

**Rich Hill Farmhouse
Historic Structures Report
Bel Alton
Charles County, Maryland**



Prepared for:

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1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Historic Structure Report (HSR) for the Rich Hill Farm House in Charles County, Maryland was prepared by The Ottery Group, Inc. for the Charles County Department of Planning and Growth Management. Charles County is in the process of determining the appropriate treatment for rehabilitating the Rich Hill Farmhouse and is seeking to complete an initial site assessment of the historic structure. Rich Hill is listed in the National Register of Historic Places for its association with the John Wilkes Booth escape route, among other notable historic associations. The property encompasses 2.4 acres located about one-half mile northwest of a residential subdivision. The dwelling has been vacant for many years and is in need of stabilization. This HSR is intended as a preliminary step in assessing the physical and historical integrity of the structure. It is also intended to provide guidance and recommendations for ongoing efforts towards the stabilization, rehabilitation, preservation and interpretation of this historic resource.

Mr. Thomas Bodor of The Ottery Group served as the Project Manager and Quality Control manager for the project and the lead historic preservation specialist was David C. Berg. Mr. John DeKraker and Mr. Ryan Salmon from the firm of Robert Silman Associates Structural Engineers (Silman), provided structural analysis of the building. Alt Breeding Schwarz Architects, Inc. (ABS Architects) of Annapolis, MD prepared cost analyses. The Oxford Tree-Ring Laboratory conducted dendrochronological research on various timber samples throughout the building.

This HSR does not attempt to provide the final word in preservation and interpretation of Rich Hill. Rather, it is an organic document that documents the present state of research that will continue to evolve.

Documentary and field analysis of Rich Hill has resulted in an estimated construction date for the house of around 1729, however the majority of information available on the physical appearance of the house is best for the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Accordingly, this HSR recommends restoration of the house to circa 1865, coinciding with the visit made by John Wilkes Booth and David Edgar Herold in that year.

Recommendations are made for stabilization and further physical and historical studies. Preliminary recommendations are made for beginning the restoration of Rich Hill with the proviso that further research may change some aspects of the final product. The Ottery Group recommends that the County consider a museum and private event venue as the primary uses of the house. Other recommended uses could include allowing college preservation programs to use space for studies or special projects, use as a community center, art studio or art gallery.

The Ottery Group also recommends that the County consider reconstructing the lost wing as it was present during Booth's visit and would help with the interpretation of that period as well as serve to house functions that would not suit the historic house.

2 METHODOLOGY

The Rich Hill HSR is the product of a multi-disciplinary approach involving historical documentary research, comparative historic building analyses, historic photographic analysis, physical analysis before and after selective demolition of modern materials, analysis of aerial photographs including historic aerial photographs, present satellite imagery and LIDAR (Light Detection and Ranging) imagery.

Initial historical research was performed by Mr. Berg of The Ottery Group during the week of April 13, 2015. At that time, Mr. Berg researched all pertinent files containing information on Rich Hill and its former owners and occupants at both the Charles County Department of Planning and the Southern Maryland Studies Center, College of Southern Maryland Library, both in La Plata, Maryland. Additional sources included online files of the Maryland State Archives and other internet resources.

A site reconnaissance to Rich Hill was also performed during the week of April 13, 2015. At that time, Mr. Berg met with Ms. Cathy Thompson of Charles County, Mr. Dekraker of Silman and Mr. Bodor of The Ottery Group. The entire building and grounds of Rich Hill were carefully investigated, measured and photographed. Each room was examined for its architectural and structural elements. Construction methods were noted and photographed and all parties engaged in extensive discussion of the original and altered elements, structural integrity and needs for further research and physical investigations (structural and archeological). It was decided during this visit that the removal of all late twentieth century drywall would greatly facilitate physical investigations of structural members and original design. Ms. Thompson of Charles County agreed to facilitate the removal, whereupon Mr. Berg provided specifications for the removal of moldings and drywall. Removal was conducted in accordance with the guidelines found in the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Treatment of Historic Properties*.

Following the removal of drywall and trim in late July of 2015, a second site visit was performed by The Ottery Group and Silman in August of 2015. The ability to see the framing of the original building and differentiate it from later work greatly facilitated analysis as well as the ability to assess the structural integrity. Access to original framing members also made possible the taking of wood samples by Michael Worthington of the Oxford Tree-Ring Laboratory for Dendrochronological research.

Comparative analysis was performed with other period structures in the County from a variety of sources including the Historic American Buildings Survey collection, Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties forms and internet resources. This comparative study helped towards understanding the architecture and details of the house. This list includes, but was not limited to, Marshall Hall, Betty's Delight, Greenwood, Maxwell Hall, Blossom Point Farm and Rose Hill.

