

HISTORIC STRUCTURES REPORT
HISTORICAL DATA SECTION UPDATE

BUILDING 48

Harpers Ferry National Historical Park

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Introduction

This report examines the history of Park Building 48, located on the eastern portion of Lot 2, North of Shenandoah Street.¹ It is primarily a physical history of the building with some background on those believed to have resided within it. Context and setting should be included in a more complete report, examining Park Building 48 in comparison to other armory dwellings and analyzing the lives of its residents compared to others who lived in the Harpers Ferry area. To complete this task, sources at the National Archives will have to be examined, particularly those in Record Group 217, Records of the Second Auditor of the Treasury, 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Series. Among other items, the record group includes payrolls and muster rolls from the United States Armory at Harpers Ferry (currently being microfilmed for Harpers Ferry National Historical Park).

Park Building 48 is currently a six room, two-story plus attic stone structure, which fronts 19 feet on Shenandoah Street and runs 33 feet deep, abutting the cliffs. The original building measured 19 feet by 15 feet, 6 inches. At an unknown time, a 17 foot, 6 inch by 19 foot addition was constructed on the north side or rear. Physical foundations identified by park archeologists in 1990 indicated a 20 foot, 3 inch by 17 ft, 1-½ inch two-story wing once existed to the east. Park Building 48 is designated the "Armorer's Dwelling" because it is the only extant structure within park boundaries constructed for and used as a residence by United States Armory employees at Harpers

¹Deed records most commonly describe the property as Lot 2, North of Shenandoah Street. Other public records label it as Lot 2, Shenandoah Street or Lot 2, South Cliff Street.

Ferry.

This study supplements two previous works by former Park Historian Charles W. Snell. His "Historic Building Report" of 1958 is the most complete study of Building 48.² Snell's "Historic Structure Report" of 1980 is an addendum to the 1958 report. The 1980 report incorporates new information located in the National Archives and includes post-Civil War history omitted in the original work in accordance with earlier Park policy.³

Since January 1989, a historical research team established through a cooperative agreement with the University of Maryland has been indexing all records pertinent to the Harpers Ferry vicinity. To date, the following records have been indexed: the Charles Town Spirit of Jefferson newspaper from 1848 to 1955, as available; the Charles Town Virginia Free Press newspaper from 1808 to 1850 and from 1865 to 1915, as available; the Charles Town Farmers Advocate newspaper from 1890 to 1911, as available; the United States Census data for Jefferson County from 1810 to 1910 (with the exception of 1890, which was destroyed by fire); and deeds, wills, and property tax records located in the Jefferson County Courthouse. These primary sources have provided new information on Park Building 48, mandating an updated report.

²Charles W. Snell, "Historic Building Report, Part I and II, Bldg. No. 48, An Armorer's Dwelling House, Lot No. 2, Shenandoah Street." Harpers Ferry National Monument, October 31, 1958, Revised December 30, 1958.

³Charles W. Snell, "Historic Structure Report, An Armorer's Dwelling House, Bldg. No. 48, on U.S. Lot No. 2 North of Shenandoah Street, Harpers Ferry National Historical Park, West Virginia." Historical Data Section, Denver Service Center, May 1980.

Other sources consulted include: Armory records on microfilm in the Park Library extracted from the National Archives; modern and historic photograph collections also located in the Library; Park Architect Krista Pace-Copeland; Park Archeology staff; and Historic Research Project Lead Historian Pat Chickering and Project Historian Michael A. Jenkins.

Park Building 48 has been given different enumerations during its history. Armory Superintendent James Stubblefield used one set of numbering in the 1820s. In 1841, a new system was created wherein the dwelling number was actually painted on the structure.⁴ After the Civil War, the government labeled the buildings in preparation for the 1869 sale of property. Due to confusion over numbering systems, no historic structure can positively be identified as Park Building 48, although it definitely was one of two buildings, Armory Dwelling 3 or Armory Dwelling 5, as identified in the post-Civil War enumeration. Charles Snell has labeled Armory Dwelling 3 as Park Building 45, although there are no details in that enumeration distinguishing either as Park Building 48 or Park Building 45.⁵ Furthermore, no

⁴Charles W. Snell, "A Descriptive Catalog and Directory of 187 Armory Dwelling Houses, 1841-1852, of the U.S. Armory at Harpers Ferry, Virginia, Including Rents Collected, 1823 to 1851: Volume II, A History of Armory Houses," Denver Service Center, September 1981, p. 10;

"Rent Roll - Statement of Dwelling Houses belonging to the United States at Harpers Ferry Armory, and of the Rents due thereon on 31st March 1841," National Archives Record Group 217, 2nd Auditor, 2nd Series, File No. 6195, Washington, D.C.

⁵Brigadier General Edward D. Ramsay, inspection report to Brigadier General A. B. Dyer, Chief of Ordnance, July 27, 1865. National Archives, Record Group 156. The enumeration of Park Building 48 does not appear on the 1869 map prepared for the sale, although Charles Snell wrote "AD 5" on both the 1869 map and the Harpers Ferry

known records correlate numbers of one period with those of another. Thus, a conclusion about the occupants of a numbered structure during any given period could be correct is tentative at best.

Ownership of the Land

Lot 2, North of Shenandoah Street, was included in the original sale of land from John Wager, Sr., to the United States on June 15, 1796, for establishment of a national armory at Harpers Ferry.⁶ In 1852, the government sold much of its land which had been developed as housing for Armory employees, but certain tracts were not offered for sale, including Lot 2 on which Park Building 48 stands. Park Building 48 was one of 25 armory dwellings still owned by the government which survived the Civil War.⁷

On November 30 and December 1, 1869, the United States offered its holdings at Harpers Ferry for sale. Isabella Leisenring placed the winning bid for Lot 2.⁸ On June 14, 1878, Congress passed an act which allowed purchasers of Harpers Ferry property in the 1869 sale to apply for release from their contracts. Upon application, successful

National Monument 1859 Historical Base Map.

⁶National Archives, Microfilm Reel 21, Volume 7, pp.704-708.

⁷Brigadier General Edward D. Ramsay, inspection report to Brigadier General A. B. Dyer, Chief of Ordnance, July 27, 1865. National Archives, Record Group 156. A photocopy is located in HFNHP Library.

⁸James P. Noffsinger, "Harpers Ferry, West Virginia: Contributions Towards a Physical History." United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Eastern Office of Design and Construction, November 1958, pp. 135-136. Serial No. 1580, Document No. 6, pp. 2-3. [FROM SNELL-TO BE CHECKED AT NATIONAL ARCHIVES]

bidders from 1869 either could have their original contract cancelled or have the original purchase price abated, if they desired to keep the property. This policy is described in a deed confirming resale of other property at another public auction at Harpers Ferry in 1880: "With the consent of the Secretary of War shall cancel contract with and release the purchasers of lots on land from their purchasers made on the 30th day of November 1869, at and near Harpers Ferry, West Virginia, wherever such purchasers shall quit-claim and release said lots or parcels of land to the United States."⁹ Isabella Leisenring was allowed to quit-claim the lot to the United States. On May 25, 1880, Gabriel L. Myers paid the United States \$405 for Lot 2,¹⁰ which he held for only eighteen months before selling to Mrs. Margaret Dempsey for \$450.¹¹ In 1885, Dempsey divided the lot, keeping the eastern portion (on which Park Building 48 is located) and selling the western portion to Magnus Cockrell.¹² In 1907, Dempsey sold her portion of the lot either to Eugenia Shugart, the one-month old daughter of Harpers Ferry Deputy Sheriff Eugene Shugart, or to Eugene

⁹Jefferson County, West Virginia, Deed Book I, p. 109.

¹⁰Jefferson County, West Virginia. Deed Book I, p. 109, Deed of Bargain and Sale. Solicitor of Treasury Kenneth Rayner to G.L. Myers, June 1, 1880; National Archives Record Group 121, Entry 58 [FROM SNELL-CHECK WHETHER SHOULD BE ENTRY 78], "Warranty Deeds to Lands Conveyed by the Ordnance Department, 1830-1927" (4 vols.), Vol. III, p. 590.

¹¹Jefferson County, West Virginia, Deed Book K, p. 239, Deed of Bargain and Sale. G.L. Myers to Margaret Dempsey, December 26, 1881.

¹²Jefferson County, West Virginia, Deed Book 77, p. 117, Deed of Bargain and Sale. Margaret Dempsey to Magnus Cockrell, April 9, 1885.

Shugart for \$290.¹³

This deed was not recorded until after Eugene Shugart's death in 1919, thus evoking questions concerning title to the property. The grantee of the original deed was Eugene Shugart, although when recorded, the final typewritten "e" in Eugene was covered with an "ia" written in ink. The new name Eugenia was that of Shugart's daughter, born one month before the 1907 transaction. The notary public attested the name as being Eugenia.

Land tax records, however, reflect Margaret Dempsey as the owner of Lot 2 through 1919. In 1920, Eugene Shugart's name first appears as its owner.¹⁴ Later records of the 1920s and early 1930s continue to list either Eugene Shugart or the Eugene Shugart estate as the property owner.¹⁵ In 1934, the eastern portion of Lot 2 finally appears in the name of Eugene's daughter Eliza P. Shugart, who purchased it from her surviving brothers and sisters and their spouses the previous year.¹⁶

¹³Jefferson County, West Virginia, Deed Book 117, p. 518, Deed of Bargain and Sale. Margaret Dempsey to Eugenia Shugart, November 15, 1907; Farmer's Advocate, October 19, 1907, p. 2, col. 2, notes Eugenia's birth.

¹⁴Jefferson County, West Virginia, Land Record Book 1920. All available real estate and some personal property assessments for Lot 2, North of Shenandoah Street, appear in the Appendix.

¹⁵Jefferson County, West Virginia, Lands Record Books for 1923, 1926, 1929, 1930, 1932, and 1933.

¹⁶Jefferson County, West Virginia, Land Record Book for 1934; Jefferson County, West Virginia, Deed Book 138, p. 489, Deed of Bargain and Sale. Frank E. Shugart, Ann W. Dearing, Margaret Shugart, James A. Dearing, Gardner G. Shugart, Marguerite M. Shugart, Oliver M. Reitan to Eliza P. Shugart, May 26, 1933.

