

HISTORIC STRUCTURES REPORT

PART I

ON

THE PHILIP COONS BUILDING
SOMETIMES CALLED THE MASONIC HALL BUILDING
(Building #44)

Harpers Ferry National Monument

Architectural Data Section

Prepared by

Archie W. Franzen
Architect

October 1962

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service
Eastern Office, Design and Construction

HISTORIC STRUCTURES REPORT

PART I

ON

THE PHILIP COONS BUILDING
SOMETIMES CALLED THE MASONIC HALL BUILDING
(Building #44)

APPROVAL SHEET

RECOMMENDED

Superintendent

Date _____

Henry A. Judd

Acting Supervising Architect, Historic Structures

Date 10-23-62

Robert G. Hall

Robert G. Hall
Chief

Date 10-23-62

Regional Director, Northeast Region

Date _____

APPROVED

Director

Date _____

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7. ARCHITECTURAL DATA

A. Architectural and Structural Design

The Philip Coons Building is a three story stone structure located on the northwest side of Shenandoah Street in the lower town section of Harpers Ferry. Its construction was conditioned by the site; that is, it was necessary to remove large quantities of natural rock from the hillside to provide a level space on which to build the structure. Similar conditions had to be met when the adjacent buildings were built, namely Stagecoach Inn to the southwest and the McCabe-Marmion Building to the Northeast. And as with these latter buildings, the removed rock was used in building up the walls of the structure and finished on the exterior with "rough casting".

The building was designed to house two stores located at sidewalk level and facing Shenandoah Street. The second floor was partitioned off to provide living accommodations for one of the storekeepers and family. The third floor was devoted to the use of the Masonic Order and the small attic room above the southwest end of the third floor may have been used by a caretaker for the Lodge.

Construction was started in 1844-45 at the same time that the McCabe-Marmion Building was being built, although this statement¹ contradicts the data advanced in the Historical Data Section.

1. Snell, C. W., "Historic Building Report, Part I, for Bldg. No. 44, The Philip Coons Building," dated Oct. 14, 1957, p.4. "This building must therefore have been erected between June 1836 and January 10, 1840"; undoubtedly this must refer to an earlier building whose foundations may be uncovered when the present rubble and trash overburden covering the first floor of the structure is removed.

However it could not have been otherwise in as much as the Philip Coons Building uses the southwest end of the McCabe-Marmion Building (known to have been built in 1845) as its northeast end closure. There is no evidence on this wall showing where a roof had been constructed over the lower two floors prior to the construction of the third floor for masonic use.

A careful perusal of the minutes of Charity Lodge #111 for the year 1845 shows that construction of the third floor meeting room was started early in 1845 and completed by November 22, 1845, when the Masons held their first meeting in their new quarters. Philip Coons was a Mason himself and in the minutes of March 22, 1845, mention is made of his having bought and salvaged brick, iron and lumber from the earlier Masonic Hall in the Episcopal Church which had burned
2
down.

Some of these materials may have been used in the construction of the new hall. The rear wall above the third floor level is brick and the width of the floor boards are narrower than those of the second floor.

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2. Mr. Harry Chambers, over eighty years old and historian for Logan Lodge #25, made it possible for the writer to have access to the minutes of Charity, Eureka and Logan Lodges covering the period from 1845 to the present. All minutes prior to March 22, 1845, were lost when the Episcopal Church was destroyed by fire in that year.

The roof structure is supported by five king post trusses alternating with paired rafters to provide a large assembly room on the third floor uninterrupted by supporting partitions or columns. A vaulted plaster ceiling, elliptical in profile, was suspended over this assembly room, by means of old boat timbers scabbled to the lower chords of the trusses.

The roof covering was of slate and there were no dormers. In 1956 the Service removed the slate and applied temporary roll roofing to eliminate a number of leaks that had developed.

A balcony at the second floor level on the Shenandoah Street elevation has a railing of cast iron but no evidence has been found to prove that the railing dates to the restoration period.

Access to the second and third floors was provided by means of a flight of wooden steps occupying the space between the subject building and the adjacent Stagecoach Inn to the southwest. The stair run is interrupted at the second floor level by two contiguous landings, one serving the Coons Building and the other a step lower giving access to the second floor of Stagecoach Inn. The minutes of the Lodge disclose that these steps were repaired in 1870, 1877, 1890 and 1920. There is a complete inventory given for the materials used in the 1877 repairs. Upon acquisition of the property by the Service the treads and risers were renewed in 1956 for the protection of the Park visitors.

To the rear of the structure the foundation of a small appended building remains but so far the period of this addition has not been determined nor has its appearance or use been established.

In the natural rock hillside, at the rear, a flight of stone steps from the upper slope were carved in the rock. We are told that these led to a back porch at the second floor level.³

The sash on the second floor are double-hung with twelve lights over eight and the third floor sash have six over six lights. The sash of the first floor windows, like those of the second floor, had twelve over eight lights. Exterior doors at the upper levels had six panels. The first floor doors will have to be studied further to determine their appearance.

The structure has no basement and the outer walls and interior cross division wall are built on natural rock foundations. The second and third floor joists run from the front to back of the structure and because of the distance are overlapped at mid-span and supported from beneath on a heavy poplar beam running from end wall to end wall.

In the beginning heating was accomplished by three fireplaces, one at each floor level. These were closed over at an early date in favor of stoves and for which stovepipes were let into the chimney breasts above the mantelpieces. Still later flues of the McCabe-Marmion Building were utilized for additional stoves in the Coons Building. The Masonic Order closed one of the windows on the northwest

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3. Interview with Monument employee, Charles Murphy, who lived with his uncle and family on the second floor of the structure some thirty years ago. Mr. Murphy also states that he does not remember the interior stairs between the first and second floors. The materials employed in this stair are obviously post period.

wall of the third floor and in bricking it up incorporated a short chimney flue with the construction. Plumbing and sanitary facilities are non-existent. Water would probably have been obtained from the town pump and carried. Privies would have had to be located on the crest of the rock hillside behind the structure and if they existed at all they have long since disappeared. Lighting would have been accomplished with oil lamps.⁴

Rainwater from the roof slopes was conducted under the sidewalk to the street.

B. Existing Conditions

The Coons Building along with the adjacent structures to either side was subjected to the ravages of flood waters. As a result the finish floor and joists of the ground floor have completely rotted out and no longer exist. Adaptations incorporated in the structure, by the many varied occupancies, have taken their toll of the fabric. This is particularly true of the rear wall where revisions in the first floor openings have caused settlement extending upward toward the eaves. General masonry stabilization was accomplished in the summer of 1962 as a safety measure but no attempt was made to rebuild the repairs to period appearance or levels.

The slate roof was removed in the fall of 1962 because leaks.

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4. Minutes of Charity Lodge, dated January 3, 1852, notes a bill for \$6.62½ for candles to light the hall.

When the sheathing was uncovered little more than half of this material was found to be sound. In replacing the damaged sheathing several of the rafter and truss bearing ends together with the kick plates were found to be decayed. The kick plates were replaced and new ends scabbed onto the defective rafters and truss bearing members using split ring connectors. The decayed portions of the above wereremoved and destroyed to avoid further contamination. The truss joints were tightened up to bring the truss components into full play. A temporary covering of roll roofing was applied and remains today.

There are twenty-nine windows, twelve of which will have to be reconstructed, and the balance require varying degrees of repairs. There are eight exterior doors, five of which appear to be original and can be repaired.

The exterior of the structure was pargeted and much of this work will have to be re-pargeted because of erosion and spalling.

The brick chimneys have lost their top brick courses and require new cappings to bring them up to their historic height.

The present gutters and downspouts were installed in 1956 by the service and are to be replaced by their period counterparts.

As previously mentioned the exterior flight of stairs between this structure and Stagecoach Inn were repaired by the Service but the supports and carriages will have to be replaced. In so doing period considerations are to be taken into account.

