from Richard Pratt, Ladies Home Journal, November 1951.

RECEIVED

Robert W. Burgett

JUL 1 1959

Memorandum

To: Director, National Park Service

From: Superintendent, National Capital Parks

Subject: Repairs to Custis - Lee Mansion

The roofs on the north and south wings of the Custis - Lee Mansion have so deteriorated that major repairs are necessary. We have carefully researched the appearance of these roofs at the time when the Custis - Lee Mansion had attained its optimum development architecturally, c. 1853, as the residence of Robert E. Lee. It is our intention to replace these roofs as nearly as practicable to their appearance at that time including the substitution of the parapets on the east front in place of the existing unauthentic balustrades.

This decision was reached after careful consideration among ourselves and in consultation with Messrs. Kahler and Peterson of your staff.

Our unanimous opinion is that in authorizing the restoration of the Lee Mansion (H.J. Res. 284, March 4, 1925), the Congress intended that "practical" considerations should govern. We feel it would not be in the best interests of the Government to replace the cheap tar and gravel roof of 1861 -- an economy measure at the time -- but to restore the more permanent roof and parapet as designed by Hadfield, the architect, which we know existed at least as late as 1853. Thus the roofs of the house would present an appearance more typical of Lee's occupancy than of that immediately prior to the Civil War when, for sake of expediency, temporary repairs had been made.

Funds for these repairs have been programmed and the work will be getting underway in the near future.

(Sgd.) Harry T. Thompson

Superintendent

JUL 1 3 03 PM '59
NATIONAL CAPITAL PARKS

SENT

WDChick:psw:6/29/59
Copy to: Files (2)
Mr. Hausmann
Mr. Jett
Mr. Swartz
Miss Downey
Mr. Chick
Lincoln Museum
Mr. Kahler

Mr. Chick, Chief of Interpretation — May 5, 1959

Via : Asst. Chief Historian and The Chief Historian

Park Historian, Agnes M. Downey

Contemplated Restoration of the Roofs of the Wings of the Custis-Lee Mansion.

In compliance with your request for evidence regarding the roofs of the wings of The Custis-Lee Mansion, the following information is summarized:

According to the Act of Congress (Pub. Res. No. 74, 68th Congress passed March 4, 1925) which established "Arlington" as The National Memorial to Robert E. Lee, the mansion and area immediately surrounding it was to be restored "to the condition in which it existed immediately prior to the Civil War". That would be the condition in which the mansion and estate were in April 1861.

The major source of evidence concerning the exterior of the Custis-Lee Mansion during the Civil War period are photographs made of it and with the men stationed there by photographers on Mathew Brady's staff. It is logical to assume that the Union Army did little to alter the appearance of the house during the War years 1861-1865. This is established by comparing photographs made in 1861 with photographs made in 1864.

The master file at the Custis-Lee Mansion contains documentation for the extensive renovations which took place under the direction of the Lee Family 1855-1860.

Material of roofs on the north and south wings of the Custis-Lee Mansion

In 1859 Col. Robert E. Lee took out fire insurance for "Arlington House" with the Hartford Fire Insurance Company (copy in safe at the Custis-Lee Mansion). Intthis document it is stated that the wing roofs were gravel. A close study of 1864 photograph of the south wing (Archives #C517) reveals the texture of these roofs and indicates that this material, and **not** glass, was used for the roof of the conservatory.

Appearance:

Balustrades

Although earlier drawings of Arlington House, (Markie Williams' drawing in 1843 and Bernen Lessing's drawing 1853)--original in the Custis-Lee Mansion Museum - show parapets at the edge of the wing roofs, there is no historical justification for the balustrades which were placed on the wings by the War Department. The Civil War photographs made in 1861, 1862 and 1864 clearly show that Col. Robert E. Lee had no parapet nor balustrade on the wing roofs in 1861.

Chimneys

The present locations of chimneys on the north and south wings of the Custis-Lee Mansion correspond to those shown in the Civil War photographs. However, the shape of the chimney on the south wing as shown in Archives Photographs #BA 1502, #CW 517 and #CW 969 differs from the present and should be restored to its former appearance. It can also be noted from these photographs that the bare brick of the chimneys were left exposed. There was no plaster over the brick of the chimneys of "Arlington House" prior to 1864.