Archeological research was conducted by Esther Doyle Read. Although the final report is not yet available, a summary of findings is presented in Appendix D. The structural analysis of Rich Hill performed by Silman has been included in the findings of this report and the full report is presented in Appendix C. Cost analyses for stabilization and restoration alternatives are currently being prepared by ABS Architects but were not available at the time of writing.

3 HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL CONTEXT

3.1 PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION OF RICH HILL

This section will describe the present appearance and general condition of the Rich Hill Farmhouse accompanied by illustrative photographs. The complete photographic record may be found in Appendix A.

Rich Hill is a one-and-a-half story, side-gable, joined timber frame building that was constructed sometime during the eighteenth century. Located 1-1/2 miles east of Route 301 on the north side of Bel Alton - Newtown Road in Bel Alton, Charles County Maryland (Figure 1). The house has had substantial alterations dating between 1800 and 1849, again in the late nineteenth century and finally in the late twentieth century.

Exterior

The house appears to have originally been set solely on quarried sandstone block piers. There are also two concrete or perhaps parged stone piers present on each corner of the front of the building. Later brick infill now encloses nearly the entire foundation perimeter and likely adds support to the framing members. Some of this brick infill was present in the nineteenth century and some appears to be of twentieth century origin.

The principal façade of Rich Hill faces southwest. It is four bays wide at the first floor level with the main entrance at the bay nearest the south corner. The three remaining first floor bays contain windows and the second floor of this façade has five window bays. The first floor of the rear façade has four bays with a door located at the first bay in from the east corner with the remaining bays being windows. The northwest gable end has a large double chimney with a two-story, windowed pent at the center. The chimneys taper above the attic gable line making the two stacks free-standing.

The southeast gable end has two windows on each floor. There is a small interior brick chimney on the front roof slope at the southeast gable end. All windows and exterior doors are late-twentieth century replacements. The exterior siding is clapboard that was installed during renovations in the 1970s to simulate riven beveled siding. The roof, which is in stable but poor condition, is clad with asphalt shingles stylized to simulate wood shakes. Beneath the asphalt shingles lie remnants of earlier wood shakes.



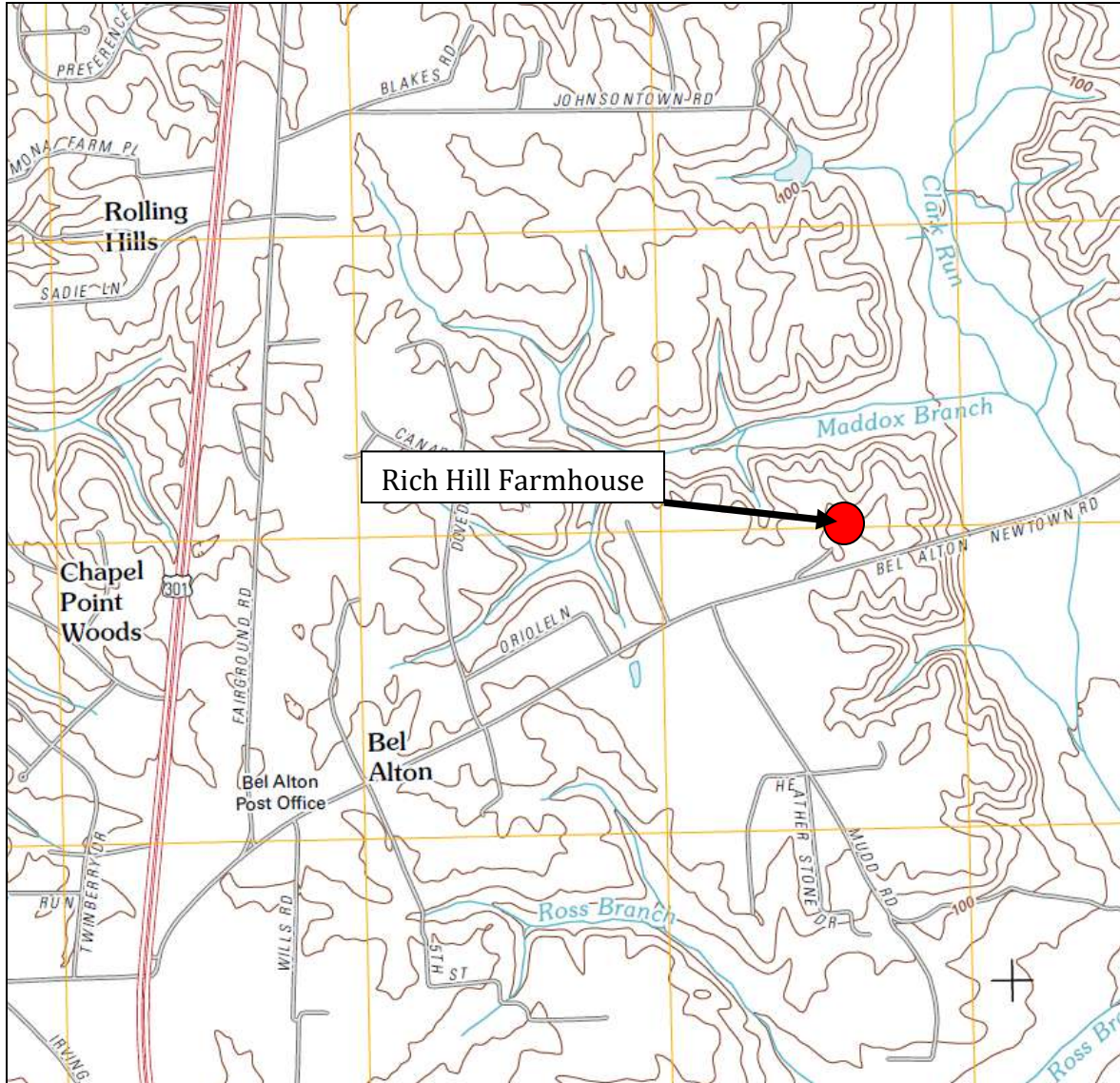
South Corner Sandstone Blocks and Brick Infill.