To complicate the matter, Lot 2 does not appear in either Eugene Shugart's will or the 1919 appraisal of his estate.¹⁷ In accordance with the will, all enumerated property was transferred to his wife Margeret D. Shugart. Upon her death one-half of the property would pass to daughter Eliza and the other one-half to the remaining surviving children. Unfortunately, the records of fiduciary appear to lack formal closing of his accounts. When Margaret D. Shugart died on May 21, 1931, Lot 2 was omitted from the appraisal of her property as well.¹⁸ Furthermore, if the property was legally owned by Eugenia Shugart, there should have been corresponding fiduciary records following her death intestate on November 19, 1932.¹⁹ The surviving brothers and sisters of Eliza P. Shugart should not have been able to acquire Lot 2 from either Eugene Shugart, Margaret D. Shugart, or Eugenia Shugart Reitan without recordation in the Jefferson County Courthouse; however, no records have been found. The 1933 deed which transfers the eastern portion of Lot 2 to Eliza Shugart states the surviving heirs had acquired the property from Eugenia Reitan,

¹⁷Jefferson County, West Virginia, Will Book D, p. 425; Accounts of Fiduciaries Book O, pp. 472 and 485.

¹⁸Record of Fiduciaries Book No. 1 [CHECK NUMBER IN COURTHOUSE], recorded June 1, 1931. List of heirs are stated as follows: Gardner Shugart, son, of Upper Marlboro, MD; Frank E. Shugart, son, of Westernport, MD; Eliza P. Shugart, daughter of Harpers Ferry; Margaret G.S. Reed, daughter, of Harpers Ferry; and Jean S. Reitan, daughter, of Charlotte, NC. Mrs. Reitan is the former Eugenia Shugart.

¹⁹Tombstone inscription of Eugenia Shugart Reitan in Harper Cemetery, Harpers Ferry.

deceased.²⁰

In 1943, Eliza and her husband Floyd Barnes conveyed the eastern portion of Lot 2 to Richard Kidwell, Jr., for \$100.²¹ The marked decrease in value is probably due to damage suffered in the 1936 flood. Tax records indicate a significant devaluation of structures on the eastern and western portions of Lot 2 between 1935 and 1936.²² Kidwell held the property until the state purchased it in 1953 for inclusion in Harpers Ferry National Monument.²³ The western portion of Lot 2 was sold in 1928 by Kate Cockrell and Georgia Cockrell to Raymond W. Murphy, who held the property until the state purchased it in 1953.²⁴

²⁰Jefferson County, West Virginia, Deed Book 138, p. 489, Deed of Bargain and Sale. Frank E. Shugart, Ann W. Dearing, Margaret Shugart, James A. Dearing, Gardner G. Shugart, Marguerite M. Shugart, Oliver M. Reitan to Eliza P. Shugart, May 26, 1933.

²¹Jefferson County, West Virginia, Deed Book 159, p. 180, Deed of Bargain and Sale. Eliza P. Barnes and Floyd Barnes to Richard Kidwell, Jr., May 21, 1943.

²²Jefferson County, West Virginia, Land Record Books for 1935 and 1936. The assessment of the Shugart building decreased from \$140 to \$40. The assessment of Raymond Murphy's structure on the western portion of the lot decreased from \$380 to \$260.

²³Jefferson County, West Virginia, Deed Book 192, p. 252, Deed of Bargain and Sale. Richard Kidwell, Jr. and Nellie Mae Kidwell to the State of West Virginia, January 7, 1953.

²⁴Jefferson County, West Virginia, Deed Book 130, p. 515, Deed of Bargain and Sale. Kate Cockrell and Georgia Cockrell to Raymond W. Murphy, June 4, 1928;
Spirit of Jefferson, July 5, 1928, p. 1, col. 4;
Jefferson County, West Virginia, Deed Book 192, p. 251, Deed of Bargain and Sale. Raymond W. Murphy and Jessie P. Murphy to the State of West Virginia, January 7, 1953;
Spirit of Jefferson, September 11, 1952, p. A6, Col. 1-2 notes Raymond Murphy's death before the formal transfer of property to the state.

Construction of Park Building 48

In 1811, no stone dwellings and only one stone and frame structure stood on Armory land at Harpers Ferry.²⁵ As the government could not satisfy the demand for housing, Superintendent James Stubblefield, without authorization, began allowing workers to construct and make improvements to dwellings on government land at Harpers Ferry beginning in 1811. In 1821, only three armorer dwellings were of stone construction, none matching the dimensions of Building 48.²⁶ Between 1822 and 1837, the Armory itself built 46 new residences, none of which fits the description of Park Building 48.²⁷ Following 1837, the government only constructed dwellings for the Armory superintendent, paymaster, master armorer, and their clerks.²⁸

²⁵Snell, "Historic Structure Report," 1980, p. 15; Samuel Annin, Military Store Keeper, Harper's Ferry, VA, "Public Buildings at Harper's Ferry in Virginia," October 1, 1811. National Archives Record Group 107, Records of the Secretary of the War. Detailed in Charles W. Snell, "A Comprehensive History of the Construction, Maintenance, and Numbers of Armory Dwelling Houses, 1796-1869," National Park Service Typescript, Harpers Ferry National Monument, January 13, 1959, pp. 6-7.

²⁶Snell, "Historic Structure Report," 1980, p. 24; "Statement of the Number and Dimensions of the Buildings at the United States' Armory at Harper's Ferry, Virginia, American State Papers, Military Affairs, Volume II, p. 482.

²⁷Snell, "Historic Structure Report," 1980, p. 25; National Archives Record Group 156, Entry 935, War Department, Ordnance, National Armory Accounts for Harper's Ferry, 1795-1829, photostats located in HFNHP Library; National Archives Record Group 156, Entry 936, National Armory Accounts and Annual Report for 1830 and 1831, HFNHP Microfilm Reel No. 20, Vol. 5, p. 436; Superintendent George Rust, Jr. to Chief of Ordnance George Bomford, August 7, 1832, Reel 22, Vol. 13, p. 1255; Bomford to Rust, August 13, 1832, Reel 14, Vol. 4, p.896.

²⁸Snell, "Historic Structure Report," 1980, pp. 17-18; Snell, "A Comprehensive History...", p. 136.

Since Park Building 48 did not exist in the 1821 inventory, it likely was constructed by an armorer between 1821 and January 1832, when the government abandoned its policy of allowing employees to erect buildings on public land. Meanwhile, the government began compensating workers for dwelling houses they had built; and by 1839, the Armory had acquired full title to all buildings on public land at Harpers Ferry.²⁹ Of those buildings for which the government paid claims, several stone structures could be Park Building 48. In 1829, Armory Superintendent Stubblefield prepared a report listing the buildings for which the government owed claims.³⁰ Unfortunately, no details are provided for the eleven stone buildings listed in the Stubblefield report. In a report by Armory Superintendent Rust in 1831, the government owed compensation for six stone structures constructed by Daniel T. Crawford, William Smallwood, John Lackey, Francis Attlespeiger, and Henry Ward. William Smallwood constructed two of the listed structures, with one measured at 16 by 19 feet, and the other at 19 feet by 29 feet.³¹ Upon examination of the foundations of Park Building 48 in September 1990, Park Architect Krista Pace-Copeland and Park Archeologists determined its probable original size as approximately 19 feet by 15 feet, six inches, which closely matches the dimensions of the smaller Smallwood structure.

²⁹Snell, "Historic Structure Report," 1980, pp. 16-17; Snell, "A Comprehensive History...", pp. 133-137.

³⁰Snell, "Historic Structures Report," 1980, p. 27; American State Papers -- Military Affairs, Vol. IV, pp. 143-144.

³¹Snell, "Historic Structure Report," 1980, p. 28; Copy of the original list is located in HFNHP Library Reel 24, Vol. 9, pp. 844-849.

Although no known documentary data proves this is Park Building 48, it most closely matches the description of the smaller Smallwood structure. The 19 feet by 16 feet building is listed as having the following outstructures: log house, bake oven, smoke house, privy, stable, and fence.³²

Since all additions to the original 16 by 19 foot core must have appeared after Rust's 1831 report, the government itself must have erected the north rear addition, which appears in an 1865 photo, HF-119, and still exists. The government or the original builders likely made few improvements before claims were paid to most of the builders in 1837, because the claims were assessed in 1832. Furthermore, little or no construction work was done on armorer dwellings after the sale of property in 1852. Therefore, it is likely the rear addition was constructed between 1837 and 1852.

The east wing addition identified by Park Archaeologists in 1990 does not appear in HF-119 due to the angle of the photo. The first actual evidence of this wing appears in two 1898 photographs. None of the Sanborn Fire Insurance maps include Lot 2, North of Shenandoah Street, although the lot does appear on a 1913 B&O Railroad map. The wing may have been constructed by the government before the Civil War, possibly at the same time as the rear addition. Park Archeologists believe both the rear addition and the wing were erected before 1850.

To prevent losing skilled laborers who could not afford to lease

³²Snell, "Historic Structure Report," 1980, p. 29; "Valuation of claims of individuals for improvements made on the Public Land at Harper's Ferry Armory," October 31, 1831, American State Papers, Military Affairs, IV, pp. 143-144. [CHECK REFERENCE]

private land, in 1852, the government sold 216- $\frac{1}{2}$ acres, subdivided into 258 house lots, with 53 dwellings.³³ Building 48 remained on the 120- $\frac{1}{4}$ acres retained by the government. After the 1852 sale, the Armory still owned 90 houses, down from 143 in 1850. During the 1850s, the government destroyed those dwellings in poor condition, leaving only 33 residences extant in 1860, 25 of which survived the war.³⁴

Residents of Park Building 48

It is impossible to positively identify who resided in Park Building 48 before 1865. Lists taken from Rent Rolls³⁵ identify buildings by numbers (designated in August 1841 by painter John P. Kennedy) but these do not correspond to the post-war numbers.