The brick sidewalk found out front along Shenandoah Street replaced large flagstones of Harpers shale. This is believed to have been done in 1877 when a reference was made in the Masonic minutes to fixing the pavement in connection with the exterior stairway repairs.

The flooring in the west corner room of the second floor is damaged beyond reuse and the flooring of the south corner room is in poor condition. The balance of the flooring on this level can be salvaged and used elsewhere should fireproof floor construction be resorted to in rehabilitating the structure. The flooring on the third floor, with the exception of an eight foot square replacement patch, appears to be in good condition.

Interior partitions on the second floor were wide wood boards of single thickness, tongued and grooved and varying in width with small beaded edge treatment. They were painted originally and papered over in later years. Few of these partitions remain.

Exterior walls were plastered direct to their interior surfaces and then whitewashed many times and later papered and/or calcimined. Wall plaster on the first floor walls has fallen off apparently from having been soaked during floods. The ceiling plaster at all story levels was applied to wood lath and is cracked and in some cases has pulled loose from the joists. The plaster of the ceiling over the Masonic Hall was removed when repairs to the roof were being made.

Only one mantel remains and it is very plain and severe in character and is located in the south room of the second floor.

Little if any hardware remains except door and shutter hinges, and a few post period door locks.

C. Architectural Description of the Fabric

This three story masonry structure fronts 37'-6" on Shenandoah Street and is 31'-6" deep, and measures 42'-6" from grade to the roof peak. It contains 43,125 cu. ft. exclusive of the indeterminate cubage of the rear appendage. Each of the three floors contain approximately 965 sq. ft. of usable floor space.

The building has but three of its own exterior walls relying on the southwest wall of the McCabe-Marmion building for its fourth enclosing wall. The exterior walls are composed of Harpers shale, approximately two feet in thickness, with the exception of the rear wall at the back between the third floor joist level to the eaves which is brick. Fenestration and door openings account for one third of the front and back exterior wall surfaces and explains the necessity of the tie rod washers that are apparent at the second and third floor levels on these elevations.

First Floor

In plan the first floor was divided into two store spaces by an eight inch thick brick cross wall only one story in height. The individual stores were further divided into two rooms, front and back, at one time but these partitions no longer exist. A relatively late stair in the southwest store leads to the second floor. The interior walls and ceilings of the stores were plastered. Their finish floor

systems are gone and only vestiges indicate that they were wood fastened to wood joists running parallel to Shenandoah Street and bearing on top of masonry ledges located at the base of the interior partition wall and the end walls.

Each store had a door and two flanking windows in both the front and back exterior walls. There was an interconnecting opening between the stores in the brick party wall that was later bricked up, possibly when the interior stair in the southwest store was added.

On the exterior and at the rear of the southwest store, stone masonry crosswalks ran from the building to the rock hillside behind the structure forming a room 12'-1" deep by 11'-0" wide inside dimensions. Remains of these walls are approximately eight feet high. Within this room is a low stone foundation which may have been a vault or oven enclosure. It measures 6'-0" deep by 5'-0" wide on the inside. These may have been roofed over by the porch deck that once existed at the second floor level.

Second Floor

As closely as can be determined the second floor was divided into at least four rooms by means of wooden partitions composed of single board thickness running from floor to ceiling. The partitions were tongued and grooved and were fastened to the floor and ceiling by small chamfered strips, one on each side of the partition. Only a portion of these partitions still exist and their doors are missing.

The interior surfaces of the outer walls and the ceilings

were plastered. The splayed flanks of the windows on this floor were plastered and there was a single board casing with a beaded edge located at the intersection of the splays and interior wall plane surface.

There were three doors to the exterior at this level during the restoration period. One of the three opened onto the exterior stair landing on the southwest elevation, the second opened onto the balcony at the front of the building and the third door opened onto the porch deck at the rear of the structure.

A poplar beam 10 3/4" deep by 13 1/2", running continuously for 35'-0" from end wall to end wall, supports the floor joists where they are lapped at mid-span. The beam in turn bears on the brick cross wall below at its (the beams) mid-span. In a similar fashion the joists above are supported by a poplar beam which is supported at its mid-span by a 10" x 10" poplar post. This post should remain because of its structural value. The poplar beam is checked and may need to be reinforced.

There is but one fireplace on this level and it is located on the southwest wall of the south corner room. It was bricked up so a stove could be used. The mantelpiece is made up of thick undecorated boards. A stove pipe hole was broken into the chimney of the McCabe-Marmion building on the northeast wall at this level also.

Later day paint and wallpaper has come off the walls disclosing Civil War troop scribblings and stenciling on the whitewash coat beneath.

Third Floor

The third floor was reserved from the beginning for the exclusive use of the Masonic Order. It is subdivided to create a large meeting room toward the northeast end approximately 28'-0" wide, front to back of the building by 29'-0" long. A wooden partition at its southwest end (wood finished on the Lodge Room side and plastered on the other side) separates the meeting room from a narrower space 6'-6" wide by 28'-0" long. This latter space is further divided into a small preparation room at the front of the building and a larger area at the rear that served as an entry and cloak room off the exterior stairs on the southwest. The ceiling above the preparation and cloak rooms is 8'-6" high. An interior stairs within the cloak room leads to a small room above in the attic space.

The large lodge meeting room's ceiling was vaulted. Its cross section was elliptical in shape transverse to the ridge line of the roof (the latter is parallel to Shenandoah Street). This ceiling had white stars and clouds painted on a light blue background. It was supported from old boat timbers used as furring suspended from shaped scabbing affixed to the lower chord members of the king post trusses above. As a result there was no need for intermediate supports thus providing a large uninterrupted meeting room. The outer walls were plastered with the exception of the southwest wall which is vertical wood boards. There is a wooden cornice running around the room at the spring line level of the vaulted ceiling.

Unlike the floors below, the windows at this level have painted splayed wood flanks instead of plaster. The casing trim is moulded and has rose blocks at its upper corner intersections. There are two interior doors opening off the Lodge Room, one leading to the cloak room and the other to the preparation room. They have four raised panels each and are held in place with heavy mouldings that appear to be post period. The door casing trim matches the window casings but a slight variation in width indicates that they were made to match the existing casings.

There is a small closed fireplace in the cloak room which suggests that the dividing partition mentioned above may not have been planned for originally. The minutes of the Lodge for November 22, 1845, call for the purchase of a stove.

The flooring at this level is composed of narrower boards than those found on the second floor. They are in good condition for the most part, but a large patch of modern flooring occurs at the entrance and extends into the Lodge Room.

Exterior

The outer walls were pargeted on the exterior but no evidence of scoring, to resemble coursed masonry, has been discovered. There is a corbelled brick cornice at the eaves line three courses in height.

The roof was covered with black slate and there were no dormers. Solid sheathing was nailed over alternate king post trusses and paired rafters. There are five trusses in all and these occur

over the assembly or Lodge Room. The component members of the trusses are both spiked and bolted together. The bolts are hand-wrought iron. See section thru truss shown on Sheet #2 of the appended sketches.

A novel form of construction was employed to resist the horizontal thrust of the heels of the trusses and rafters. A vertical wood plate was let into the masonry, at the interior masonry line, its top being level with the top of the masonry wall at the eaves. Affixed to this plate, by means of a mortise and tenons secured with wood pins, were triangular shaped blocks of wood buried in the masonry to which the wood kick plates were spiked. The wood members mentioned above, that are in contact with the masonry, are severely decayed in spots and will require some replacement.

The exterior window and door openings at the second and third floor levels of the front and back walls have concealed wood lintels. These run continuously from end wall to end wall and in addition to acting as lintels they also function as masonry ties for the piers between openings. As these timbers are embedded in masonry they too have been damaged by decay. It is recommended that they be removed, short sections at a time, and the space filled with poured concrete reinforced with steel rods. The one chimney for the structure requires repairs and will have to have its cap reconstructed to its proper level.