Recommendations:

Material of the roofs of the north and south wings.

It is recommended that gravel or a material rendering the same appearance as the roof described in the fire insurance and shown in the Civil War Photographs be restored to the north and south wings. It is suggested that thorough reconsideration be given to the roof of the conservatory on the basis of the discussion of this roof in the Repair and Restoration Log.

Appearance of the roofs of the north and south wings:

Balustrades: It is recommended that the balustrades be removed from the north and south wing roofs, leaving the roofs bare as shown in the Civil War Photographs.

Chimneys: It is recommended that the chimney on the south wing roof be restored to its appearance as shown in the Archives Photograph #CW 969. It is further recommended that the plaster be removed from the exterior of the chimneys so that they will have their proper appearance.

Magnolias: It is recommended that the four large Southern Magnolia trees now hiding the north and south wings on the east front be removed. This recommendation has been fully documented by Dr. Murray H. Nelligan in his memorandum to the Superintendent entitled "Magnolia Trees on the East Front....." and dated May 26, 1953. This recommendation was renewed by Mr. William Haussmann in his Memorandum to Mr. Harry Thompson entitled "The East Front of Arlington House..." and dated October 17, 1955.

Drains: The drains or roof gutters on "Arlington House" were metal according to the fire insurance policy of 1859, which has been cited. In Archives Photograph #CW 5654 the east gutter of the south wing appears to be marbleised. It is recommended that serious consideration be given to this question and that a decision on marbleization of the east front be reached.

The way in which the dark markings appear at intervals on the south gutter of the portico roof and the wing roof suggests this treatment. It is recommended that the color used for marbleization of this type in the Washington Area in the 1850's be investigated and that the exterior appearance of the east front of Arlington be restored to its 1861 appearance, including marbleization.

Agnes M. Downey
Park Historian

Attachments:

Prints: Archives CN 517
CN 969
CN 5654
BA 1502

Memo. Kelligan (1953)
" Haussmann (1955)

AMDowney:kmm

Copies to: Mr. Jett
Mr. Truett
Miss Downey
Files (2)

[Photostat Negative returned to K.M. Hemenway, the owner, by MHW, Oct , 1949.]

May 29, 1929

WAR DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF THE QUARTERMASTER GENERAL
WASHINGTON

IN REPLY REFER TO QM 600.3 C-E
(Arlington Mansion)

May 29, 1929.

SUBJECT: Restoration of Arlington Mansion.

TO: Quartermaster Supply Officer, Washington General Depot, 20th and C Streets, Washington, D. C.

1. In order that you may be prepared for the work of the restoration at Arlington Mansion and proceed with the work as soon as possible, the following outline of what it is intended to do is forwarded for your information. Certain parts of this work may be proceeded with without further reference to this office, but the greater part of it will require specifications and in some cases plans to be prepared by this office and handed over to you for completion under general direction of this office.

ITEM NO. 1 - The Quartermaster Supply Officer, Washington General Depot, to initiate a letter to the Secretary of War through this office, requesting amendment of existing instructions so as to permit us to place in the Amphitheatre, in a suitable location, all trophies and memorials except the two large bronze plates now in the central hall of the Mansion. When permission has been obtained, work of removal must be done with great care in order that no damage be done to the pieces removed. In the case of the "Honor Roll of Soldiers who Served in the Spanish-American War", the brick foundation under the marble pedestal shall be entirely removed, including its footing, and the cellar floor leveled and repaved. In the case of the two bronze plates in the central hall, these will be removed and stored to permit of the wall underneath being refilled.

ITEM NO. 2 - Thoroughly clean out the attic and examine everything which is taken out, in order that no pieces of possible historic interest be destroyed. This should be done under competent supervision. Clear all old dirt from the top of lath and plaster work. No painting is to be done in the attic and no changes made to old frame work, etc., unless such are absolutely necessary. Carefully examine the under side of roof board for possible leaks.