Rent rolls from the 1840s identify the occupants of Armory dwellings.³⁶ From these rolls, the identity of Park Building 48 can

³³Snell, "Historic Structure Report," 1980, p.4. P. 22 of the same report states the number at 56, which is inconsistent with the total;
Charles W. Snell, "The Acquisition and Disposal of Public Lands of the U.S. Armory at Harper's Ferry, West Virginia, 1796-1885," 3 vols., December 1979, National Capital Team, Denver Service Center, Vol. I, pp. 22-30.

³⁴Brigadier General Edward D. Ramsay, inspection report to Brigadier General A. B. Dyer, Chief of Ordnance, July 27, 1865. National Archives, Record Group 156.

³⁵HFNHP Library Reel 18, Volume 12, pp. 1185-1186 and 1177-1178.

³⁶Rent rolls found in: National Archives Record Group 217; HFNHP Microfilm Reel 18, Volume 12, pp. 1177-1191; National Archives Record Group 153. Detailed in Charles W. Snell, "A Descriptive Catalog and Directory of 187 Armory Dwelling Houses, 1841-1852, of the U.S. Armory at Harpers Ferry, Virginia, Including Rents Collected, 1823 to 1851: Volume II, A History of Armory Houses," Denver Service Center, September 1981.

be narrowed to three possibilities. In 1848, seven government-owned, stone, two-story structures existed on Shenandoah Street: Armory Dwellings 7, 10, 17, 22, 26, 30, and 32. Due to mistakes in the rent rolls describing Dwellings 17 and 26 in 1848 and the sale of Buildings 10 and 22, the list is narrowed to three by 1852: Government Buildings 7, 30, and 32.

Charles Snell has identified Building 7 as Park Building 45, located on Lot 1, North of Shenandoah Street.³⁷

Of the two remaining possibilities, no information positively correlates either to Park Building 48. Rent rolls from 1841 to 1852 show Armory Building 30 as a single-family dwelling. Armory Building 32 also is a single-family dwelling in 1841, but had become a duplex by 1844, housing two families. Although the enlargement of Park Building 48 provided ample room for two families, it may have also remained a residence for one. This report considers both possibilities.

William Smallwood

It remains unclear whether William Smallwood ever lived in Park Building 48, which he constructed at some point between 1821 and 1832. Smallwood built two dwellings during this period, both of which Charles Snell believes stood on Lot 2, North of Shenandoah Street.³⁸ The larger, measuring 19 by 29 feet and designated by Superintendent

³⁷Snell, "A Descriptive Catalog...", p. 24.

³⁸Snell, "A Descriptive Catalog...", pp. 47 and 49.

Stubblefield as Building 37, was erected in 1825.³⁹ Unfortunately, no date for the erection of the smaller 16 by 19 feet dwelling (believed to be Park Building 48) has been found.

The first record of Smallwood in the Harpers Ferry area comes from the 1820 Census, which lists him as a breech filer.⁴⁰ From 1823 to 1828, Smallwood rented an armory dwelling from the government.⁴¹ The rent fluctuated from one year to the next raising questions as to whether he changed residences. An increase in rent from \$6 to \$12 between 1825 and 1826 may correspond with his construction of the 19 by 29 foot dwelling. Smallwood also appears in the 1830 Census, but his occupation was omitted from that census, and it is uncertain whether he still worked for the armory.⁴²

In 1832, most likely after he had built the two armorer dwellings, Smallwood purchased a large tract encompassing most of Bolivar Heights

³⁹Snell, "Historic Structure Report," p. 27; Report of Superintendent Stubblefield, February 23, 1829, American State Papers-Military Affairs, Vol. IV, pp. 143-144. Armory Dwelling 37 in 1829 does not correspond to Armory Dwelling 37 identified in Rent Rolls between 1841 and 1852.

⁴⁰Bureau of the Census, Fourth Census of the United States (1820), Town of Harpers Ferry, Jefferson County, Virginia, p. 535.

⁴¹Snell, "A Descriptive Catalog...", p. 265; "Statement of rents collected on dwelling-houses belonging to the United States armory, Harper's Ferry, Virginia, and occupied by workmen employed in the said armory, from the year 1823 until the close of 1828; and the names of persons from whom collected," submitted by James Stubblefield, Superintendent of the Harper's Ferry Armory, February 1, 1829, American State Papers-Military Affairs, Vol. IV, pp. 146-148.

⁴²Bureau of the Census, Fifth Census of the United States (1830), Town of Harpers Ferry, Jefferson County, Virginia, p. 170.

from the Wager family for \$2,400.⁴³ This tract continued to be recognized in legal records as the Smallwood Farm for many years.

It is unknown how Smallwood acquired the means to purchase the farm since his only known occupation was as a common armory worker. In Addition, by 1832, he had received only one payment (in 1826) for only \$400 of the \$895 owed to him for labor and materials in constructing the two armory dwellings.⁴⁴ Funds to pay the balance were approved in 1832, but not actually appropriated until 1837. By then, the available funds had decreased, so Smallwood received only \$125.41 for one structure and \$229.32 for the other.⁴⁵

After 1832, no evidence exists of William Smallwood's further association with the Harpers Ferry Armory. His extensive land holdings made Smallwood a prominent citizen, and he regularly appeared as a superintendent of elections at Harpers Ferry.⁴⁶ He became one

⁴³Jefferson County, West Virginia, Deed Book 20, p. 96, Deed of Bargain and Sale. James B. Wager, Mary Ann Wager, Gerard B. Wager, and L.A. Wager to William Smallwood, July 7, 1832.

⁴⁴Snell, "Historic Structure Report," p. 29;
"Valuation of claims of individuals for improvements made on the Public Land at Harper's Ferry Armory, HFNHP Microfilm Reel 24, Vol. 9, pp. 844-849.
Superintendent Stubblefield notes the 1826 reimbursement in a list located in the American State Papers, Military Affairs, Volume IV, pp. 143-144.

⁴⁵Snell, "Historic Structure Report," 1980, p. 30;
"Record of Payment of Claims" located in HFNHP Library Microfilm Reel 24, Volume 9, pp. 837-840 mistakenly designates one of the structures as a "frame house." Previous lists indicate both of the dwellings constructed by Smallwood were stone.

⁴⁶Virginia Free Press, March 24, 1836, p. 3, col. 3;
Ibid., April 13, 1837, p. 3, col. 2;
Ibid., April 25, 1839, p. 3, col. 4;
Ibid., March 25, 1841, p. 3, col. 3. There are numerous listings for Smallwood as a superintendent of elections.

of the first two aldermen for the new corporation of Bolivar shortly after he purchased the large tract on Bolivar Heights.⁴⁷ He later became active in local democratic politics.⁴⁸

Smallwood sold his farm, which had been greatly damaged during the Civil War, to Nathan C. Brackett in 1867.⁴⁹ By 1870, he had moved his family to Loudoun County, Virginia. His family is listed in the 1870 Census as follows: William Smallwood, 78, farmer, real estate valued at \$4,000 and personal property valued at \$3,000; Charlotte Smallwood, 76, keeping house; Franklin Smallwood, 35, farmer; Mary F. Masee, 33, at home; Adaline Masee, 16, at home; Elizabeth Masee, 14, at home; Ella Masee, 12, at home; Willie, 8; Logan Townsend, 15, laborer, Mulatto.⁵⁰ William Smallwood died at his home "near Neersville," in Loudoun County, on November 6, 1876, at the age of 86.⁵¹

Unfortunately, the absence of armory records concerning dwellings and rents precludes even an educated guess about residents in Park

⁴⁷Virginia Free Press, July 5, 1832, p. 3, col. 1.

⁴⁸ Virginia Free Press, November 30, 1843, p. 2, col. 7; Ibid., December 21, 1843, p. 3, col. 1.

⁴⁹Jefferson County, West Virginia, Deed Book 2, p. 225, Deed of Bargain and Sale. William Smallwood and Charlotte Smallwood to Nathan C. Brackett, June 15, 1867. William Smallwood disappears from local newspaper items after this, while his wife, Charlotte, continues to be mentioned for several years.

⁵⁰Bureau of the Census, Ninth Census of the United States (1870), Loudoun County, Virginia, p. 127.

⁵¹Loudoun Mirror, November 23, 1876, p. 2, col. 3; Virginia Free Press, December 2, 1876, p. 3, col. 3; Spirit of Jefferson, December 5, 1876, p. 2, col. 4.

Building 48 before 1841.⁵² Likewise, it is impossible to determine the occupants after 1852. The only evidence of armory policy concerning dwellings is a January 1838 advertisement in the Virginia Free Press, in which the government advertised "several dwelling houses, calculated to accomodate boarders" and "a number of rooms," for rent.⁵³ This indicates the government was renting some of its houses to persons not associated with the armory.

Assuming Park Building 48 is either Armory Dwelling 30 or Armory Dwelling 32, rent rolls provide the following information: from 1841 through 1852, Armory Dwelling 30 was occupied solely by the John Nichols' family, while Armory Dwelling 32 was occupied by a series of residents. Of the two structures, Armory Dwelling 30 was more modest than Armory Dwelling 32, apparent in substantially lower rents. Residents of the latter dwelling will be discussed later.

John Nichols -- Armory Dwelling 30

John Nichols may have lived in Building 48 any time after its construction until his death in 1851. Few other dwellings were occupied by only one family during this same period. Very little is known about Nichols and it is unclear whether he even worked for the United States Armory or whether he had an occupation. In the 1850 Census, his occupation is listed as "none."⁵⁴

⁵²Many of these records were destroyed by the National Archives because they were considered expendable.

⁵³Virginia Free Press, January 25, 1838, p. 3, col. 4.

⁵⁴Bureau of the Census, Seventh Census of the United States (1850), Town of Harpers Ferry, Jefferson County, Virginia, p. 418.

On March 17, 1835, John Nichols placed real and personal property in trust to Notley Dearing to secure a debt to Robert Dearing.⁵⁵ The items included a set of chinaware, which may be the source of china uncovered by park archeologists in 1990. There is notable dichotomy between the high quality of the artifacts and the presumed modest setting of the dwelling. The deed of trust also includes a 300-acre tract of land in Preston County, Virginia, left to John Nichols by his deceased father, another possible indicator of some wealth. Although the deed fails to mention locations of the grantors or grantees, newspapers reveal that grantee Notley Dearing was a Harpers Ferry resident.