Most of the exterior pargeting has been eroded by weather and will require the application of new pargeting. Similar to Stagecoach

Inn the pargeting was not scored to resemble coarsed masonry.

Nothing remains of the period gutters and downspouts. The run-off from the rear roof slope was conducted by a downspout that spilled onto a brick paved gutter at grade that ran between Stagecoach Inn and the subject building. This discharged, probably under the sidewalk thru a pipe, to the street. The roof drainage of the front roof slope was discharged to the street from a downspout located in the middle of the Shenandoah Street elevation.

Should it develop that the cast iron railing of the second floor balcony at the front of the building is a period feature it will be necessary to replace some of its damaged or missing parts to preserve it.

A flagstone sidewalk along Shenandoah Street in front of the building was replaced by brick paving in later years. The brick should be removed and replaced with flagstones.

Brick pavement was found at grade level and located in the small space at the rear between the rock hillside and the building.

Not enough evidence has been found to establish the manner in which the rear appended room (constructed of stone) was used nor does enough remain to definitely determine how it looked. It is felt that the wood second floor porch deck provided a roof over this room.

D. Additional Work Needed to Complete Architectural Research

The physical condition of this structure is poorer than the majority of structures within the Monument area. For this reason

much of the fabric that would normally be concealed lays exposed to view and has been described in this report. In the course of numerous post period alterations and repairs some of the period components were removed and no longer exist. Contemporary details of similar buildings will have to serve as a basis for the restoration of these portions.

Further research is required to establish whether the existing balcony railing on the Shenandoah Street elevation was in use during the 1859-65 period. Several of the exterior doors will need additional study to determine if they are replacements or originals. It would be desirable to establish the period appearance and furnishing of the Masonic Hall on the third floor. The Historian's Data Section suggests the possibility of a cooperative agreement with the Masonic Lodge to furnish the Lodge Room.

It will be necessary to remove a few selected floor boards, several small panels of lath and plaster and remove paint layers from representative portions of the interior wood trim to determine the colors used.

It should be possible to accomplish the balance of the investigation just under \$1000.00.

APPENDIX I

ILLUSTRATION NO. 1

SHENANDOAH STREET ELEVATION

To the left can be seen the flight of wooden steps that provided access to the second and third floors. This stairway also served the second floor of Stagecoach Inn. The second doorway from the left on the first floor level was formerly a window opening and was converted in recent years, as yet no date can be ascribed to the cast iron balcony railing on the second floor. The sash openings of the second floor windows on this elevation are smaller than the first floor windows but larger than the windows on the third floor. There are no shutter hinge mortises on the second floor window frames although they appear on the first floor frames. As can be seen the third floor windows are shuttered. The photograph shows how the pargeting has eroded from exposure to weather.

Photo: Jack E. Boucher, December 1961
Neg. No. EODC 1725



ILLUSTRATION NO. 2

CLOSEUP SHOWING INTERIOR OF SOUTHEAST EXTERIOR WALL

Floods and general neglect have all but destroyed physical evidence at first floor level. X-bracing and posts are part of shoring that had to be placed under the second floor system. Most of the doors and windows at this level are missing and will have to be reconstructed.

The interior walls and ceilings were plastered and the floor was wood flooring laid across wood joists with little space between the joists and the natural rock beneath them.

Photo: Jack E. Boucher, December 1961
Neg. No. EODC 2512



ILLUSTRATION NO. 3

INTERIOR VIEW OF SECOND FLOOR SOUTH ROOM

This floor level was divided into rooms by vertical board partitions. The boards are 7/8" in thickness, tongued and grooved with small beaded edges. Their original paint coat was a pinkish red. They were fastened top and bottom with chamfered wood strips. Only small sections of these partitions remain.

As indicated in the photograph the mantelpiece is simple to the point of crudeness. The baseboard is plain with a top beaded edge. Because of floor settlement, additional wood stripping was nailed to the top of the baseboard to close the gap caused by settlement. The flooring is tongued and grooved pine boards of random width.

Photo: Jack E. Boucher, December 1961
Neg. No. EODC 1723



ILLUSTRATION NO. 4

VIEW OF MASONIC LODGE ROOM

The ceiling plaster was removed by the Service in 1956 when the roof structure was stabilized. The joints of the king post trusses are bolted together and it was found necessary to tighten these connections to bring the top chords into their proper position and prevent further sagging. The two tie rods, one of which appears in the photograph, were installed in 1892.

The long timbers with the mortises are reputed to be salvaged boat timbers from cargo barges floated down the rivers to Harpers Ferry and then broken up for sale.

The ceiling plaster and gable ends, down to the wood cornice line, were painted a light blue and decorated with clouds and stars.

Photo: Jack E. Boucher, December 1961
Neg. No. EODC 1726



APPENDIX II

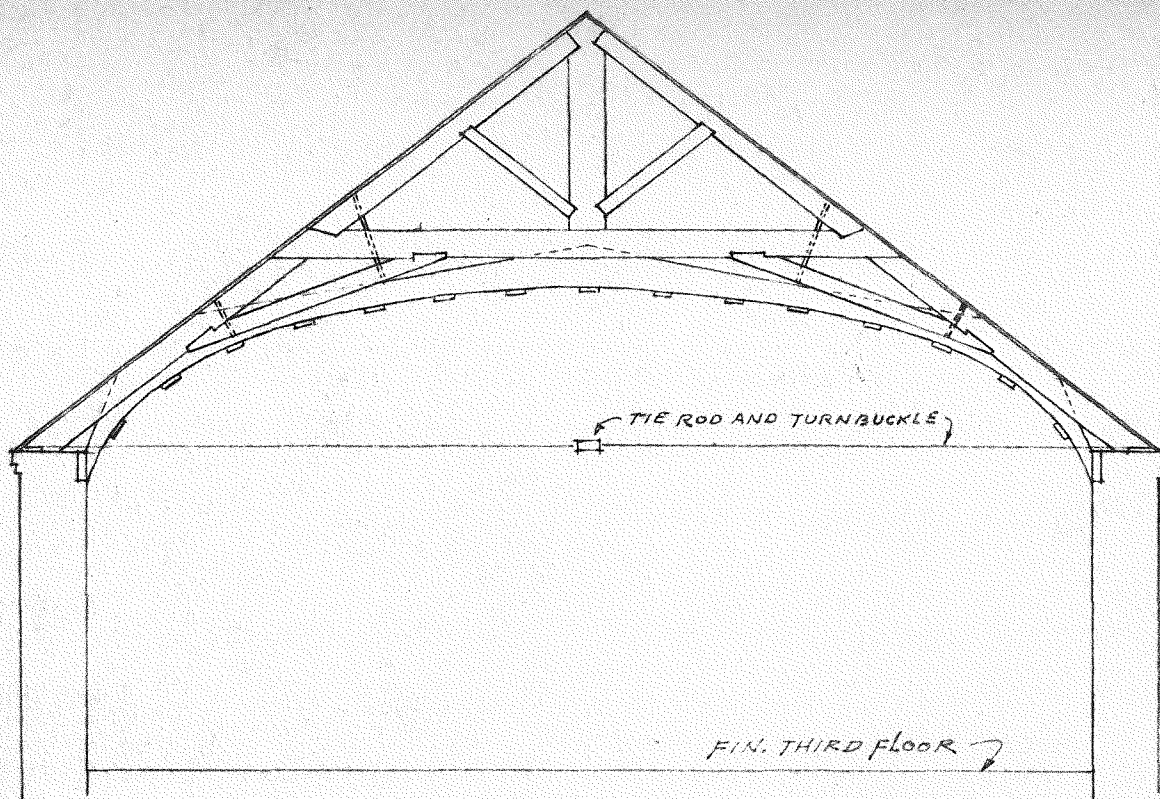
MEASURED SKETCHES

The following six sheets of measured sketches were started in 1956 and recently added to when the study of the structure was undertaken. They will be supplemented by more detailed drawings as work progresses and pertinent and hidden data is uncovered.