ITEM NO. 3 - Open up and clean out all flues in all chimneys down to the fireplaces or other openings from whence they start. Insert in tops of all chimney flues heavy copper wire screens to keep out birds and squirrels.

ITEM NO. 4 - The present marble mantels in Rooms 2, 4, 19, 20, 22 and 23 are eventually to be removed and replaced. Those in Rooms 2 and 4 will be replaced with marble mantels similar to those now in Rooms 7 and 8. Those in the second floor bedrooms Nos. 19, 20, 22 and 23 will be removed and replaced with wooden mantels similar to that now in Room No. 14. When this is done, new hearths will be laid in connection with all of these mantels. In the meantime, all loose brickwork in the fireplaces and in the fireplace throats should be made secure. The Office of The Quartermaster General will furnish plans and specifications for both the new marble and new wooden mantels desired, and the new hearths. When this has been done, information will be furnished to the Depot Quartermaster who will then secure quotations of cost for approval by this office.

ITEM NO. 5 - Repair the marble mantels now in Rooms 7 and 8, also the wooden mantel in Room 14. Don't do this until the work is practically completed.

ITEM NO. 6 - Remove the ranges, plumbing fixtures and piping and open up fire places in Room 13 and in the winter kitchen immediately below this room in the cellar. Refinish these as old open fire places with cranes and other utensils. The Office of The Quartermaster General will specify kind of cranes and utensils to buy.

ITEM NO. 7 - Open up and clean all flues and all chimneys in the slaves' quarters and summer kitchen. Finish these fireplaces with open brick arches, and fit them with old-fashioned cranes and other utensils. Specifications for material for utensils will be furnished by the Office of The Quartermaster General. Exteriors of all chimneys to be covered by screening of copper wire to keep out birds and squirrels.

ITEM NO. 8 - Open up basement in summer kitchen at old door and window openings. Carefully examine under competent supervision all material taken out so that no articles or materials of historic interest and value are lost. When this excavation has been made, furnish a complete survey of the building to The Quartermaster General and after securing from him drawings and specifications, complete the restoration of this building with floors at the old levels, with areaway and steps from the south side.

ITEM NO. 9 - In the slaves' quarters, re-lay the old brick floors at their original levels. Open up interior doors. Repair generally. Furnish all missing hardware of old patterns approved by The Quartermaster General.

ITEM NO. 10 - Repair and re-lay floor of the portico of the main building and construct new stone steps, as per Drawing No. 6608-1070 prepared by The QMGO (2 copies of which are attached). In securing the estimates for these stone steps, it is the desire to secure an alternative price for supporting the steps on 18 inch brick spur walls securely anchored to the present exterior walls of the portico, then carry down to the same levels as concrete founda-

tion shown on Drawing. The construction of the stone steps will not be done until it is ascertained whether or not present funds will be sufficient to cover the cost of same. No action will be taken on the steps until approval obtained from The Quartermaster General.

ITEM NO. 11 - Set a steel I-Beam of suitable size to carry all possible loads in the partition and floor construction over Room No. 4. This beam must be set so that the lines of the present ceiling in Room No. 4 shall not be affected nor the present lines in baseboards and partitions in Rooms 19 and 20.

ITEM NO. 12 - Remove all old electric light wiring or gas piping now in the buildings and install a new system with floor plugs and a certain number of fixtures for emergency illumination, in accordance with plans and specifications prepared by The QMGO.

ITEM NO. 13 - Remove all of present heating system in main building, including radiators and piping, and install a new system with concealed radiators and pipes operated from central heating plant, as per drawing and specifications by The Quartermaster General.

ITEM NO. 14 - Install an electric fire protection system to sound an alarm from any room, with alarm in guard-room, as per plans and specifications of The Quartermaster General.

ITEM NO. 15 - Install a gas fire smothering system in the attic in the main building, as per Plans and specifications of The Quartermaster General.

ITEM NO. 16 - When all work likely to disturb interior plaster has been completed, repair all original interior plaster work, carefully matching original moldings, cornices, panels, etc.

ITEM NO. 17 - Repair all evidence of injury to interior mill work, carefully conforming to contours of all original moldings, etc. Take down temporary partitions marked on plans by The Quartermaster General to be removed.