In the 1840 Census for Harpers Ferry, the closest name which matches John Nichols is John Nickolls (or Nicholas), with his household listed as: 1 male under 5 years of age, 1 male age 30 to 40, 1 female under 5 years of age, 1 female age 5 to 10, 1 female age 10 to 15, and 1 female age 15 to 20.⁵⁶ This may or may not be the John Nichols of Armory Dwelling 30. Other information about Nickolls' family indicates it is not the same John Nichols later found in the 1850 Census. John Nickolls' age in 1840 is between 30 and 40, while

⁵⁵Deed Book 20, pp. 265-266, Deed of Trust. John Nichols to Notley Dearing to secure \$300 debt for Robert Dearing. The deed was made March 17, 1835, although it was not recorded until December 14, 1842. He placed the following items in trust: land in Preston County willed from his late father; two bedsteads; two feather beds; one walnut bureau; one mahogany dining table; two cherry tables; one clock; one candlestand; one set of green Windsor chairs; one set of yellow Windsor chairs; one set of china ware, "including in the same a small set;" one iron wash pot; one iron dinner pot; one small iron pot; two skillets; and one large pan.

⁵⁶Bureau of the Census, Sixth Census of the United States (1840), Town of Harpers Ferry, Jefferson County, Virginia.

in 1850, John Nichols was 55. Furthermore, the oldest female in 1840 may match the age of Nichols' oldest daughter in 1850; but this would indicate an absence of Nichols wife in 1840. There is no record of him remarrying. Note that ages in census records were often inconsistent from one enumeration to the next.

The first known records which place "John Nichols" in Harpers Ferry are the United States Armory rent rolls, the earliest of which is from March 31, 1841, when the rent on Armory Dwelling No. 30 was \$6.25 per quarter.⁵⁷ Nichols is listed as the occupant through the December 31, 1850, roll. Beginning with the installment of June 30, 1851, Mrs. Nichols is listed as the occupant, following Nichols' death in February. The latest available rent roll from June 30, 1852, continues to place Mrs. Nichols in the dwelling.⁵⁸ At the time of John Nichols' last installment in 1850, the rent due had accumulated to \$22.50, three times the quarterly rent of \$7.50.⁵⁹

On October 4, 1842, Nichols' oldest daughter, Susan Catherine Nichols, married Robert Dearing, to whom the 1835 deed of trust was

⁵⁷"Rent Roll-Statement of Dwelling Houses belonging to the United States at Harper's Ferry Armory, and of the Rents due thereon on 31st March 1841," National Archives Record Group 217, 2nd Auditor, 2nd Series, File No. 6195, Washington, D.C. Recorded in Snell, "A Descriptive Catalog," p. 47.

⁵⁸"List of Dwelling Houses at Harper's Ferry Per Inventory June 30, 1851, Corrected to December 31, 1852," National Archives, on Harpers Ferry NHP Microfilm Reel 18, Volume 12, pp. 1117-1183. Recorded in Snell, "A Descriptive Catalog," p. 47.

⁵⁹"List of Dwelling Houses belonging to the United States at Harper's Ferry, December 31, 1850," National Archives Record 153, Judge Advocate General, Abandoned Military Reservation File No. 34. Copy in Harpers Ferry NHP Photostat Collection, Park Map Case, Drawer No. 4 [FROM SNELL]. Recorded in Snell, "A Descriptive Catalog," p. 47.

intended.⁶⁰ One year later, the items placed in trust were to be sold at the residence of John Nichols in Harpers Ferry on September 23, 1843.⁶¹ Unfortunately, no recorded resolution of the sale exists, either in newspaper or court records.

The following year, George Dearing, 83, described as a former resident of Culpeper County, VA, died at the home of John Nichols at Harpers Ferry.⁶² From his age, he may have been the father of Notley Dearing and the grandfather of Robert Dearing.

The 1850 Census details the following information on the Nichols family: John Nichols, age 55, born in Virginia, occupation listed as none, head of household; Sarah V. Nichols, age 40, born in Virginia; Susan C. Nichols, age 30, born in Virginia; Ann W. Chulp, age 21, born in Virginia.⁶³ It is significant Susan Nichols is listed as a resident in the home of John Nichols, no longer carrying the married name of Dearing. The 1850 Census lists one Robert Dearing in Harpers Ferry and Bolivar and he is 14, too young to have married Susan Nichols in 1842. This implies Dearing died during those eight years and his wife assumed her maiden name, or they divorced, or the census taker erred.⁶⁴ When Frances Elizabeth Nichols died in 1849 at age

⁶⁰Virginia Free Press, October 13, 1842. Page 3, Col. 2.

⁶¹Virginia Free Press, August 31, 1843. Page 3, Col. 3.

⁶²Virginia Free Press, July 25, 1844. Page 2, Col. 7.

⁶³Bureau of the Census, Seventh Census of the United States (1850), Town of Harpers Ferry, Jefferson County, Virginia, p. 418.

⁶⁴No record of a divorce between Robert Dearing and Susan Nichols Dearing could be found in the Jefferson County Circuit Court Records between the years 1842 and 1850.

15, the Virginia Free Press described her as the "eldest daughter of John & Sarah Nichols."⁶⁵ This may suggest that Susan Nichols, who was Nichols' oldest daughter, may not have returned to her father's home yet. Another interesting resident listed in Nichols' home is Ann Chulp, who may have been living with the family as a servant. Due to John Nichols' lack of income, however, it is more likely Ann Chulp was a daughter whose husband had died or moved elsewhere. The fact John Nichols had no occupation might be explained by a "lingering disease" which claimed his life one year later on February 12, 1851.⁶⁶ This lack of a job may also explain why the rent had not been paid over the last three quarters of 1850. Financial troubles are also reflected by Nichols' appearance in Jefferson County Overseers of the Poor lists of delinquents in 1849 and 1850.⁶⁷

Armory Dwelling 32

Unlike Armory Dwelling 30, Armory Dwelling 32 was occupied by several different families during the 1840s. At the time of the first existing rent roll on March 31, 1841, Augustus Shope resided in the building.⁶⁸ Beginning with the rent roll of December 31, 1844,

⁶⁵Virginia Free Press, March 22, 1849. Page 2, Col. 7.

⁶⁶Virginia Free Press, February 28, 1851. Page 3, Col. 1.

⁶⁷Virginia Free Press, August 2, 1849. Page 3, Col. 3.
Ibid., September 13, 1850. Page 3, Col. 3.

⁶⁸"Rent Roll - Statement of Dwelling Houses belonging to the United States at Harper's Ferry Armory, and of the Rents due thereon on 31st March 1841," National Archives Record Group 217, 2nd Auditor, 2nd Series, File No. 6195, Washington, D.C. Recorded in Snell, "A Descriptive Catalog," p. 49.

Armory Dwelling 32 had become a duplex, rented by John Berlin and James O'Laughlin.⁶⁹ By December 31, 1846, William H. Wentzle had taken O'Laughlin's place, sharing the duplex with Berlin through at least the payment of June 30, 1849.⁷⁰ Armistead M. Ball and J.W. Roderick occupied the dwelling from 1850 through the last available rent roll of June 30, 1852.⁷¹ The following section briefly analyzes each of these residents.

Augustus Shope -- Armory Dwelling 32

The 1830 Census contains the first record of Augustus Shope in the Harpers Ferry area, listing him as Augustus Shoop.⁷² The 1840 Census

⁶⁹"Rent Rolls - Statement of Dwelling Houses, Belonging to the United States, at the National Armory, Harper's Ferry, Va., and of the amount of Rents due thereon, on the 31st December 1844," National Archives Record Group 217, 2nd Auditor, 3rd Series, File 1934. Recorded in Snell, "A Descriptive Catalog," p. 49.

⁷⁰"Rent Roll - Statement of Dwelling Houses belonging to the United States, at the National Armory, Harper's Ferry, Va., and of the amount of Rents due thereon on the 31st December 1846," from National Archives, Record Group 217, 2nd Auditor, 3rd Series, file 4967; "List of United States Dwelling Houses at Harpers Ferry, 30 June 1849." National Archives material on Harpers Ferry National Historical Park Microfilm Reel 18, Volume 12, pp. 1184-1191. Recorded in Snell, "A Descriptive Catalog," p. 49.

⁷¹"List of Dwelling Houses belonging to the United States at Harper's Ferry, December 31, 1850," National Archives, Record Group 153, Judge Advocate General, Abandoned Military Reservation File No. 34. Copy in Harpers Ferry NHP Photostat Collection, Park Map Case, Drawer No. 4; "List of Dwelling Houses at Harper's Ferry Per Inventory June 30, 1851, Corrected to December 31, 1852," National Archives. On Harpers Ferry NHP Microfilm Reel 18, Volume 12, pp. 1177-1183. Recorded in Snell, "A Descriptive Catalog," p. 49.

⁷²Bureau of the Census, Fifth Census of the United States (1830), Town of Harpers Ferry, Jefferson County, Virginia, p. 170.

presents another variation of his name, Augusta Shupe.⁷³ His ties to the Armory are unknown; however, two events relate him to Armory Superintendent Col. Edward Lucas. Shupe participated in a dinner to honor Lucas and former Superintendent Gen. George Rust in 1837.⁷⁴ Two years later, he served as a member of the eleven man committee appointed to investigate charges that Superintendent Lucas discharged seventy armorers because of their affiliations with the Whig party.⁷⁵ The committee ruled in favor of Lucas, but the controversy continued into the 1840s.

The rent rolls place Shupe in Armory Dwelling 32 by March 31, 1841. He paid a quarterly rent of \$16.25, a significantly high rent for any dwelling on Shenandoah Street occupied by one family.⁷⁶ There is a discrepancy, however, in the rent rolls of December 31, 1844, in Snell's "Descriptive Catalog of Armorer Dwellings." The index of the "Descriptive Catalog" places Shupe in Armory Dwelling 46, although listings elsewhere show Samuel Kilham as the occupant of 46.⁷⁷ [NEED TO CHECK IN NATIONAL ARCHIVES]

On February 7, 1844, Augustus Shupe died in Harpers Ferry at the

⁷³Bureau of the Census, Sixth Census of the United States (1840), Town of Harpers Ferry, Jefferson County, Virginia, p. 243.