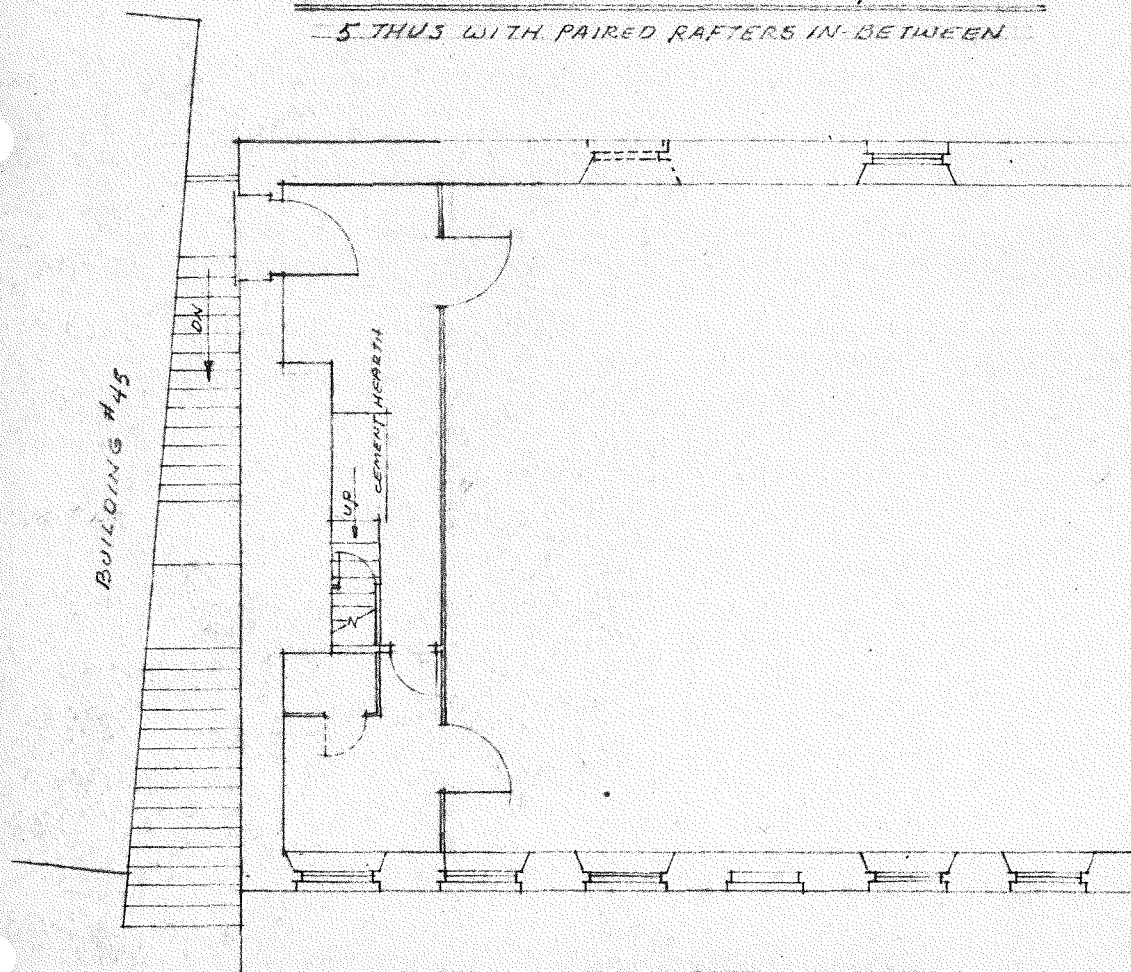
Some construction features are similar to those found in the neighboring structures to either side of the subject building. However, the roof construction is different to that found in any of the Harpers Ferry buildings and the details of the kick plates and their components supporting the trusses are unique to those observed anywhere else.