ITEM NO. 18 - Remove gate from main stairs. Open up service stairs to second floor and to cellar. Repair wherever injured and make all perfect.

ITEM NO. 19 - Replace all missing or all modern hardware in all three of the buildings with the hardware of the Colonial period, approved by The Quartermaster General.

ITEM NO. 20 - Investigate the supposed existence of mural painting in Room No. 4, using the services of an expert approved by The Quartermaster General.

ITEM NO. 21 - Carefully restore the mural paintings on the frieze over the stairs in the hall, and also the painted panels on the exterior of the slaves' quarters, using the services of an artist approved by The Quartermaster General. Examine for evidence of mural decorations on south side of hall frieze.

ITEM NO. 22 - Brick wall in main hall, second floor, to be carefully inspected and if found necessary, it will be rebuilt before being replastered.

ITEM NO. 23 - Remove all plumbing fixtures from Room No. 3 and restore this room same as similar rooms in north wing. Provide toilet and lavatory for guards at location to be approved by The Quartermaster General.

ITEM NO. 24 - Paint the interior of all buildings, as per schedule of where and what colors to paint approved by The Quartermaster General.

ITEM NO. 25 - Remove all modern flooring and replace all original flooring that has rotted or been injured with new mill pieces worked to match original floor boards. Scrape all floors and refinish with oil and wax to a flat dull lustre.

ITEM NO. 26 - Construct wooden balustrades at eaves line of roofs on north and south wings, in accordance with details furnished by The Quartermaster General.

ITEM NO. 27.- Renew rotted and damaged window sash, doors and frames wherever necessary.

ITEM NO. 28 - Provide metal guard rails and screens to the different rooms to keep the general public out, similar to the arrangement at Mount Vernon.

ITEM NO. 29 - When all other work is completed, finish any necessary painting on the exterior of building.

The numbers of the rooms referred to above are shown on Drawings No. 6608-1032 and 6608-1033, duplicate copies of which are attached.

Arrangements for the continued use of Room No. 1 as an office with its entrance through the Conservatory are to be made, before work as outlined in above instructions progresses to such a point as to make it inadvisable for visitors to enter the office through the main entrance.

So far as possible, all of the work is to be carried on so as to permit the general public to have access to the main hall of the first floor

and to the portico and to look into the rooms on either side of the main hall.

Your particular attention is directed to the necessity of taking effective means to insure that all of the work herein described is a "restoration". Every effort must be made to insure that any new work, such as the re-flooring or wall finish, has an antique appearance so as to perfectly match the balance of the house. The success of the job will depend on the new work being undistinguishable.

For The Quartermaster General:

L. H. BASH,
Colonel, Q. M. C.,
Assistant.

3 incls. in dup.
(blueprints)

L. M. Keiserring, report to Q. M. Gen.

C. 1931

- Restoration of Lee Mansion
- Before
- Work done / foundations, walls
- Committee in charge
- Research done
- Chimneys rebuilt
- Floor settlement corrected by trusses.
- Flooring - whole second floor
- Locks, original & restored
- Heating plant.
- Suits, Qtrs - before & after
- Furnishings.

The original of this copy was sent to the Quartermaster General.

ARLINGTON MANSION AND ITS RESTORATION.

ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY, FORT MYER, VIRGINIA.

A "Joint Resolution Authorizing the Restoration of the Lee Mansion in Arlington National Cemetery, Virginia, (Public Resolution - No. 74 - 68th Congress) (H. J. Res. 264)" was "Approved, March 4, 1925", and reads as follows: "Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the Secretary of War be, and he is hereby, authorized and directed, as nearly as may be practicable, to restore the Lee Mansion in the Arlington National Cemetery, Virginia, to the condition in which it existed immediately prior to the Civil War and to procure, if possible, articles of furniture and equipment which were then in the Mansion and in use by the occupants thereof. He is also authorized, in his discretion, to procure replicas of the furniture and other articles in use in the Mansion during the period mentioned, with a view to restoring, as far as may be practicable, the appearance of the interior of the Mansion to the condition of its occupancy by the Lee family." (The above to be printed in italics.)