⁷⁴Virginia Free Press, April 13, 1837, p. 2, col. 3-4.

⁷⁵Virginia Free Press, May 23, 1839, p. 1, col. 5.

⁷⁶Snell, "A Descriptive Catalog;" "Rent Roll - Statement of Dwelling Houses belonging to the United States..., 31st March 1841."

⁷⁷Snell, "A Descriptive Catalog...", pp. 288 and 63.

approximate age of 44.⁷⁸ His will indicates he owed \$15 rent to Richard Parker, the Armory Paymaster.⁷⁹ The sale of Shope's possessions netted only "\$81.24 $\frac{1}{4}$."⁸⁰ A month later, Mrs. Catharine Shope, who ran a boarding house at Harpers Ferry, moved her business to a residence last occupied by Michael Melhorn.⁸¹ Snell places Michael Melhorn in Armory Dwelling 32 between April and September 1844, although this information is not included in his "Descriptive Catalog of Armorer Dwellings."⁸² This information creates several possibilities. First, Mrs. Shope and Melhorn simply exchanged residences. Second, Rent Rolls show Armory Dwelling 46 as a boarding house, so Mrs. Shope may have been in Armory Dwelling 46 early in 1844, before she moved out in March. [CHECK SOURCES] Third, she may have been operating a boarding house in Armory Dwelling 32, which might explain why the Armory rented it as a duplex after Mrs. Shope moved out.

John Berlin -- Armory Dwelling 32

⁷⁸Virginia Free Press, February 15, 1844, p. 3, col. 1.

⁷⁹Jefferson County, West Virginia, Will Book 10, p. 427, October 26, 1844.

⁸⁰Jefferson County, West Virginia, Will Book 10, p. 426-427, April 6, 1844, indicates Michael Doran as administrator; Shope's personal estate is appraised in detail in Jefferson County, West Virginia, Will Book 10, p. 381, by N. Marmion, George Mauzy, and ironically, William Smallwood.

⁸¹Virginia Free Press, March 14, 1844, p. 3, col. 2.

⁸²Snell, "Historic Structure Report," 1980, p. 41. [CHECK IN NATIONAL ARCHIVES IN CORRELATION TO COMMENT ABOUT JOHN BERLIN POSSIBLY LIVING IN BUILDING 48 BY MARCH 1844]

The rent roll of December 31, 1844, places John Berlin and James O'Laughlin in Armory Dwelling 32. The more complete record exists for John Berlin, listed in Armory Dwelling 32 in the rent rolls of December 31, 1844, through June 30, 1849. Many details about him are gleaned from "The Berlins of Harpers Ferry," written by David W. Ross, and found in the Park Library.

John Berlin was born at Harpers Ferry in 1820, and worked for the Armory from June 1836, until its destruction in 1861.⁸³ The censuses of 1820 and 1830 note a male child of Abraham Berlin, matching the age bracket of John Berlin.⁸⁴ At the Armory, Berlin served in the position of "jobber" through at least April 1840. By March 1844, at which time he was possibly living in Armory Dwelling 32, the payrolls listed his position as "assistant jobbing smith."⁸⁵ John Berlin married twice, first to either Mary Hinkle or Mary Ennis in 1843.⁸⁶ The 1850 Census lists John Berlin's household as follows: John Berlin, 30, Armorer, Head of Household; Mary Berlin, 20; James M.

⁸³Ross, David W., "The Berlins of Harpers Ferry," August 25, 1989, p. 1. He took this information from the June 1836 Armory payroll; Bureau of the Census, Eighth Census of the United States (1860), Town of Bolivar, Jefferson County, Virginia, p. 244, notes Berlin's occupation as armorer.

⁸⁴Bureau of the Census, Fourth Census of the United States (1820), Town of Harpers Ferry, Jefferson County, Virginia, p. 537; Bureau of the Census, Fifth Census of the United States (1830), Town of Harpers Ferry, Jefferson County, Virginia, p. 164. Family members are enumerated by ranges of ages, not by name.

⁸⁵Ross, "The Berlins of Harpers Ferry," p. 2.

⁸⁶Ross, "Berlins of Harpers Ferry," p. 3, notes her maiden name as Mary Ennis; Virginia Free Press, October 26, 1843, p. 3, col. 1, notes her maiden name as Mary Hinkle of Burkettsville, MD.

Berlin, 6; and Sarah L. Berlin, 2.⁸⁷ Mary Berlin died in July 1851, and John Berlin married Elizabeth Ann "Betsy" Deck five months later.⁸⁸ The rent rolls indicate Berlin did not live in public housing after the 1849 rent roll. In August 1851, one month after the death of his first wife, John Berlin arranged an assignment of goods with Philip Coons, in which Coons extended Berlin further credit even though Berlin had an outstanding debt. This deed reveals Berlin was living in Washington County, Maryland, and still an employee of the Armory.⁸⁹ He left Harpers Ferry around the time of the Civil War and apparently never returned as a resident. Following the war, John Berlin pursued a career as a railroad machinist and died in Martinsburg on August 25, 1894.⁹⁰

James Y. O'Laughlin -- Armory Dwelling 32

At the time of the rent roll of December 31, 1844, John Berlin shared Armory Dwelling 32 with James O'Laughlin. Very little is known of James O'Laughlin. In 1843, he married Pleasant Parmer, and both were residents of Harpers Ferry.⁹¹ The absence of O'Laughlin from the 1846 rent rolls creates a gap in his record. By the time of the rent roll of June 30, 1849, he is living in Armory Dwelling 17,

⁸⁷Bureau of the Census, Seventh Census of the United States (1850), Town of Harpers Ferry, Jefferson County, Virginia, p. 421B.

⁸⁸Ross, "Berlins of Harpers Ferry," p. 3.

⁸⁹Jefferson County, West Virginia, Deed Book 31, pp. 479-480, Deed of Trust. John Berlin to Philip Coons, August 7, 1851.

⁹⁰Ross, "The Berlins of Harpers Ferry," p. 4.

⁹¹Virginia Free Press, November 30, 1843, p. 3, col. 1.

located on Shenandoah Street on Block D, Lot 5, at a rent of \$11.50 a quarter, nearly three dollars more than paid in the duplex in 1844.⁹² O'Laughlin continues residing in Dwelling 17 through the final available rent roll of June 30, 1852. His family appears in the 1850 Census as follows: James O'Lockland (sic), 30, armorer, head of household; Pleasant O'Lockland (sic), 26.⁹³ In 1851, he took out two deeds of trust, the latter one similar to that involving John Berlin. In fact, the second of O'Laughlin's deeds was signed with Thomas W. Shriver six days before Berlin's deed with Coons, indicating a possible payment problem at the Armory.⁹⁴ Although no death record for O'Laughlin has been located, his will was filed in February 1855 by Mrs. Pleasant O'Laughlin. At the time of his death, O'Laughlin was still working at the Armory, because the will indicates that the Paymaster's Office at Harpers Ferry owed him \$30.⁹⁵ O'Laughlin's widow apparently married Benjamin Whitson, based on the following entry from the 1860 Census: Benjamin Whitson, 34, carpenter, head of household; Pleasant Whitson, 32; Narcissa O'Laughlin, 9; Sarah F. O'Laughlin, 6; Julia H. Whitson, 1.⁹⁶

⁹²Snell, "A Descriptive Catalog...", p. 34.

⁹³Bureau of the Census, Seventh Census of the United States (1850), Town of Harpers Ferry, Jefferson County, Virginia, p. 418B.

⁹⁴Jefferson County, West Virginia, Deed Book 31, p. 402, Deed of Trust. James J. O'Laughlin to Thomas Vickers, March 25, 1851; Jefferson County, West Virginia, Deed Book 31, p. 478, Deed of Trust. James J. O'Laughlin to Thomas W. Shriver, August 1, 1851.

⁹⁵Jefferson County, West Virginia, Will Book 14, p. 222.

⁹⁶Bureau of the Census, Eighth Census of the United States (1860), Town of Bolivar, Jefferson County, Virginia, p. 230.

William H. Wentzle

The rent rolls of December 31, 1846, and June 30, 1849, indicate John Berlin shared the duplex with William H. Wentzle, whose name is also commonly spelled Wentzel or Wentzell. The censuses of 1850 and 1860 denote Wentzle as an armorer.⁹⁷ After the destruction of the Armory in 1861, he apparently continued his trade, as he is listed in the 1870 Census as a gunsmith.⁹⁸ From their ages in 1850, two of his children, William W. Wentzle and Mary V. Wentzle, may have been born while he lived in Armory Dwelling 32. The son became a prominent cigar manufacturer in Harpers Ferry after the Civil War. Although William H. Wentzle lived in Armory Dwelling 32, he owned land in North Bolivar.⁹⁹ While an occupant of Armory Dwelling 32 Wentzle was an active participant in the large temperance movement in Harpers Ferry, and served as an officer of the local Sons of Temperance division.¹⁰⁰ According to existing rent rolls, Wentzle never lived in any other government housing, either before or after his occupancy of Armory Dwelling 32. The 1850 Census indicates he moved to Bolivar by

⁹⁷Bureau of the Census, Seventh Census of the United States (1850), Town of Bolivar, Jefferson County, Virginia, p. 393; Bureau of the Census, Eighth Census of the United States (1860), Town of Bolivar, Jefferson County, Virginia, p. 239.

⁹⁸Bureau of the Census, Ninth Census of the United States (1870), Township of Bolivar, Jefferson County, West Virginia, p. 52.

⁹⁹Virginia Free Press, July 20, 1848, p. 3, col. 3. Advertisement of a sale involving a deed of trust notes "Wentzel" owned property adjoining lot owned by W.F. Wilson.

¹⁰⁰Virginia Free Press, September 21, 1848, p. 3, col. 1.