Southwest Façade (Front Façade).



Northwest Gable End Chimney.



Source: USGS Popes Creek, MD 7.5 Minute Quadrangle, 2011

Figure 1: Location of Rich Hill Farmhouse

Interior

First Floor

The first floor of the interior of the house is divided into four spaces. The front entrance opens into a hall that extends from the front entrance to the rear door. Plywood (oriented strand board or OSB) subflooring in this room, as well as the supporting floor joists are recent replacements by the County. About two-thirds the way from the front to rear entrance is a decorative archway that presumably covers the supporting beam for the second floor joists. The two outside corners of this hallway are rounded rather than having 90-degree corners. This appears to have been original to the house as the massive corner posts are beveled to accommodate the feature. A small interior chimney is located on the southeast wall of this hall.

The main room at the front of the house is located immediately to the left upon entering the hall. This room has a fireplace and small closet on the northwest wall within the chimney pent. Flooring in this room, as with the remainder of the first floor, is 4" tongue and groove. The fireplace mantle is similar to other late eighteenth to mid nineteenth century examples, having Classical motifs including oval paterae and reeding (see Martin and Miller 120-121; Lanier and Herman 134). Doors appear to date from the mid-to-late nineteenth century and the door frames are either late eighteenth century or early nineteenth century with a first layer of casing having beaded edges

with some openings having additional built-up architrave trim that may have been added later.

Centered on the northeast wall of the main room is an opening leading to the stair hall. A doorway on the northwest side of the stair hall leads to a small bedroom with a second fireplace having a slightly less decorative mantle than that of the large room. The door and trim in this bedroom room match those on the rest of the first floor.

Tucked beneath the dog-leg stairway is a small water closet that was constructed in the 1970s. The stairs and railing appear to be later replacements from the mid nineteenth and were probably salvaged from another location. The railing has signs of being retrofitted to the staircase and the underside of the railing has numerous holes for balusters that do not line up with any existing balusters and in some cases, the existing



First Floor Hall.



Main Room Fireplace.



Typical First Floor Trim.



Stairs and Brick Nogging.

balusters utilized the nearest available hole which did not always lead to perfectly plumb balusters. Some early riven lath and plaster remains on the wall beneath the staircase. All principal exterior and interior walls on the first floor have original eighteenth century brick nogging between framing members.

Second Floor

The dog-leg stairs lead to a second floor hall with bedrooms located immediately to the left and right (north and east corners). The attic is accessed through a 2'x2' opening in the ceiling near the center of the hall. The room on the north corner has a fireplace with brick mantel dating from the 1970s renovations. Eighteenth or early nineteenth century brickwork of the outer hearth still exists but has been covered with brickwork from the 1970s. Any original mantel that may have existed is gone. The new brick fireplace was worked into the original brick chimney. A worker known only as "Russell" dated his work within the mortar to "10/3/75". One modern vinyl clad window is located on each of the two exterior walls. A small closet of 1970s construction is located in this room. The flooring in this room appears to be eighteenth century wide board pine as is true with all flooring on the second floor with the exception of the stairs and stair landings which closely match the original flooring but are comprised of a different species of wood. Baseboard consists of a 1"x6" pine with oak quarter round at the floor and ogee molding as a cap. This is typical for the entire second floor. The baseboard appears to be modern replacement material and in some rooms the baseboard overlaps the original door trim. The door frame and trim date from the eighteenth century. The door has raised panels that extend beyond the plane of the rails and stiles. The door in this north corner room appears to have original wrought iron "H" hinges. The room at the east corner of the second floor is virtually identical to the north corner room with the exception of lacking a fireplace.