The honor and privilege of restoring the Mansion to its original grandeur as called for by the above joint resolution fell to the lot of the Quartermaster Corps and the work was undertaken with determination to do justice to the Mansion and credit to the Corps. The Quartermaster General designated a "Committee on the restoration and refurnishing of Arlington Mansion" who would have charge of this work. The personnel of this committee was:

Brigadier General William E. Horton, Chairman,

Brigadier General L. H. Bash, Assistant Quartermaster General.

Lieutenant Colonel Charles G. Mortimer, Q. M. Corps, Commanding Officer, Washington Q. M. Depot.

The architects were Mr. Edward W. Donn and Mr. L. M. Leisenring. The personnel of this committee has not changed, but since the retirement of General Horton, General Bash has become Chairman.

Nearly sixty-five years had passed since the Lees left. How did the Mansion look at that time? What was in the house and how was it arranged? For what was the ground surrounding the house used? These major questions and many minor questions in detail must be answered.

All available old pictures, artists' sketches, magazine articles and old maps were carefully studied, folklore and first hand recollections of former slaves and their descendants was gathered, and the information thus obtained was collected into a visionary replica of what had once been the beautiful and imposing Mansion.

This building had been used since 1864 as quarters for the superintendent and the gardener of Arlington who occupied the entire building with the exception of the central hall and three rooms of the first floor. These latter were, without furnishings, open to the public. Modern improvements had been made, the badly worn floors had been covered with modern oak and maple flooring, the entire building was heated with steam, all rooms were provided with electric lights and modern plumbing and bathrooms had been installed on each floor.

The first act of restoration was to discontinue the use of the Mansion as living quarters and the removal of modern improvements. This general

discard of improvements was followed by a careful examination in all parts of the structure from foundation to roof and the replacement of every crumbled brick and decayed timber which could be found. The bricks used in walls were made by hand upon the site and the wear of time had reduced many to a state of disintegration. Many used in basement walls and chimneys, where they were exposed, were entirely gone or what remained was only red earth, easily removed with the fingers. This condition of the brick work required considerable rebuilding of basement walls and the reconstruction of all chimneys from the second story ceiling to tops. The condition of timbers necessitated the reconstruction of cornices, replacement of many beams and joists, flashings on the west gable, and the roof of the conservatory. The reconstruction of these portions of the building was done with extreme care to duplicate the members used in the original work. On the second floor over the large reception room the weight of a portion had caused settlement of nearly five inches, with the resulting cracks in walls above and ceilings below. To add support to this floor without visible alterations, a truss was constructed within the partition, the sag in the floor was corrected and the walls were replastered in their original positions.

The floors consisted originally of tongued and grooved pine boards, random width and thickness, hewn out on the underside to fit over joists and provide even exposed surface. This old flooring in the second story was carefully cleaned, repaired in spots where necessary with old flooring taken from the first story, so that in truth the second floor of this

building is now "original." The flooring of the first story over which the hardwood had been lain was in such condition that its repair was impossible, and a new pine floor, duplicating the original as closely as possible, was laid over the entire first story.

The hardware was another item requiring considerable study. With the exception of the two large entrance doors where the original massive locks remained intact, all other locks, knobs, escutcheons and key plates had been replaced by modern hardware or the few which remained were long past usefulness. Such old locks as still remained in part were removed, and from the collection thus obtained it was possible to reproduce by hand, locks very closely resembling those originally used on all doors.

Next came the question of heating this building for the comfort of the visiting public in winter. With this end in view the boiler was located in an adjacent building, not only to remove a modern utility from the Mansion, but also to reduce the fire hazard by elimination of all fires within. Hot water heat was provided, with all installation within the Mansion confined to the basement and concealed as far as possible. The heat to rooms on the first floor was brought in through gratings in the fireplaces, thus eliminating the necessity of placing radiators in the rooms to contrast with their colonial furnishings.