Sketches by

The Author and
Architect Ray R. Mehl

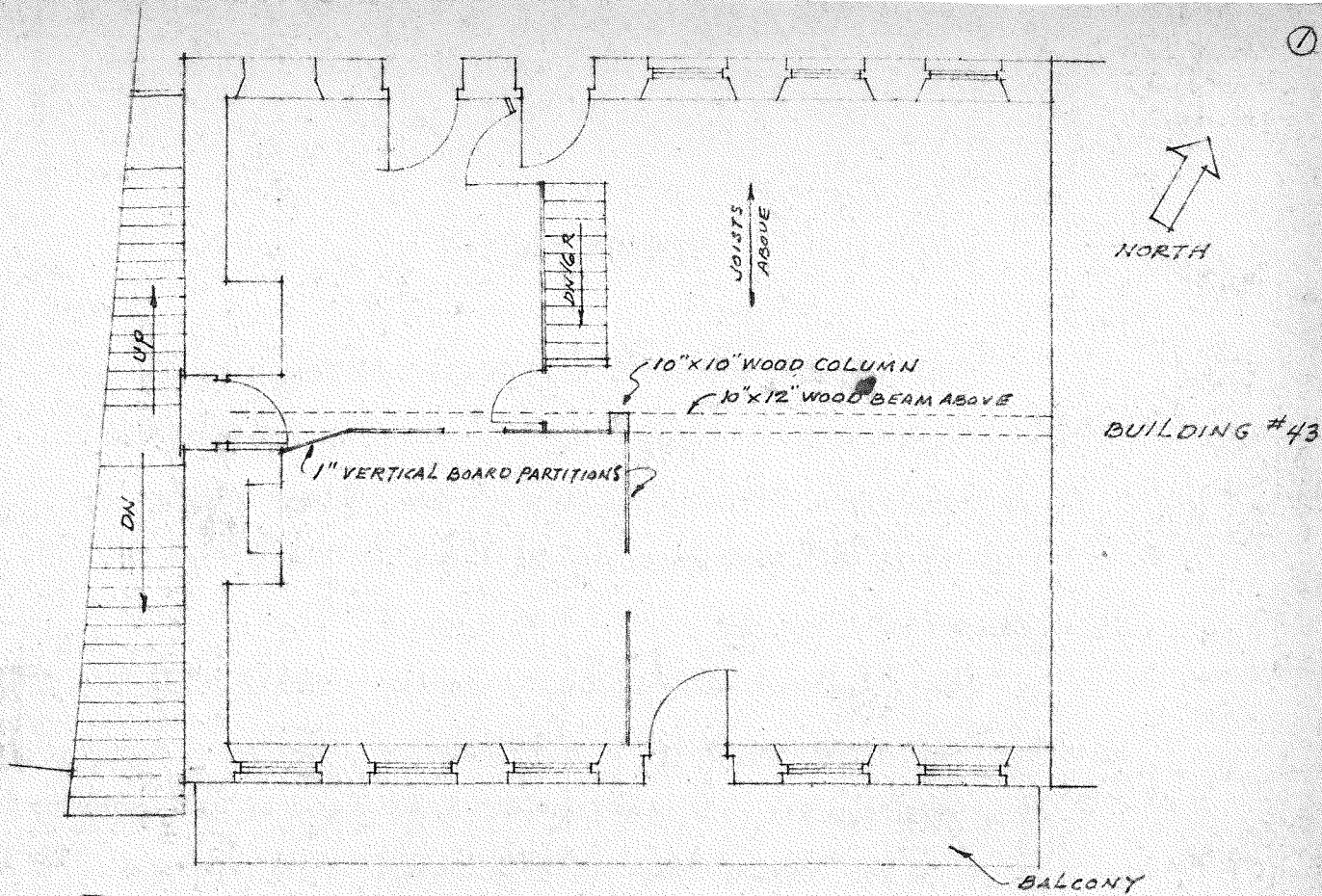


SECTION SHOWING ROOF TRUSS
- 5 THUS WITH PAIRED RAFTERS IN BETWEEN -

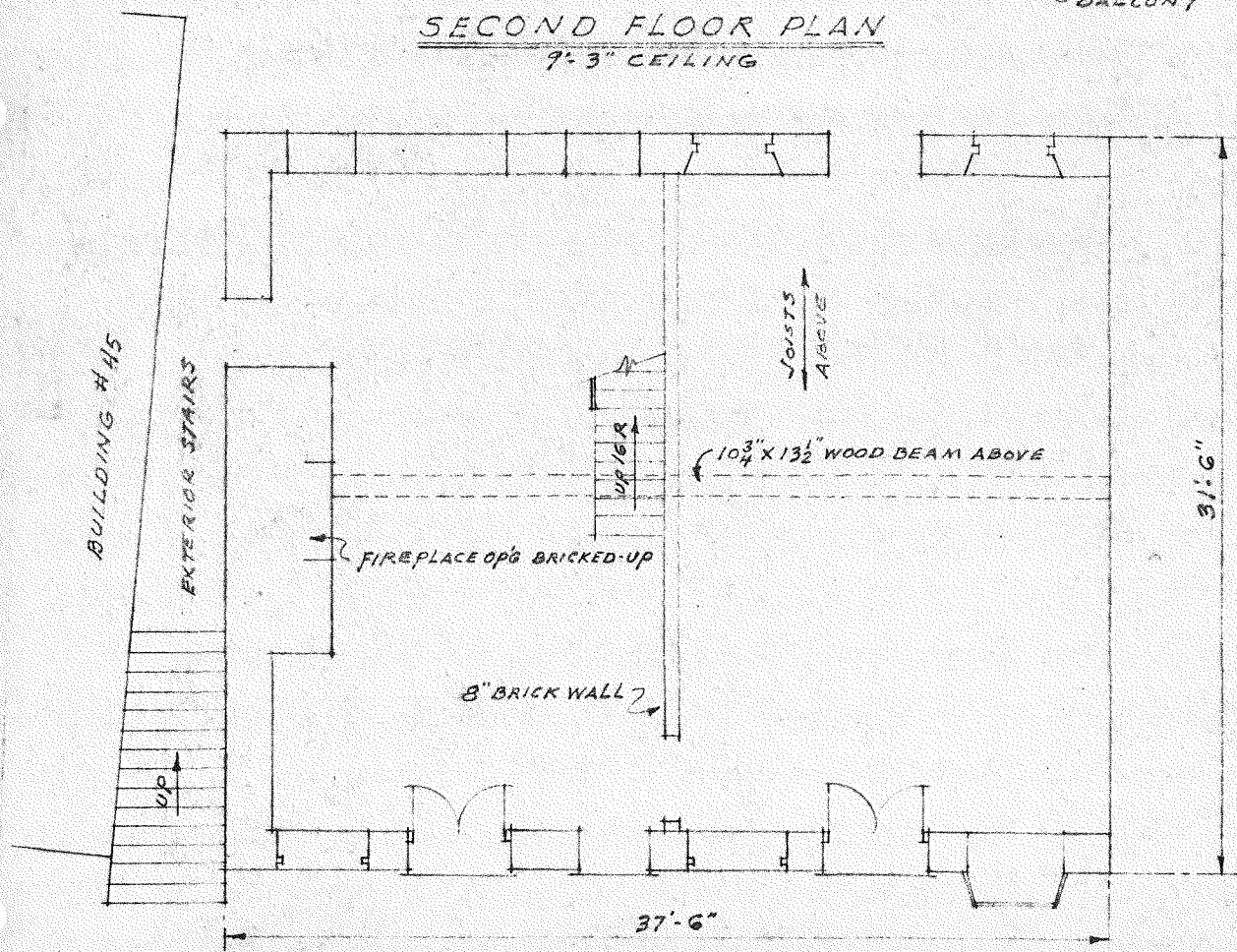


THIRD FLOOR PLAN

PHILIP COONS BUILDING #44

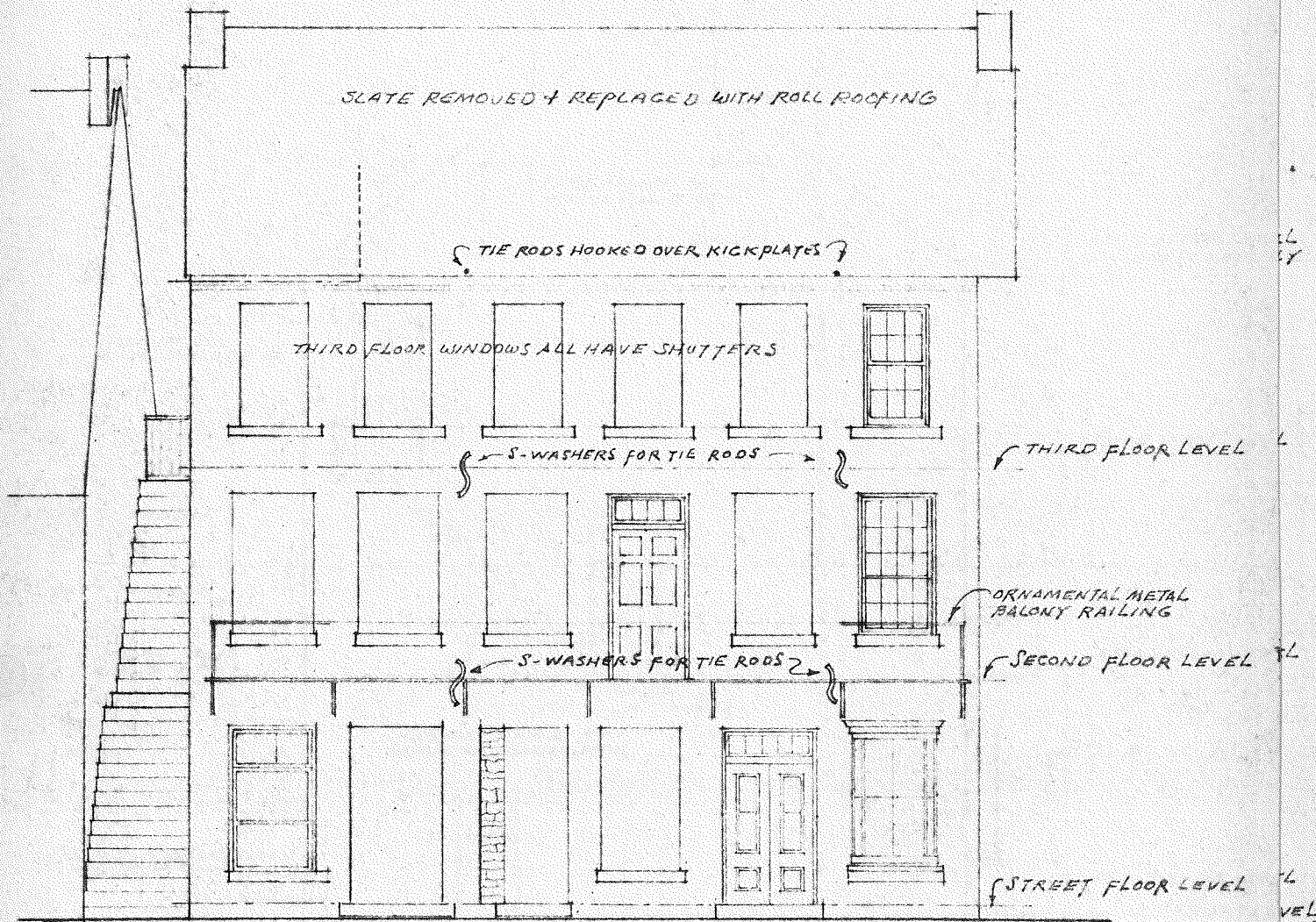


SECOND FLOOR PLAN
9'-3" CEILING

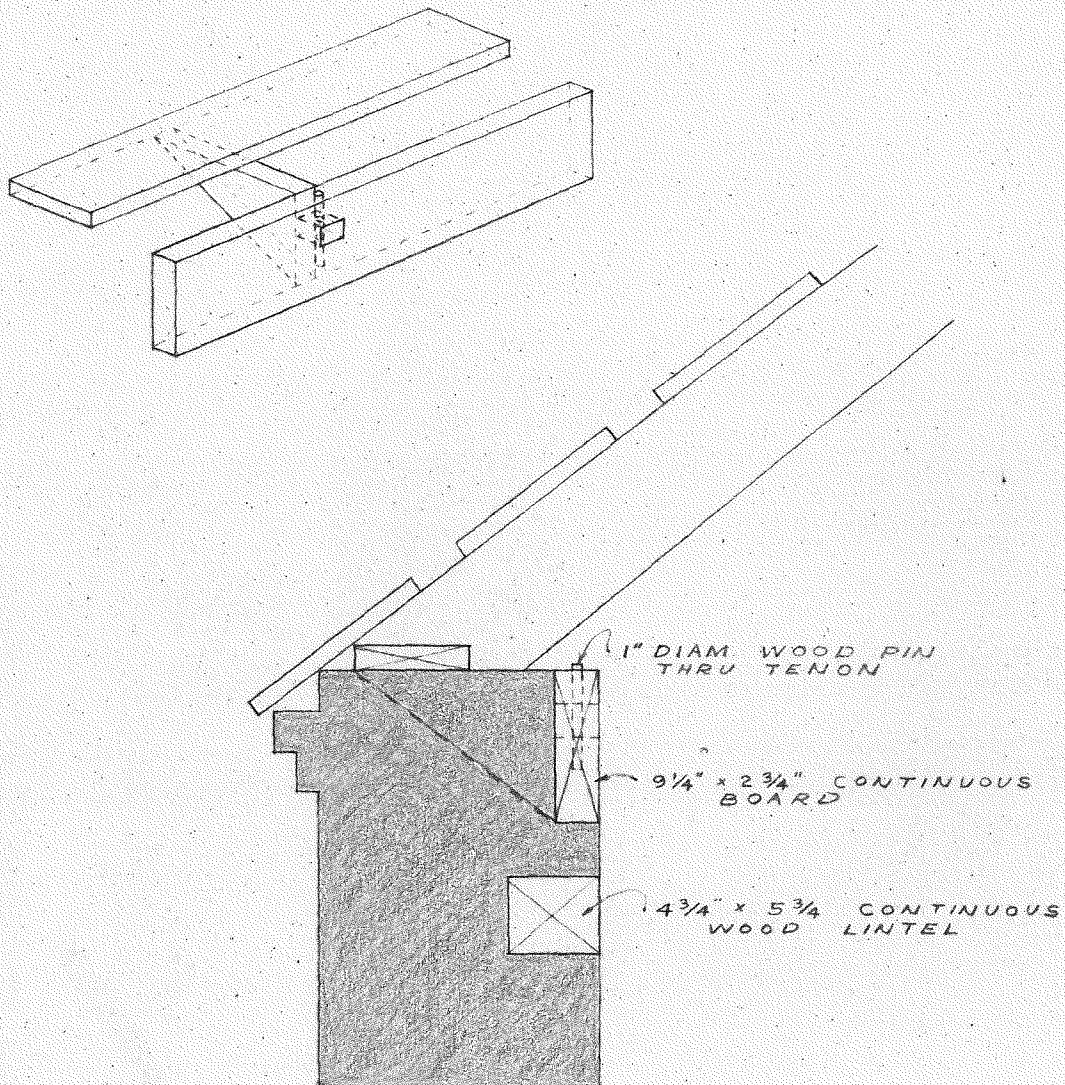


STREET LEVEL PLAN

PHILIP COONS BUILDING #44



SHENANDOAH STREET ELEVATION



SECTION SHOWING CORNICE DETAIL
SCALE 1" = 1'-0"

HER-155

HISTORIC STRUCTURES REPORT

PART II

ON

THE PHILIP COONS BUILDING
SOMETIMES CALLED THE MASONIC HALL BUILDING
(Building #44)

Harpers Ferry National Monument

Administrative Data Section

Prepared by

Joseph R. Prentice
Superintendent

October 1962

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service
Harpers Ferry National Monument

HISTORIC STRUCTURES REPORT

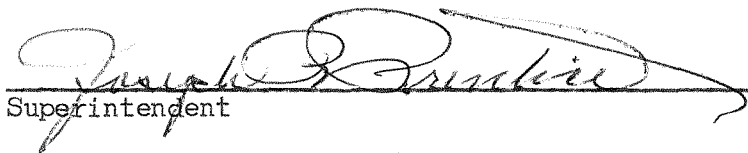
PART II

ON

THE PHILIP COONS BUILDING
SOMETIMES CALLED THE MASONIC HALL BUILDING
(Building #44)

A P P R O V A L S H E E T

RECOMMENDED


Superintendent

Date Nov. 1, 1962

Acting Supervising Architect, Historic Structures

Date _____


Robert G. Hall
Chief

Date 12/18/62


Regional Director, Northeast Region

Date 5/2/63

APPROVED

Director

Date _____

ADMINISTRATIVE DATA

A. Name and Number of Building:

Building No. 44, The Philip Coons Building or Masonic Hall.

B. Proposed Use of Structure:

It is proposed to restore the exterior of this building to its 1859 appearance, based upon data uncovered by historical and architectural research. As already agreed upon, between the Park, the Regional Office and the Eastern Office of Design and Construction, rest room facilities for Park visitors will be provided for on the first floor. This will eliminate, or at least alleviate, what has been a dire need since this park was established, i.e., adequate rest room facilities. The second floor of this building will contain the heating and cooling system, both for Building No. 44 and adjacent Building No. 45 - the forthcoming Visitor Center. The small stone structure, appended to the rear of Building No. 44, will contain the cooling tower for the aforementioned second floor installation.