Typical Second Floor Door.

At the southwest end of the hall lies a small full bathroom that included a ca. 1975 toilet, bathtub and sink. The floor was covered with tile installed in the 1970s. Until its removal, the walls were clad with drywall, but the wall framing, including the interior wall of the bathroom appears to be chestnut with visible ghosts of removed lath. The door and door frame appear to date to the eighteenth century or at the latest, early nineteenth century. The door is identical to other original doors on this floor but it no longer has its wrought iron hinges.



Wrought Door Hinge.

The room at the south corner adjacent to the bathroom is similar to the other two rooms with original door and door trim, replacement windows and late twentieth century closet. The interior chimney in the first floor hall extends through this room to the attic, but no longer pierces the roof. This chimney has a terracotta lining and 4" opening into the room to accommodate a stovepipe. The room opposite the hall at the west corner is nearly identical to the room at the north corner, having original door trim but its entrance door is of nineteenth century construction. This room has a small closet within the pent section of the chimney with an eighteenth century door identical to the other original doors on the second floor. The additional closet opposite the small closet dates to the 1970s renovations.

The wall and ceiling junctions of each of the four bedrooms on the second floor were originally vaulted. The ceiling corners were boxed in during the 1975 renovations with drywall. This drywall and modern framing was removed in late July of 2015. Now visible are original remnants of roof rafters that were once covered with lath and plaster on the front and rear sides of the house with matching smaller dimension boards on the other sides of the bedrooms, creating an unusual vaulted ceiling that sloped down to the walls on each side. Although the smaller vaulting boards have been removed from the center wall of each room, evidence by way of nail holes, remaining forged nails, wood and ghosts of plaster and lath lines remain.

Roof and Framing

The roof is gabled, having 2-1/2" x 6" pit sawn rafters. They are spaced between 27" and 30" apart. Roof rafters are joined at the peak with bridle joints and pegs. Collar ties are joined with half dovetail joints and pegs at the midpoint of each rafter. Each rafter is set on a 2"x6" false plate which is itself set on 3-1/2" square outriggers that are attached to the original wall top plates with wooden pegs.

The present roof rafters appear to have been added during a later renovation. The lower portion of the original hewn rafters and original collar ties remain and continue to act as supports for the vaulted ceiling. At the south corner of the building, a single remaining section of a hip rafter remains in place with some connecting rafters intact. The outriggers and false plate may have once supported a flared roof configuration.

The oldest framing exhibits evidence of being axe hewn and smoothed with an adze, while later construction, such as seen with the roof rafters, have been pit sawn, dating these to the first half of the nineteenth century or earlier, as circular saws became prevalent after the mid nineteenth century. The earliest framing uses mortise joints for the studs and plate junctions, bridle joints for the roof peak and half dovetail joints for the collar ties. Earliest nails are hand forged, while nails used in the gable roof framing and other later construction are cut nails. Some of the earliest hewn framing members have the appearance of having been hewn with an axe after installation. This may have been an attempt to give visible framing members a "colonial" look during renovations during the 1970s.

Typical of the Chesapeake region, the house utilized downbraces at the exterior corners as well as less typical downbraces on interior walls. The house now has additional 2"x4" stud walls both inside and outside of the original timber framing.



West Corner Room Showing Boxed Ceiling.



Vaulted Ceiling Frame Members.



Roof Rafters and False Plate.

3.2 BRIEF HISTORY OF RICH HILL

The following historical and architectural context is adapted from several sources including: Taylor (no date), Rivoire (1987, 1975), Hurley (1991), Scott (ed. 2014), the papers of J. Richard Rivoire located at the Southern Maryland Studies Center, College of Southern Maryland Library, online files of the Maryland State Archives, and other internet resources.

Rich Hill was the colonial home of the Dr. Gustavus Brown and Reverend Richard Brown, the eldest son of Dr. Gustavus Brown. Reverend Richard Brown was also the half-brother of Dr. Gustavus Brown of Rose Hill, George Washington's friend and physician. The Browns' association with Rich Hill dates to 1714, when the elder Dr. Gustavus Brown purchased 300 acres from Philemon and Mary Hemsley (Taylor, nd; Rivoire 1987).