The removal of heating and cooking appliances from the building reduces the fire hazard to a minimum, but for the further protection of this historic and magnificent structure, an automatic fire alarm system has been installed which will sound the alarm within a few seconds, should a fire start in any room, hall or closet throughout the entire building. With the exception

of the fire gong, this silent watchman is invisible to all those not familiar with its location.

The restoration of the Mansion called for not only the return of the Mansion itself to the original condition, but also the two adjacent buildings immediately west. The slave quarters consisted of three rooms and had been used since the establishment of Arlington as a tool house and place for storing paints, oils, and the like. The woodwork of the building was badly decayed, concrete floors had been placed in two rooms and in the other a stone pavement had been placed. These floors were all removed, the woodwork replaced with duplicates of the original, the walls of rooms were cleaned where necessary, and where they had been replastered the plaster was taken from the walls. The location of joists supporting the attic floor long since removed, was determined. Information relative to the original arrangement of these rooms and the purposes for which used was obtained from one of the old slaves who lived in this building, and today the building is in the same condition, as far as possible, which existed prior to the Civil War.

The summer kitchen building had been remodeled and used as quarters by the assistant gardener and was, of course, far different from the original summer kitchen which it was desired to restore. Practically everything except the walls inside this building was removed, the kitchen and basement room were restored, new floors were constructed at the original elevation and we now have five rooms following the original arrangement. Information on the original condition of this building was also obtained from the former slave.

FURNISHING THE INTERIOR

Brigadier General William E. Horton, Retired, is still very active on the Committee on the restoration and refurnishing of Arlington Mansion. For many years the General has been a close student of fine old furniture and a collector of the cream of antiques. He had in storage for some time a very select assortment of furnishings. In looking over Arlington Mansion, the General saw where part of his furniture could become useful and delight the hearts of others who saw it, as well as his own. So he has loaned the War Department nearly one hundred pieces of equipage. All the furnishings in General and Mrs. Lee's bedroom and in the "Lafayette room" are his. In addition to the two rooms mentioned above, the General has loaned many other pieces and there is no room of the entire fifteen throughout the Mansion that does not contain something loaned by him. Not long ago, General Horton saw another piece of furniture that was needed in the "Lafayette room" and also one for the "Lees' bedroom." The pieces desired had to be of a particular kind, and the General went to Boston to purchase them at a price that plainly showed that he loved Arlington more than money.

In addition to the furniture supplied by General Horton, many other items were donated by various benefactors. As an illustration of the generosity displayed by these various benefactors, the following incidents are cited: One of the very first benefactors was Mrs. James Peyton Powell of Huntsville, Alabama, who opened her richly furnished home with the request that anything she had, be taken, that could be used in refurnishing the Mansion. From her home was brought the very finest of these furnishings.

Articles of furniture, dishes, silverware, bedding, spinning-wheel, and deer horns were among the donations of Mrs. Powell.

The furnishing of the Mansion is by no means complete, and in this respect the committee is working diligently to secure originals where possible, and, failing in this, to secure replicas that are authentic in all respects. Work of this kind must of necessity be rather slow.

It should be remembered that much of the original furnishings of Arlington came thence from Mount Vernon on the death of Martha Washington who willed many of the fine paintings and portraits of the Washington collection, furniture and furnishings, as well as most of the Washington war relics to her grandson - George Washington Parke Custis - the builder and original proprietor of Arlington Mansion.

In the nature of things these can not be returned to Arlington. Some are in the National Museum, some are back at Mt. Vernon and others are in possession of the Washington and Lee heirs. Reproductions are being made and they will take the places of the originals. The old hall lantern presented by Admiral Vernon to Lawrence Washington at the time he built Mt. Vernon, and which hung in the main hall there until it moved to Arlington in 1802, will shortly be replaced by a faithful copy. It will hang in the main hall of Arlington at the same point from which swung the Vernon lamp for over fifty years, and until Mrs. Robert E. Lee removed it preparatory to packing "the Washington relics" early in 1861.

Much remains to be done toward completing the furnishing, and study must be given each item to the end that the will of Congress, to restore

"as far as practicable, the appearance of the interior of the Mansion to the condition of its occupancy by the Lee family", may be fulfilled. Such a job is not one of weeks or months - but of years.