We are holding in abeyance any proposal for use of the third floor of this building, until such time as park interpretive plans are more concrete.

C. Provisions for Operating the Building:

The lower or ground floor will serve as comfort stations and will be open to the public. The second floor will be kept locked to prevent unauthorized admittance to the heating system.

D. Preliminary Estimate of Cost of Restoration, Rest Rooms and Heating and Cooling System:

EODC is currently preparing plans for the comfort stations and for the heating and air-conditioning systems serving both buildings. It is expected to accomplish this installation within the current funds appropriated for PCP # B-20-3.

In accordance with the provisions of the PCP, we will stabilize the walls and restore the exterior of this building to its appearance in 1859. The interior will be in keeping with the facility served. This will require concrete floors and proper fire retardation wall and ceiling treatment on the second floor. Sewer, water and electrical connections will be essential.

HISTORIC BUILDING REPORT

PART II,

HISTORICAL DATA SECTION

FOR

BLDG. NO. 44.

THE PHILIP COONS BUILDING

Harpers Ferry National Monument

Prepared by:

Charles W. Snell
Historian (Park Supervisory)
Dated March 20, 1959
11 Pages
Project No. HF-59

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HISTORICAL DATA SECTION

1. OWNERSHIP OF THE LAND, 1782-1872

Wager Lot No. 46, the present site of Bldg. No. 44, was owned by the Wager family from 1782 to 1836. On June 16, 1836, the vacant lot was sold at public auction to Philip Coons and James Duncanson for \$600. In 1840, Duncanson sold his interest in Lot No. 46 to Philip Coons for \$100. Mr. Coons remained the owner of the lot until July 17, 1855, at which time he sold the property to William Richards for \$1,830. Mr. Richards retained title to Lot No. 46 from 1855 to 1872. The location of Bldg. No. 44 and Lot No. 46 may be seen by glancing at the 1835 plat of Wager property which appears on the next page of this report.