1850.¹⁰¹ In December of that year, he purchased three lots in Bolivar from Singleton Chambers.¹⁰² William H. Wentzle died in Bolivar in 1886 at age 69.¹⁰³

John W. Roderick

The rent rolls of December 31, 1850, June 30, 1851, and June 30, 1852, list A.M. Ball & J.W. Roderick as the residents of Armory Dwelling 32. Very little is known of Roderick, who appears in the Harpers Ferry censuses of 1820, 1840, and 1850. The 1850 Census lists his occupation as armorer.¹⁰⁴ A John "Rodrick" included in the 1830 Census, is likely the same person.¹⁰⁵ In 1850, three people lived in his half of the duplex: Roderick, 57; Artridge Roderick, 52, probably his wife; and John W. Roderick, 24, most likely his son and also an armorer. John W. Roderick died on December 24, 1855, of rheumatism at age 65.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰¹Bureau of the Census, Seventh Census of the United States (1850), Town of Bolivar, Jefferson County, Virginia, p. 393.

¹⁰²Jefferson County, West Virginia, Deed Book 31, p. 409, Deed of Bargain and Sale. Singleton Chambers to William H. Wentzle, December 15, 1851.

¹⁰³Virginia Free Press, October 14, 1886, p. 3, col. 3.

¹⁰⁴Bureau of the Census, Seventh Census of the United States (1850), Town of Harpers Ferry, Jefferson County, Virginia, p. 418. The census taker placed Ball and Roderick in separate dwellings, although the Armory rent rolls clearly indicate they shared a duplex.

¹⁰⁵Bureau of the Census, Fifth Census of the United States (1830), Town of Harpers Ferry, Jefferson County, Virginia, p. 170.

¹⁰⁶Jefferson County, West Virginia, Death Record Book 1 [CHECK ACTUAL BOOK NUMBER IN COURTHOUSE], p. 11.

Armistead M. Ball

An abundance of information exists on Armistead Ball, who first came to Harpers Ferry in 1830, and worked through the Armory ranks to become Master Machinist in 1849 and Master Armorer in 1859. Merritt Roe Smith describes Ball's abilities: "Considered one of the best machinists in the United States, Ball proved 'uncommonly clever' at designing self-acting machinery for drilling and rifling cast-steel gun barrels."¹⁰⁷ Ball served as an active member of ethnic social organizations. He joined the secret Irish MacIvor Clan and worked for the relief of the people of Ireland following the "Potato Famine."¹⁰⁸ He also participated in local democratic politics.¹⁰⁹ In 1850, Ball was 35 years old and shared his half of the duplex with three family members: wife Hannah Ball, 30; George Ball, 10; and Randolph Ball, 2.¹¹⁰ Before residing in Armory Dwelling 32, Armistead Ball lived in Armory Dwelling 25, a brick structure which stood virtually across the street from Park Building 48.¹¹¹ He purchased Armory Dwelling 11, located on Block D, Lot 1, from the United States in 1852, and likely

¹⁰⁷Merritt Roe Smith, Harpers Ferry Armory and the New Technology: The Challenge of Change (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977), p. 248.

¹⁰⁸Virginia Free Press, December 28, 1837, p. 3, col. 6; Ibid., February 25, 1847, p. 1, col. 7.

¹⁰⁹Virginia Free Press, May 29, 1839, p. 3, col. 4.

¹¹⁰Bureau of the Census, Seventh Census of the United States (1850), Town of Harpers Ferry, Jefferson County, Virginia, p. 418.

¹¹¹Snell, "A Descriptive Catalog...", p. 42.

moved there shortly afterward.¹¹² In 1859, he gained notoriety as one of John Brown's prisoners.¹¹³ Ball died in June 1861.¹¹⁴

Unfortunately, it is impossible to determine who lived in Park Building 48 from 1853 to 1869, due to the destruction of National Archive records. Based on the 1860 Census and a knowledge of the dwellings of other town citizens, Charles Snell hypothesizes the family of William Cox may have resided in Park Building 48 in 1860.¹¹⁵ This cannot be substantiated.

Isabella and B.F. Leisenring

At the 1869 sale of government property at Harpers Ferry, Mrs. Isabella Leisenring bid \$1,475 for Lot No. 2, North of Shenandoah Street. She signed two notes to be paid over the next two years making her the owner of the lot and house. Her husband Benjamin F. Leisenring, who operated a dry goods business in Harpers Ferry, was named as surety on the notes.¹¹⁶ Mrs. Leisenring never made a payment on the property.

Following the Civil War, George W. Leisenring of Baltimore opened dry good and grocery stores in Harpers Ferry, Charles Town, and

¹¹²Jefferson County, West Virginia, Deed Book 37, p. 34, Deed of Bargain and Sale. The United States to Armistead M. Ball, February 20, 1857. Although he purchased the lot at the government sale of August 31, 1852, the deed was not recorded until 1857.

¹¹³Smith, Harpers Ferry Armory, p. 307.

¹¹⁴Smith, Harpers Ferry Armory, p. 248.

¹¹⁵Snell, "Historic Structure Report," 1980, p. 42.

¹¹⁶National Archives, Record Group 121, Entry 78. Found in Park Library on Abatement Microfilm Reel, Frames 514-515.

Rippon, with his son, Gideon Leisenring.¹¹⁷ On February 26, 1867, George W. and Gideon Leisenring conveyed their business and stock to trustees William Travers and Benjamin F. Leisenring, including the "store or warehouse occupied by Leisenring and Son," located in the Masonic Building on Shenandoah Street in Harpers Ferry, which is Park Building 44.¹¹⁸ It is uncertain who lived in Park Building 48 before 1881. Since neither Benjamin F. or Isabella Leisenring owned any other land in the county, and since they appear in the 1870 census as residing at Harpers Ferry, it is possible they lived in Park Building 48; however, it was not uncommon to own property and still lease a place of residence. Even though Benjamin operated a business in town as early as 1867, it remains unclear when they moved to Harpers Ferry. On February 20, 1869, before the government sale, their five month old son Albert S. Leisenring died in Harpers Ferry, making it probable they lived in town before owning Park Building 48.¹¹⁹

The Census of 1870 lists the following information on the family: Benjamin F. Leisenring, 32, retail merchant, real estate valued at \$1,000, personal property valued at \$3,000; Isabella Leisenring, 30, keeping house; Robert S. Leisenring, 10; George H. Leisenring, 8;

¹¹⁷Detailed list of goods appears in Spirit of Jefferson, November 7, 1865, pp. 2 and 3.

¹¹⁸Jefferson County, West Virginia, Deed Book 2, p. 37. Deed of Trust, George W. Leisenring to Wm. Travers and Benj. F. Leisenring, February 26, 1867. It is interesting to note the variation of titles between the three stores: George W. Leisenring and Co. at Rippon; Leisenring, Son, and Co. at Charles Town; and Leisenring and Son at Harpers Ferry.

¹¹⁹Jefferson County, West Virginia, Death Record Book [CHECK ACTUAL BOOK NUMBER IN COURTHOUSE], p. 48.

Gideon S. Leisenring, 11; Bertha Marlin, 25, domestic servant; Samuel Resser, 21, clerk in dry goods store.¹²⁰

On September 30, 1870, the Shenandoah River flooded, resulting in the highest death toll in the history of Harpers Ferry. Among the many properties damaged was a Leisenring building, as the Baltimore Sun notes damage to "Mr. Bernard McCabe's large brick dwelling, and also that of Mr. B.F. Leisenring."¹²¹ At this time, Bernard McCabe owned a stone structure (Park Building 43) on Wager Lot 47 and a brick dwelling on Block C, Lot 1, directly across Shenandoah Street. It is uncertain whether Leisenring's building in the newspaper account was Park Building 48, Park Building 44, or another structure in town with which he associated.

B.F. Leisenring was involved in church and political activities in Harpers Ferry, notably as a Mason, Methodist-Protestant Church trustee, and Radical Republican. In this last capacity, he allied with such prominent Harpers Ferry residents as Nathan C. Brackett, George Koonce, and Zadoc Butt.¹²² As a businessman, Leisenring proved unsuccessful and placed his entire stock of goods and fixtures

¹²⁰Bureau of the Census, Ninth Census of the United States (1870), Harpers Ferry P.O., Bolivar Township, Jefferson County, West Virginia, p. 460. In the 1870 Census, all entries for Harpers Ferry and Bolivar are recorded under the heading "Bolivar Township." This entry is found on p. 22 of the Harpers Ferry Post Office section.

¹²¹Virginia Free Press, October 8, 1870, p. 2, col. 3, reprints report from in a reference from the Baltimore Sun.

¹²²Virginia Free Press, July 29, 1869, p. 3, col. 2; Virginia Free Press, April 29, 1869, p. 3, col. 4; Virginia Free Press, May 25, 1872, p. 2, col. 2.

into trust to John Koonce on May 23, 1872.¹²³ This occurred one month after William Richards sold Park Building 44, site of Leisenring's store, to Murtha Walsh.¹²⁴ Bankruptcy proceedings began later that year.¹²⁵

After bankruptcy, Benjamin F. Leisenring continues to appear in the personal property tax books for Harpers Ferry through 1876.¹²⁶ A list of the 1869 purchasers of government property from the Abatement Records show Isabella Leisenring living in Charles Town in 1879.¹²⁷ Neither B.F. or Isabella are listed in the personal property books for Harpers Ferry or Charles Town in 1877 and 1878.¹²⁸ Likewise, no real estate assessments appear for them since the

¹²³Jefferson County, West Virginia, Deed Book 7, pp. 115-116, 118-120, Deed of Trust. B.F. Leisenring to John Koonce, May 23, 1872. The deed itemizes the goods in Leisenring's store as well as a list of those owing him money.

¹²⁴Jefferson County, West Virginia, Deed Book 7, p. 198, Deed of Bargain and Sale. William Richards to Murtha Walsh, April 27, 1872.

¹²⁵Virginia Free Press, September 7, 1872, p. 2, col. 5, gives details of the bankruptcy notice; Virginia Free Press, October 15, 1872, p. 2, col. 5, notes appointment of Charles Davies as the assignee in bankruptcy.

¹²⁶Jefferson County, West Virginia, Personal Property Tax Books for 1873, 1875, and 1876. B.F. Leisenring's personal property is assessed at \$240 for 1873 and at \$245 for 1876 and 1877.