The elder Dr. Brown established his principal residence at Rich Hill not long after its purchase. When Dr. Brown died at Rich Hill in 1762, his will and inventory show substantial holdings including many furnishings and a large library. The inventory also lists a number of slaves and farm implements at his Nanjemoy plantation, "Middleton," and his estate at "Pomfret Quarter" (Rivoire 1987).

Having studied at the University of Edinburgh Scotland, Reverend Richard Brown, returned to Maryland shortly after his ordination into the Church of England in 1750. For a period of time he was rector of King and Queen Parish in St. Mary's County. In 1783, he married Katherine (Smoot) Hawkins. At that time, Richard Brown appears to have been making significant changes to Rich Hill. The tax assessments for 1783 describe "566 acres, a large unfinished dwelling house with 3 brick chimneys and a new kitchen without a chimney, a corn house and several other houses in perfect condition, a small mill seat, a small apple orchard and a garden" (Rivoire 1975b).

Richard Brown died in 1789. Following a series of transfers among the various heirs, the part of Rich Hill that encompassed the house was sold to Samuel Cox in 1807. Reserved from this sale was the "grave place or graveyard" where Dr. Gustavus Brown was buried. The 1797 Federal Direct Tax indicates that Cox may have resided at the house prior to his purchase, although at present it is not known whether he lived in the main house or somewhere else on the property prior to his purchase or when he first lived on the property. The tax record shows him as having 1 dwelling house and 5 outbuildings situated on 2 acres. The owner of record was recorded as Rev. Richard Brown's heirs (MSA 1797 Federal Direct Tax). At some time in the early nineteenth century, the property passed to Samuel Cox's daughter, Margaret Cox and her husband Hugh Cox. Hugh Cox served as sheriff of Charles County from 1824-1827 (MSA Maryland Manual Online). In 1849, the property passed to their son, Samuel Cox.

Samuel was fated to own Rich Hill at the time of the assassination of President Lincoln by John Wilkes Booth. Cox aided both Booth and David Herold, arranging for their safe passage to Virginia. Booth and Herold remained hidden in a pine thicket near Rich Hill from April 16 until April 21, 1865, when Thomas A. Jones, foster brother of Cox, procured a small boat for passage across the Potomac River to Virginia. In the trials that followed Booth's eventual capture in Virginia, Cox and Jones were convicted of aiding Booth in his flight and sentenced to brief imprisonments.

When Samuel Cox died in 1880, the property passed to his wife, Walter Ann Cox (sic). The Cox's had no children, but had adopted Samuel's nephew, Samuel Robertson who had lived with the couple for some time at Rich Hill before being formally adopted. In 1864, The Maryland

General Assembly passed an Act changing Samuel's name from Robertson to Samuel Cox Jr. (MSA Laws of Maryland, Chapter 65). Upon his mother's death in 1894, Samuel Cox Jr. inherited Rich Hill and owned it until his death in 1906. Rich Hill passed to his son Walter Cox, who in turn sold to Lucy Beale Neale. Lucy Neale's husband, James F. Neale sold the property to Joseph Vallario in 1971. The County acquired 2.432 acres including the farmhouse and extant outbuildings in 2014.

3.3 HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

Rich Hill is historically significant for its association with the persons and events surrounding the flight of John Wilkes Booth through Charles County, Maryland to Virginia following the assassination of Abraham Lincoln on April 14, 1865. For aiding Booth and David Herold in their escape, Samuel Cox and his foster brother, Thomas A. Jones, were sentenced to prison for seven and six weeks, respectively. Rich Hill is included in the "Booth Trail," defined by published tour guides and marked by state historical markers that locate all stops Booth made starting with his exit from Ford's Theatre and ending with the barn and house of the Garrett Farm in Virginia where he was shot and killed by Union soldiers.

Rich Hill is also significant for its architectural character. Although greatly altered in the 1970s, its original eighteenth century frame and original interior features, mostly on the second floor, make it a valuable source of information on eighteenth century southern Maryland architecture. The original floor plan was characteristic of the architecture of Charles and St. Mary's County region throughout the eighteenth century; however it is one of only two known houses with this plan that were initially built as two-story dwellings (the other being Marshall Hall). Additional important original elements that survive include the cut stone piers on which the house stands and the original doors and hardware of the second floor. Rich Hill was listed on the National Register of Historic Places on November 12, 1975.

4 CONSTRUCTION HISTORY/ANALYSIS

4.1 CONSTRUCTION DATE

The present exterior appearance of Rich Hill is largely a result of renovations undertaken during 1975-1976 by then owner, Joseph Vallario. The original timber frame is presently behind modern 2"x4" frame walls on both the exterior and most of the interior. The siding, windows, exterior doors, brick stoops to the front and rear, and roof covering are all twentieth century additions.