2. CONSTRUCTION OF BLDG. NO. 44

Lot No. 46 was a vacant piece of land in 1836. The future site of Bldg. No. 44 and the structures then standing near the property may be seen on Map No. 2 of Harpers Ferry, dated January 27, 1835.

In 1837-38 Philip Coons erected a two story stone building on Lot No. 46. The new house fronted 38 feet on Shenandoah Street and was 32 feet deep. Probably because the lot was jointly owned by Coons and

1. For a detailed and documented study of the ownership of Lot No. 46, see Snell, Charles W., "Historic Building Report, Part I, for Bldg. No. 44, The Philip Coons Building," dated October 14, 1957, revised February 4, 1958, pp.1-4, 5.

2. Virginia Free Press, April 7, 1836, p.4, c.1.

3. National Archives, R.G. 77, Records of the Office of the Chief of Engineers, Fortification Map File, Part of Map Dr. 150-Sheet 82-2.

4. Virginia Free Press, September 27, 1838, p.3, c.3, showing building in use. Dimensions from Drawing No. NM-HF-3055.

1 RON BOLT



TRACING OF 1835 PLAT OF WAGER
LOTS, ORIGINAL IN DEED BOOK N° 29,
1847- 48, PAGE 140. LOCATED IN THE
JEFFERSON COUNTY COURT HOUSE IN
CHARLES TOWN, WEST VIRGINIA.

James Duncanson, the first floor was divided by means of a central partition wall into two separate shops or stores. The second floor was designed for use as dwelling and contained five rooms. The original roof was probably composed of wood shingles, the type then in general use on most houses in Harpers Ferry at that date. There was no cellar to the building.

The next major change to the structure occurred in 1845-46, when following the destruction by fire of the Masonic Hall on January 7, 1845, and old Free Church, the Masons erected their new lodge hall as the third floor to Bldg. No. 44.⁵ A slate roof was probably installed on the structure at this time. The new Lodge Hall of Charity Lodge No. 111 was dedicated on June 24, 1846.⁶ Bldg. No. 43, which stands on the east side of Bldg. No. 44,⁷ was also erected in 1844-45.

A flight of exterior wooden steps at the west end of the building were added in 1846 to grant access to the second and third floors of the house. The arrangements covering the addition of the third floor was formalized in a written grant of Philip Coons to the Masonic Lodge on November 11, 1852.⁸ Under this agreement the Masons were granted full title to the third floor of the building for use as a meeting hall. The Masons, on their part, agreed to maintain the roof and down spouting in good repair at all times.⁹ The third floor contained two rooms.

5. Virginia Free Press, January 7, 1845, p.2, c.6.

6. Ibid., May 7, 1846, p.3, c.5. Announcement of forthcoming ceremonies.

7. Snell, C. W., "Historic Building Report, Part I, for Bldg. No. 43, The McCabe-Marmion Building," dated July 9, 1958, pp.5-7.

8. Deed of B. & S., Grant. Coons to Lodge, November 11, 1852, Deed Book 33, pp.43-44. The flight of steps to the second and third floor are mentioned in this deed.

9. Ibid.

One was a large meeting room and the smaller room may have served as a coat room.

A plan of the first floor of Bldg. No. 44, furnished through the courtesy of Architect Archie W. Franzen, will be found on the next page of this report.

Philip Coons described Bldg. No. 44 in March, 1854, as follows:

I will sell, on 18th March, my LARGE STONE STOREHOUSE & DWELLING, situated on Shenandoah Street... The two store rooms on the first floor will be sold separate, and the Dwelling above consisting of five rooms also....¹⁰

The third floor, of course, was the Masonic Hall.

3. USE OF BLDG. NO. 44, 1838-1861

Bldg. No. 44 was completed by 1838 and contained two shop rooms on the first floor. By the fall of 1838, one shop was occupied by the "Flour and Grocery Store" of A. Hite and Company. The other room was then rented by the "Harpers Ferry Clothing Store" of William J. Stephens.¹¹ Both businesses advertised that they were situated "Opposite the Post Office," which was then located in House No. 4, on Lot No. 1, Block C, Shenandoah Street.¹² (See the 1835 Map, Map No. 2.)

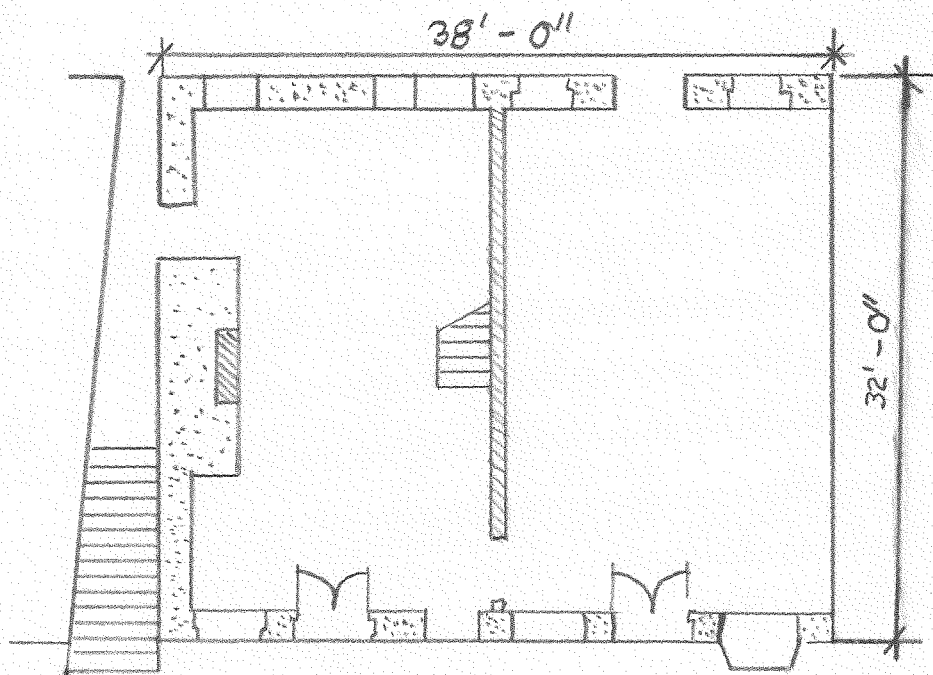
Mr. Alfred Hite remained in business at Bldg. No. 44 from 1838 to at least September 30, 1841.¹³ William Stephens remained at this location

10. Virginia Free Press, March 9, 1864, p.3, c.2.

11. Ibid., September 27, 1838, p.3, c.3; October 25, 1838, p.3, c.3.

12. Ibid., April 18, 1839, p.3, c.2; For location of Post Office, see Snell, Charles W., "History of Lots No. 1 to 11, Block C, Shenandoah Street, 1796-1865," dated January 23, 1959, pages 19-20.

13. Harpers Ferry Constitutionalist, May 1, 1839, p.4; July 23, 1840, p.3. Virginia Free Press, March 11, 1841, p.3, c.3; September 30, 1841, p.3, c.3.



SHENANDOAH ST.

FIRST FLOOR PLAN
BUILDING TAA



SCALE $\frac{3}{32}'' = 1'-0''$

14
from 1838 to October, 1842. On October 27 of that year he then moved
15
from Bldg. No. 44 to a store located on Wager Lot No. 5.

In May, 1844, one shop in Bldg. No. 44 was probably rented to
16
Righter Levering, who operated a dry goods and grocery store. The
other shop was probably occupied by the dry goods store of Solomon
17
Snook and Bushrod L. Pine. Mr. Pine died in February, 1852, at the
18
age of 35.