¹²⁷"Report of Purchasers of U.S. Armory property at the Sale of Nov. 80th (sic) 1869 at Harpers Ferry West Virginia, Who Are Not Living at Harpers Ferry with address of each," National Archives, Record Group 121, Entry 78. Found in Park Library on Abatement Microfilm Reel, Frame 709.

¹²⁸Jefferson County, West Virginia, Personal Property Tax Books for 1876 and 1877.

property never was paid for and the deed never recorded. In 1879, however, B. F. Leisenring did apply for relief of an erroneous assessment on a lot at Harpers Ferry, valued at \$400 in 1878.¹²⁹ This seems to contradict the omission of his name from any of the land tax assessments for Harpers Ferry.

In 1879, the United States cleared the title by allowing Isabella Leisenring to quit-claim Lot 2, North of Shenandoah Street. The government scheduled a new sale in 1880, and this time, the purchaser of Park Building 48 was Gabriel L. Myers.

Gabriel L. Myers

Gabriel Myers paid \$405, cash in hand, in 1881, making him the first private citizen to legally own Park Building 48, although it is unlikely he ever lived there. The 1870 Census notes Myers as a retail clothier in Harpers Ferry who shared a residence with Daniel Ames: Gabriel L. Myers, 20, born in Prussia, retail clothing store occupation, head of household; Daniel Ames, 48, born in Massachusetts, no occupation given.¹³⁰ During the 1870s, Myers became relatively wealthy in the clothing business.¹³¹ He also served as a Harpers Ferry town councilman and as a director of the Harpers Ferry Bridge

¹²⁹Virginia Free Press, December 1, 1879, p. 2, col. 1.

¹³⁰Bureau of the Census, Ninth Census of the United States (1870), Bolivar Township, Jefferson County, West Virginia, p. 460. This entry is found on p. 21 of the Harpers Ferry Post Office section.

¹³¹Jefferson County, West Virginia, Land Tax Assessment Books for 1873, 1874, 1875, 1876, 1877, 1878.

Company.¹³²

The 1880 Census provides the following information on Myers' household: Gabriel L. Myers, 30, merchant, head of household; Emma F. Myers, 26, keeping house, wife; Charles C. Myers, 4, son; Lena Myers, 7, daughter; Eta Myers, 2, daughter; Flora Myers, less than one year old, daughter; Joseph H. Myers, 19, brother; Fannie Titus, 19, servant.¹³³

By November 1882, Myers had moved his clothing store into the new building constructed by Edward Tearney (Park Building 40).¹³⁴ It is unclear how long Myers remained in Harpers Ferry. Myers' absence from the 1900 Census for Harpers Ferry indicates he had departed the town by then. The last newspaper reference for G. L. Myers notes a transfer of property in Bolivar.¹³⁵ The last reference in public records is a deed of trust in 1888, which still listed Myers as secretary of the Harpers Ferry Bridge Company.¹³⁶

At the 1880 sale of government property at Harpers Ferry in which Myers purchased Lot 2, North of Shenandoah Street for \$405, only three

¹³²Spirit of Jefferson, January 9, 1877, p. 3, col. 2; Virginia Free Press, January 17, 1880, p. 3, col. 1.

¹³³Bureau of the Census, Tenth Census of the United States (1880), Town of Harpers Ferry, Jefferson County, West Virginia, p. 1 of Harpers Ferry Town.

¹³⁴Spirit of Jefferson, November 14, 1882, p. 2, col. 1.

¹³⁵Virginia Free Press, June 24, 1886, p. 2, col. 5, notes conveyances of a house and lot in Bolivar from Ann E. Gannon and others to Trustee James D. Butt for G. L. Myers.

¹³⁶Jefferson County, West Virginia, Deed Book H, p. 201, Deed of Trust. Harpers Ferry Bridge Company, with President G. W. Green and Secretary G. L. Myers to N. C. Brackett, March 22, 1888.

other persons bought improved lots at the same time: Joshua Cavalier spent \$850, James McGraw spent \$325, and John Dittmyer spent \$250.¹³⁷ Myers made a profit of \$45 when he sold Margaret Dempsey the property in December 1881.

Margaret Dempsey

In December 1881, Margaret Dempsey purchased Lot 2, North of Shenandoah Street, from G. L. Myers, two months after her husband Michael Dempsey died of pneumonia.¹³⁸ Both Margaret Dempsey, whose maiden name was Boren, and her husband were from Ireland. Records indicate they were married in 1870, Jefferson County, of which they were residents, but no newspaper account of the marriage has been located.¹³⁹ Furthermore, they are missing from the 1870 Census for all of Jefferson County. The Dempseys can definitely be placed in Harpers Ferry as early as May 2, 1872, when their first child was born.¹⁴⁰ Personal property tax assessment records also show the Dempseys in Harpers Ferry by 1873, but they did not own land. It is possible the family lived in Park Building 48 throughout the decade of the 1870s, renting first from the Leisenrings, then from G. L. Myers. In 1965, information provided to the Park revealed Mrs. John Ella

¹³⁷Spirit of Jefferson, June 1, 1880, p. 3, col. 1.

¹³⁸Spirit of Jefferson, November 8, 1881, p. 3, col. 1.

¹³⁹Jefferson County, West Virginia, Record of Marriages, Book 3, p. 27.

¹⁴⁰Jefferson County, West Virginia, Birth Record Book 1 [CHECK ACTUAL BOOK NUMBER IN COURTHOUSE], p. 53.

Hughes, nee Dempsey, was born in Park Building 48 in 1881.¹⁴¹ Since Mrs. Dempsey did not acquire the property until December 26, 1881, this could indicate they lived in the dwelling before purchasing it. Between 1877 and 1878, tax assessments reveal the Dempseys lost a large portion of their household furniture, possibly due to the flood of November 1877.¹⁴² A newspaper item notes structures on Shenandoah Street were particularly hard hit.¹⁴³ Tax records suggest the Dempseys gradually acquired more furniture over the next four years.

The 1880 Census lists the family as follows: Michael Dempsey (sic), 36, laborer, head of household; Margaret Dempsey, 36, keeping house; Mary Dempsey, 8; Maggie Dempsey, 7; Kate Dempsey, 5; Annie Dempsey, 3.¹⁴⁴

It appears Mrs. Dempsey and her children had moved from Park Building 48 by 1886, the same year "Michael Dempsey's heirs" ceases to appear in the personal property assessments. In 1885, Margaret Dempsey sold the western portion of Lot 2, North of Shenandoah Street, to Magnus Cockrell. Significantly, 1885 is the last year Dempsey's heirs are noted in the assessments and 1886 is the first year Magnus

¹⁴¹Information given to M. D. Button of Harpers Ferry National Historical Park by Mrs. D. A. Baiardo, 2125 Huntington Street, Arlington, VA. At that time, Mrs Hughes lived on 27th Street S.E. (LU-4-8940), Washington, D.C. A note indicating reference is in Snell, "Historic Structure Report," 1958, p. 22.

¹⁴²Jefferson County, West Virginia, Personal Property Assessment Books for 1877 and 1878. The assessment between these two years drops from \$110 to \$25, \$80 of which resulted from the loss of furniture.

¹⁴³Spirit of Jefferson, November 27, 1877, p. 3, col. 2.

¹⁴⁴Bureau of the Census, Tenth Census of the United States (1880), Town of Harpers Ferry, Jefferson County, West Virginia, p. 5.

Cockrell is listed. Previously, Cockrell had been leasing property identified as the "Old Rifle Factory."¹⁴⁵ By 1891, Cockrell had constructed a building on his portion of the lot, and it is possible he leased Park Building 48 from Mrs. Dempsey beginning in 1885 until he completed his own dwelling.¹⁴⁶

Following Mrs. Dempsey's departure from Park Building 48, she remains absent on the Personal Property Assessment Books and the 1900 and 1910 Censuses. The deed in which she transferred her portion of Lot 2 to Eugene or Eugenia Shugart was notarized in Baltimore, indicating a possible residence there.

In 1891, the tax assessment for Dempsey's portion of Lot 2 doubled from the previous assessment which had included all of the lot. It is likely the property had not been assessed since at least 1885, explaining why the assessment was not split under the names of Dempsey and Magnus Cockrell. In the six years between assessments, the value of the entire lot apparently increased significantly, explaining how the assessment doubled while the property was divided. Since Park Building 48 alone was assessed at \$500, someone probably occupied it. The 1900 Census offers the only clue to identifying occupants. According to the order of the census, the families of Sidney B. Murphy and Frank Stipes were renting dwellings on either side of Cockrell, with one of these families probably residing across the street. Sidney Murphy's son, Raymond Murphy, bought the western portion of Lot

¹⁴⁵Jefferson County, West Virginia, Land Record Assessment Book for 1886.

¹⁴⁶Jefferson County, West Virginia, Land Record Assessment Book for 1891.

2 from Magnus Cockrell's children in 1928. It is possible the Murphys lived in Park Building 48 and Raymond Murphy simply acquired the portion of Lot 2 when it became available. The 1900 Census lists the Murphy family as follows: Sidney B. Murphy, 64, pulp mill laborer, head of household; Mary B. Murphy, 39, wife of Sidney B. Murphy; Alonzo Murphy, 24, pulp mill laborer; Raymond Murphy, 29, pulp mill laborer; Mattie L. Murphy, 11, at school; Carrol W. Murphy, 6; Mollie Murphy, 1. The same census lists the Stipes family as follows: Frank Stipes, 54, carpenter, head of household; Carrie Stipes, 43; Carrie Stipes, 22; James Cleveland, 42, stone cutter, brother in law of Frank Stipes.¹⁴⁷

Eugene Shugart

In 1907, the eastern portion of Lot 2, North of Shenandoah Street, was conveyed by Margaret Dempsey to either Eugene Shugart or his one month old daughter Eugenia. Shugart had placed property in the name of his minor son Frank and though the rationale of such actions is unclear, it may have involved tax purposes. It is probable Shugart and his family never resided in Park Building 48, but continued renting it to tenants.