There is some question regarding the construction date of Rich Hill. Although it is known that Dr. Gustavus Brown lived in a house on the property sometime after 1714, there had been some thought that perhaps Rich Hill was constructed in 1783, replacing an earlier structure either at the same location or possibly nearby the original dwelling. This theory was based upon tax records which describe the house in 1783 as "a large unfinished dwelling house with 3 brick chimneys and a new kitchen without a chimney". Recent dendrochronological research performed on six samples has dated the timber framing to approximately 1729 (Appendix B).

Although property inventories for Dr. Gustavus Brown in 1762 and that of his son Rev. Richard Brown in 1789 bear some resemblance, there is no conclusive evidence regarding whether or not the house present in 1762 was the same house present in 1789. Given the dating of the

timber and the tax records from 1783, it is likely that the house dates from the late 1720s or as late as 1730, having been constructed by Dr. Gustavus Brown, but that significant alterations and additions were made in the early 1780s to accommodate the Rev. Richard Brown and his new wife. These alterations possibly included a change of the roof from hip to gable as well as updating of the interior and the construction of a kitchen, which may have been the dependency formerly attached to the southeast side.

Foundation

The original house was supported by various posts that supported the main sill plates. The National Register nomination form states that these were originally all sandstone piers, however, the visible piers include both cut stone and piers at the front corners that are either concrete or brick/stone piers parged with mortar. There are several piers beneath the house constructed of brick and mortar that are unevenly located. The central summer beam appears to be supported by sections of round logs. It is unclear what is under the logs, but it may be stone or wood members. All of the brick infill between the exterior piers is of late nineteenth or early twentieth century origin.



Sandstone Pier at Left, Brick at Center and Wood Log Support at Right.

Chimneys

The assessment in 1783 describes the house as having three brick chimneys. This may mean that the main house had three chimneys, perhaps a double chimney at the northwest end and a single chimney at the southeast end, or perhaps one double chimney at each end (each counting as one chimney) and a dependency with a chimney. The original chimney configuration is not presently known, but the style of the double chimney separated from the gable wall was in general use prior to 1800. The pent section interior closet also appears original as the door frame on the second floor has an eighteenth century frame and door.



Evidence of Chimney and Mantle on Southeast Gable Wall.

There is evidence of possible chimney remains still present at the center of the southeast gable side of the house between the present two windows on the second floor. There is a remnant of brick that does not appear to be nogging, as all other nogging present within the walls have regularly spaced boards to help support the load of the brick, whereas, this band of brick does not have any wooden supports. This central area of brick is the only brick remaining within the walls on the southeast side of the house. There is also a notch with nail remnants suggesting that something wood was attached by joinery at a stud. This could have been part of a mantle. The idea of a chimney on this end matching the one at the opposite gable corresponds to an interview of Thomas Jones (foster brother of Samuel Cox) made in 1884 by George Alfred Townsend, reporter for *Century Magazine*. In that interview, Jones described the house as "a two-story house, with handsome piazzas front and rear, and a tall, windowless roof with double chimneys at both ends; and to the right of the house, which faced west (sic) was a long one story extension, used by Cox for his bedroom." He also described the house as having green shutters and a dark red roof (Townsend 1884).

In 1987, historian J. Richard Rivoire stated that evidence of a chimney on the southeast gable end was found in 1975 but he surmised that it was a single tiered chimney as opposed to a double chimney (Rivoire 1987). The present interior chimney in the hall probably dates from the late nineteenth or early twentieth century as chimney liners did not come into common use until around 1900.

Entrances

Historian J. Richard Rivoire surmised that the house was originally of a rear stair hall configuration with the main entrance centered on the front of the house and a rear entrance also at the center within the stair hall. Mr. Rivoire was able to inspect the house during the 1975 renovations and therefore may have had access to physical information not presently available.

Recent examination of the original framing gives several strong points of evidence for the configuration of entrances. The framing at the central area of the front of the house shows no evidence of ever having had a doorway. Even where original studs are missing, there are evenly spaced mortises where framing members once existed between the central two windows in the main room. A cripple stud still remains at the top plate at this point. It appears to be at its original length, having a small bit of tenon remaining and forged nails. It is unsure what may have been at this location, given the mortise at the bottom plate, it would presumably have been a window and not a door. However, that would put a window very close to the others and would make as little sense as a door so close to the windows. Although no nogging is present between the windows today, there is some evidence of nogging having once been present at this location. Another possibility is that the mortise at the sill plate may have been a carpenter's mistake and that the mortise was not used.