In April, 1848, D. Conrad announced that he was opening a new dry
goods, Groceries, Hat, Cap and Bonnet Store "On Shenandoah Street in
19
the room recently occupied by the Jews, under the Masonic Hall...."
There is no record of how long Mr. Conrad remained in business in Bldg.
No. 44.

By March, 1854, when Philip Coons offered to sell or rent Bldg. No.
20
44, the structure was then occupied by Thomas Russell, Jr. Bldg. No.
44 and Wager Lot no. 46 were purchased by William Richards on July 17,
1855, for \$1,830.

Probably from 1855 to March, 1858, one shop in Bldg. No. 44 was
occupied by William Newton and John D. Potterfield as a grocery and

14. Virginia Free Press, March 7, 1839, p.3, c.3; April 18, 1839, p.3,
c.2. Harpers Ferry Constitutionalist, June 5, 1839, p.3-in this issue
Stephens gave the location of his store as "on Shenandoah Street, oppo-
site the Post Office (which was on Lot 1, Block C, Shenandoah Street)
and adjoining Mr. Hite's flour and feed store." January 8, 1840, p.3-
Stephens gives his store location as "Next Door to the Post Office,
Shenandoah (The Post Office by that date had been moved to Bldg. No. 45).
July 23, 1840, p.3. Virginia Free Press, September 23, 1841, p.3, c.3;
May 12, 1842, p.3, c.4.

15. Ibid., October 27, 1842, p.3, c.2.

16. Ibid., May 16, 1844, p.3, c.4.

17. Deed of Trust, April 1, 1845; Pine, as surviving partner to Dennis
Snook, Deed Book 27, pp.319-320.

18. Virginia Free Press, February 8, 1848, p.3, c.1; Census of 1850,
Reel 10, V.2, p.124.

butcher store. The other room was used during the same period as a bakery. In March, 1858, the firm of Newton and Potterfield was dissolved and Mr. Newton announced that he would continue the business²¹ at the same stand.

On September 15, 1859, just before the John Brown raid, William Richards advertised: "STORE ROOM FOR RENT - Store formerly occupied by Mr. Newton. Desirable for grocery store. Apply at bread bakery, Shenandoah St."²² Thus at the time of the raid, one shop in Bldg. No. 44 was for rent and the other was being used as bakery.

In October, 1860, Mr. Richards again gave notice: "Rare chance - the only chance to rent a STORE ROOM at Harpers-Ferry is now presented. The room adjoining the Bakery on Shenandoah Street is offered for rent. It is suitable for a grocery, Shoe Store, or other purpose...Possession²³ will be given at any time."

The bakery in Bldg. No. 44 and the dwelling on the second floor of the structure was occupied in 1859 by John N. Stonebraker. The Census of 1860 contains the following data on this family:

John N. Stonebraker, 28 years old, male. Confectioner. Value of personal estate: \$500. Born in Md.
Mary C. Stonebraker, 25, female. Born in Md.
Susan Malotte, 60, female. Born in Md.
Mary B. Stonebraker, 3/12, female. Born in Va. 24

19. Virginia Free Press, April 8, 1848, p.3, c.1.
20. Ibid., March 9, 1854, p.3, c.2.
21. Ibid., March 25, 1858, p.3, c.1.
22. Ibid., September 15, 1859, p.3, c.3.
23. Ibid., October 18, 1860.
24. Census of 1860, Reel 10, V.2, p.175.

The third floor of Bldg. No. 44, was, of course, used as a Masonic Hall from 1846 to 1861.

4. HISTORICAL PLANS OF BUILDING

No historical plans of Bldg. No. 44 have been found and it is highly unlikely that any will ever be found. Modern measured drawings of the structure have not as yet been prepared.

5. HISTORICAL PRINTS AND PHOTOGRAPHS

Historical prints and photographs showing Bldg. No. 44 will be found in the following reports that have already been submitted:

1. 1857 print, photograph HF-249, in Snell, C. W., "History of Lots No. 1 to 11, Block C, Shenandoah Street, 1796-1865," dated January 23, 1959, page 110. Print shows west chimney and roof, rear side, of Bldg. No. 44.
2. 1865 photograph, HF-361, in above report, page 112. View of roof.
3. 1880 painting, HF-68, on page 113 of "History of Block C," a view of rear roof of Bldgs. No. 43 and 44.
4. 1889 photograph, HF-82, in Snell, C. W., "Historic Building Report, Part I, for Bldg. No. 43, The McCabe-Marmion Building," dated July 9, 1958, page 26. Excellent view of Shenandoah Street front of Bldg. No. 44 taken during 1889 flood.
5. 1890 photograph, HF-446, in above report, page 27, excellent view of front of Bldg. No. 44.
6. 1921 photograph, HF-346, in above report, page 28, view of front of Bldg. No. 44.
7. 1892-1896 photograph, in Snell, C. W., "Historic Building Report, Part I, for Bldg. No. 44," page 9. Excellent view of front and roof of Bldg. No. 44.

8. 1955 view, photograph NHF-526, in Snell, C. W., "Historic Building Report, Part I, for Bldg. No. 43," page 32. View of rear and slate roof on Bldg. No. 44.
9. For a photograph of a similar stone house erected by Philip Coons in 1825-26, see photograph HF-44 in Snell, C. W., "History of Lots No. 1-7, Block D, Shenandoah Street, 1796-1865," dated January 30, 1959, page 50. Also pages 41-46.
6. SUMMARY OF HISTORICAL DATA

A. Ownership of the Land, 1782-1872

Wager Lot No. 46 was owned by the Wager family from 1782 to 1836. On June 16, 1836, Philip Coons and James Duncanson purchased the lot for \$600. Coons acquired Duncanson's interest for \$100 in 1840. Coons then sold the lot and Bldg. No. 44 to William Richards for \$1,830 in 1855. Richards retained title to the property from 1855 to 1872.

B. Construction of Bldg. No. 44

Bldg. No. 44 was erected by Philip Coons in 1837-38. The structure, as built by Coons, was a two story stone house that fronted 38 feet on Shenandoah Street and was 32 feet deep. The original roof was probably composed of wood shingles. There was no cellar under the house. The first floor was divided by means of a brick partition wall into two shop or store rooms. The second floor contained five rooms and was designed for use as a dwelling.

In 1845-46 a stone third story was added to the original house by the Masonic Order of Harpers Ferry. This new addition contained a large meeting room and one smaller room. A wooden exterior staircase was built at the west end of the house in 1845-46 to give access to the

new third floor and a similar door was probably cut in the west wall at the same time to give entrance to the second floor. A slate roof was probably also installed over the new hall in 1845-46.

C. Use of Bldg. No. 44, 1836-1861

The first floor contained two shops or stores from 1838 to 1861. The second floor was used as a residence during the same period, and the third floor was used as a Masonic Hall from 1846 to 1861.

A summary of use for the shops on the first floor follows:

1. 1838-1841; Flour, Grocery and Feed Store of Alfred Hite and Company.
1838-1842; Clothing Store and Tailor Shop of William J. Stephens.
2. 1844-1848?; Dry Goods Store of Righter Levering.
1844-1848?; Dry Goods Store of Bushrod L. Pine.
3. 1848-1849?; Dry Goods Store of D. Conrad.
4. 1853?-1854; Store of Thomas Russell, Jr.
5. 1855-March, 1858; Grocery and butcher shop of William Newton and
John D. Potterfield.
1855?-March, 1852; Bakery of Stonebraker.
6. March, 1858-September, 1859; Grocery and Butcher shop of William Newton.
1858-1859; Bakery of John N. Stonebraker.
7. October, 1859, John Brown Raid; One shop vacant and for rent. Other
shop occupied as bakery for Stone-
braker. Second floor the residence
of John N. Stonebraker.
8. 1859-October, 1860; One shop rented to unknown party. Other shop
still occupied by Stonebraker as a bakery.

Charles W. Snell
Historian (Park Supervisory)
March 20, 1959