Eugene Shugart moved his family from Charles Town to Harpers Ferry in 1891, where he constructed a large home on his property on

¹⁴⁷Bureau of the Census, Twelfth Census of the United States (1900), Town of Harpers Ferry, Jefferson County, West Virginia, p. 76A.

Washington Street near the crest of Camp Hill.¹⁴⁸ Shugart's occupation at this time is unknown. In 1897, he was elected secretary/treasurer of the Harpers Ferry and Bolivar Building Association Number Four.¹⁴⁹ The following year, Shugart was appointed acting treasurer for the town of Harpers Ferry and at some time served as town sergeant.¹⁵⁰ He is listed in the 1900 Census as a policeman, with the following information on the Shugart family: Eugene Shugart, 32, policeman, head of household; Maggie Shugart, 33, wife; Frank Shugart, 11, at school, son; Margaret Shugart, 7, at school, daughter; Eliza Shugart, 4, daughter.¹⁵¹

In 1902, Eugene Shugart became mayor of Harpers Ferry, a position he would hold until 1908.¹⁵² Later in 1902, he was appointed the Harpers Ferry constable by the County Court.¹⁵³ In March 1907, Eugene Shugart purchased two lots in Block E, virtually across the street from Park Building 48, which he later purchased in November of

¹⁴⁸Spirit of Jefferson, March 31, 1891, p. 3, col. 1;
Ibid., April 7, 1891, p. 2, col. 1.
Ibid., May 12, 1891, p. 1, col. 6.

¹⁴⁹Spirit of Jefferson, March 16, 1897, p. 3, col. 4.

¹⁵⁰Spirit of Jefferson, March 15, 1898, p. 2, col. 1;
Ibid., March 6, 1900, p. 2, col. 1.

¹⁵¹Bureau of the Census, Twelfth Census of the United States (1900), Town of Harpers Ferry, Jefferson County, West Virginia, p. 73A.

¹⁵²Farmers' Advocate, January 11, 1902, p. 3, col. 1.

¹⁵³Spirit of Jefferson, November 18, 1902, p. 2, col. 3.

the same year.¹⁵⁴ All three lots are situated in the general vicinity of the town jail, located on Jefferson's Rock Lot. As mayor and constable, Shugart may have used one or all of the structures on these lots as offices near the jail. The 1910 Census indicates his occupation as Justice and place of business as nothing more than "office."¹⁵⁵ It is unknown whether the jail had its own office space.

Eugene Shugart continually bought and sold property in the Harpers Ferry vicinity, which produced much of the confusion discussed in the "Ownership of Land" section of this report. After his death in 1919, the western portion of Lot 2, North of Shenandoah Street, remained the only property left in his name on the tax assessments, probably because it was disregarded in the will and fiduciary reports as it was in daughter Eugenia Shugart's name in the deed.

After Eugene's wife Margaret died in 1931, and daughter Eugenia died in 1932, the remaining heirs consolidated ownership in the hands of another child, Eliza Shugart, in 1933. The Shugarts continued to own a large home on Ridge Street and tax assessments, beginning with 1933, indicate Eliza Shugart did not live in Park Building 48.

Tax assessments reveal Park Building 48 was badly damaged by the

¹⁵⁴Jefferson County, West Virginia, Deed Book 117, p. 427, Deed of Bargain and Sale. J. E. B. Payton and Ruth E. Payton to Eugene E. Shugart, March 19, 1907;
Jefferson County, West Virginia, Deed Book 117, p. 518, Deed of Bargain and Sale. Margaret Dempsey to Eugenia Shugart, November 15, 1907.

¹⁵⁵Bureau of the Census, Thirteenth Census of the United States (1910), Town of Harpers Ferry, Jefferson County, West Virginia, p. 185B.

1936 flood, at which time the east wing addition was probably destroyed. Following the flood, the value of the structure dropped from \$140 to \$40. The 1942 flood probably caused additional damage, but was not noticed by an assessor due to its previous poor condition. The latter flood completely destroyed the structure of Raymond Murphy which had been built by Magnus Cockrell on the western portion of the lot. In 1943, Eliza Shugart Barnes sold the property to Richard Kidwell, Jr.

According to tax assessments, Kidwell never lived in Park Building 48, although he told Park Archeologists in 1990 that he kept a garden on the site. He apparently did not pay taxes on the property from the time he owned it, forcing the state in December 1951, to advertise the lot for sale under a notice of delinquent taxes.¹⁵⁶ In 1952, Kidwell redeemed the property before the state purchased it in 1953 for inclusion in Harpers Ferry National Monument.¹⁵⁷

Conclusion

It is difficult to write a definitive history of a structure such as Park Building 48. Unlike sites of famous events or businesses, very little information about the dwelling of a common citizen is saved for posterity. Much of the information recorded by the United States government is no longer available. Thus, any attempt at a complete history is a hypothesis at best.

¹⁵⁶Spirit of Jefferson, December 6, 1951, p. B3, col. 3.

¹⁵⁷"Report of State Commissioner of Forfeited and Delinquent Lands," Volume 2.

The residents of Park Building 48 are even more of a mystery than its structural history. Harpers Ferry National Historical Park labels it the "Armorer's Dwelling," although documentation excludes proof of an armorer ever living there. In a sense, the early designation of "Armory Dwelling" could be a more appropriate label. Furthermore, it can only be proven that one family, the Dempseys, ever positively resided in the building. It is probable no owner ever lived there following Margaret Dempsey's departure from Harpers Ferry in 1885.

Further research may produce answers to some of the questions. Of sources not personally consulted for this report, the most important to the pre-Civil War section is National Archives Record Group 217, consisting of Armory records of employees. Private individuals will have to contribute pertinent information for a more complete treatment of the post-Civil War section.

List of Events Pertinent to Park Building 48

June 15, 1796	John Wager, Sr., deeded property to the United States, including Lot 2, North of Shenandoah Street.
1821-1832	Park Building 48 was constructed, probably by William Smallwood.
1837	The United States paid off final claims to William Smallwood.
1837-1852	North rear and east wing additions were constructed.
1841-1852	John Nichols' family lived in Armory Dwelling 30.
February 12, 1851	John Nichols died.
1841-1844	Augustus Shope's family lived in Armory Dwelling 32.

February 7, 1844	Augustus Shope died.
1844-1846	John Berlin and James O'Laughlin shared Armory Dwelling 32.
1846-1849	John Berlin and William H. Wentzle shared Armory Dwelling 32.
1849-1852	Armistead M. Ball and John W. Roderick shared shared Armory Dwelling 32.
August 31, 1852	The United States sold a portion of its property at Harpers Ferry, but reserved Lot 2, North of Shenandoah Street, from the sale.
1861-1865	Park Building 48 suffered some damage during the Civil War, but survived in at least "fair condition."
November 30, 1869	The United States sold Lot 2, North of Shenandoah Street, to Isabella Leisenring. It is uncertain whether they lived in Park Building 48.
1870	Michael Dempsey and Margaret Boren married in Jefferson County and possibly took occupancy of Park Building 48.
September 30, 1870	Shenandoah River flooded, likely damaging Park Building 48.
September 1872	Isabella's husband, Benjamin Leisenring, declared bankruptcy in the dry goods business he conducted in Park Building 44.
1876-1877	Benjamin and Isabella Leisenring moved from Harpers Ferry, likely residing in Charles Town.
November 1877	Flood at Harpers Ferry probably damaged Park Building 48.
1879	Isabella Leisenring quit-claimed Lot 2, North of Shenandoah Street, back to the United States.
June 1, 1880	The United States sold Lot 2, North of Shenandoah Street, to Harpers Ferry merchant Gabriel L. Myers.
October 1881	Michael Dempsey died.
December 26, 1881	Gabriel L. Myers sold Lot 2, North of Shenandoah Street, to Margaret Dempsey.

April 9, 1885	Margaret Dempsey sold the western portion of Lot 2, North of Shenandoah Street, to Magnus Cockrell, at which time Mrs. Dempsey probably left Harpers Ferry and Cockrell's family took possession of the property, possibly occupying Park Building 48. In all likelihood, no owner of the structure lived there after this date.
June 1, 1889	Flood at Harpers Ferry.
October 1, 1896	Flood at Harpers Ferry.
1900	Census indicates the families of either Sidney B. Murphy or Frank Stipes may have lived in Park Building 48.
November 15, 1907	Margaret Dempsey sold the eastern portion of Lot 2, North of Shenandoah Street (on which Park Building 48 stands), to either Eugene or Eugenia Shugart.
1919	The deed transferring the property from Dempsey to Shugart was recorded following Eugene Shugart's death.
May 13, 1924	Flood at Harpers Ferry apparently did little damage to Park Building 48.
June 4, 1928	Kate and Georgia Cockrell sold the western portion of Lot 2, North of Shenandoah Street, to Raymond W. Murphy, son of Sidney B. Murphy.
November 19, 1932	Eugenia Shugart Reitan died intestate and the eastern portion of Lot 2, North of Shenandoah Street, transferred to her surviving brothers and sisters.
May 26, 1933	Frank E. Shugart, Ann W. Dearing, Margaret Shugart, James A. Dearing, Gardner G. Shugart, Marguerite M. Shugart, and Oliver M. Reitan deeded the eastern portion of Lot 2, North of Shenandoah Street, to Eliza P. Shugart.
March 19, 1936	Flood at Harpers Ferry likely destroyed the east wing addition of Park Building 48.
October 16, 1942	Flood at Harpers Ferry destroyed Raymond Murphy's home on the western portion of Lot 2, North of Shenandoah Street, and probably damaged Park Building 48.
May 21, 1943	Eliza P. Shugart Barnes and Floyd Barnes sold the

eastern portion of Lot 2, North of Shenandoah Street, to Richard Kidwell, Jr.

1944-1952

Richard Kidwell, Jr., did not pay taxes on the property.

1952

Kidwell redeemed the property from the state.

January 7, 1953

Richard Kidwell, Jr., and Nellie Mae Kidwell sold the eastern portion of Lot 2, North of Shenandoah Street, and Raymond W. Murphy and Jessie P. Murphy sold the western portion of the same lot to the state of West Virginia for inclusion in Harpers Ferry National Monument.