The original front entrance appears to have been in the exact location of the present front entrance at the south corner of the house. The framing at this location does not look to have been altered after initial construction to accommodate the door. The corner was constructed so as to have the downbrace not interfere with the door opening and all nogging on both sides of the door frame are intact. It is known that the entrance was at the south corner of the building in 1865 from the written statement of Samuel Cox Jr.

Within the center wall of the rear (northeast side) of the house, beneath the stairway, is a door frame that appears to date to the buildings original construction. This door opening was covered up during renovations in 1975. At the site of the present rear entrance at the rear end of the hall, an



Front Wall Framing.



Mortise Joints on Front Sill Plate.



Original Rear Entrance

original timber frame downbrace was cut to accommodate the door which serves as evidence that the door may have been moved to this location during the 1970s.

Room Configuration and Details

Mr. Rivoire conjectured that the present first floor hall was originally divided into two rooms, having a wall where the present arch exists. Although this is a distinct possibility, no evidence for this is presently available. Careful inspection during future investigations that involve dismantling the arch for restoration may provide insight into this theory.

There is evidence that may indicate an original dividing wall in the main first floor room. This evidence consists of a regularly spaced toe joints on one of the ceiling joists that may be the remnants of studs joined along this joist to create a partition at this location. Again, careful inspection of beams beneath the present flooring boards may yield further evidence of this theory.

The original framing, as well as the presence of original doors and door trim on the second story indicate that the second story largely retains its original eighteenth century configuration, including the "T" shaped hall and room sizes. What is not known for certain is exactly where on the second story the stairs opened up to and whether the house originally had a dog-leg staircase. If the original rear door was centered, as existing evidence strongly suggests, it is possible that the stairs began at the rear door facing the southeast gable end and made one right turn to face the front of the house, opening to the second floor hall, but no clear evidence for this was found. The presence of a mortise joint on an exposed hewn beam at the "T" juncture of the hallway, however, is somewhat of a mystery and it is not presently known what purpose it served or if it is evidence that the hall configuration was once different. During this period, it was not uncommon in the mid-Atlantic region to leave some structural members exposed (Lanier and Herman 122).

The room that recently functioned as an indoor bathroom appears to be part of the original house configuration. The framing and trim appear to be consistent with an eighteenth century date. Contemporary single-pile houses with center hall plans often had a small unheated room over the first floor entry that period documents refer to as "the little room over the entry", so this is likely just that sort of room on a double-pile house, utilized for storage (Lanier and Herman 30).

Interior details within the house represent nearly three centuries of changes. Rivoire suggested that most of the major changes to the house occurred during its ownership by Hugh or Samuel Cox. These include: the change in the roofline, the removal of the end chimney, the insertion of a brick foundation between stone piers, the removal of riven board siding and replacement with random width beaded board siding, the addition of the interior arch within the hall, the addition of the present staircase, addition of porches to front and rear, and the addition of the one-story wing, suggesting that it was an earlier structure moved to this location in the mid nineteenth century (Rivoire 1987). The wood fireplace mantles and updated doors as well as trim may have



Joinery Evidence of Partition Wall.



Exposed Beam in Second Story Hall.

been introduced by the Cox's as well. While some of these changes undoubtedly occurred during the mid nineteenth century, it seems almost certain that there were major changes made by Rev. Richard Brown in the 1780s as well. In either case, these changes were present by 1865.

Windows

Original windows in the house were likely vertical sliding sashes of the type that began to be used in the American colonies around 1700. These early "single-hung" windows had only one moveable sash. Panes would have been much smaller than those seen in early photographs of Rich Hill, reflecting the state of the technology and style of the day. The larger paned two-over-two sashes depicted in early photographs are later replacements, possible dating to the mid-1800s. None of the windows from either the eighteenth or nineteenth century remain, although some of the nineteenth century wood jambs remain to support the 1970s replacement windows.

Southwest (Front) Façade

Although the framing and nogging of the front façade clearly point to the existing window locations being original on the first floor, the lack of symmetry and the remaining cripple stud at the center of the house create nagging questions as to how the original front appeared. Second floor windows are clearly in their original locations.

Northeast (Rear) Façade

The first story of the rear originally had a central entrance door with a window flanking each side. The present door opening near the east corner was a window opening identical to that near the north corner. Second story replacement windows retain their original locations.

Northwest Façade

Although it has been suggested that the first floor window on the gable end nearest the west corner was not an original window location, the presence of nogging below and above the window framing and the existence of the original wood frame suggests that a window was originally at this location, albeit one of a different size. The downbrace that abruptly ends at the window does not appear to have been cut to accommodate an additional window, rather it appears to have been terminated purposely within a the jack stud. As the original nogging and framing are intact on the second story, no window ever existed at this location on the second floor. Historical photographs and framing evidence indicate that there were windows on both the first and second floor at the rear of the northwest side.



West Corner Gable Window.

Southeast Façade

Little evidence remains of the framing on this side of the house. The first floor window towards the front was almost certainly a doorway in 1865 as access to the wing would have been necessary. This is in agreement with the statement of Samuel Cox Jr. in 1891. There may not have been a window above this location on the second floor as it would likely have interfered

with the wing. Photographic evidence shows that the two rear windows on this side existed in 1901 and probably existed in 1865 if not before.

Interior Doors and Trim

All of the interior doors on the first floor likely date from the early nineteenth century during its ownership by the Cox family. It is likely that the fireplace mantles date from this period as well, but may coincide with any alterations made to the chimneys either in 1783 or later. Door trim on the first floor may be original to the house or may date to the early nineteenth century, but the flooring, window casing and all baseboards are all twentieth century additions. The archway in the hall likely dates from the early nineteenth century.

The second story retains its original floor as well as doors and door trim. The one exception is the door at the west corner which dates to the nineteenth century. All baseboard trim appears to date to the twentieth century as does all window casing.

Roof/Ceilings

At various times, Mr. Rivoire surmised that the roof may have originally been of a hip or jerkinhead (clipped gable) configuration. There is no evidence of a jerkinhead roof. Evidence is present for a former hip roof at the south corner of the building, where a small piece of the original hip rafter remains.

A great deal of interest has been focused on the original configuration of the ceilings. Rivoire noted that the second story is not full height as the tops of the second story windows meet the wall top plate. The exterior gives the appearance of extra height due to the outriggers and false plates adding height to the roofline. The vaulted ceiling gave the interior full height. It is clear that the present roof rafters, which rest on a false plate that itself rests on outriggers, are pit-sawn (not circular sawn or axe-cut) and likely date to the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century renovations by either Rev. Richard Brown (1783), Samuel Cox or Hugh Cox (1820-1830). What appear to be the original hewn rafters resting on the hewn top plates were apparently cut even with collar ties during the change in the roof from hip to gable to preserve the original vaulted ceilings while making way for the updated gable roof members. The vaulted ceiling thus most likely dates to the 1730 period.

Although the present false plate and rafters are not original to the house, it appears that the outriggers are. They are hewn framing members and are fastened with wood pegs and occasionally, wrought iron nails. Rivoire conjectured that they supported framing for a flared roof edge at the eaves. At present, they are supporting the weight of the newer gabled roof rafters and suffer this weight by sagging two to three inches in places.

Historical photographs alternately show the roof being clad with standing seam metal or asphalt roll roofing in the mid twentieth century. Underneath the present asphalt shingles, remnants of earlier cedar shakes remain. Rivoire also noted that the roof had once been clad with cedar shingles.

Stairs

Physical inspection of the interior stairs clearly shows that they were not originally designed for this house. The rails have multiple unused holes and the balusters are not all evenly spaced or plumb. The framing and original lath in the hall also appear to have been altered in order to

accommodate the stairs. The wood used for the stairs and landing are clearly of a different species than the remaining original floor. The stairway appears to have been altered in the 1820-1830 period by either Samuel or Hugh Cox.

Dependency/Wing

Prior to 1975 the house had a dependency, or wing attached to its southeast gable end. During the renovations in 1975, Mr. Vallario had this wing removed. There is some question as to whether this structure was original to the house, moved to the site or perhaps constructed soon after the construction of the original house. J. Richard Rivoire was of the opinion that although the framing and construction was similar to the main house, that it was moved to the site either from during renovations in the 1820s.

The 1783 tax description seems to indicate that this wing could have served as the kitchen. Given that dendrochronological research dates the original structure to around 1730, it appears likely that the dependency was constructed as a kitchen when Rev. Richard Brown began renovations on the house in the early 1780s. It seems plausible that he constructed the addition and then changed the roof to match that of the addition at this time.

Other dependencies existed further northeast of the house that can be seen in the 1901 photograph. There appears to be a large building with a chimney that may have originally been a separate building that was later connected by infill construction with the main house (Figure 2).



Source: Oldroyd

Figure 2: Ca. 1901 Photograph of Rich Hill

Porches

Historic photographs of the house dating from the late nineteenth century through the mid twentieth century all depict a full-length one-story porch on the front of the house, and at least one photograph clearly shows that there was also a nearly identical porch on the rear façade. This is consistent with descriptions of the house that describe front and rear piazzas, as porches were called at the time.

Landscape

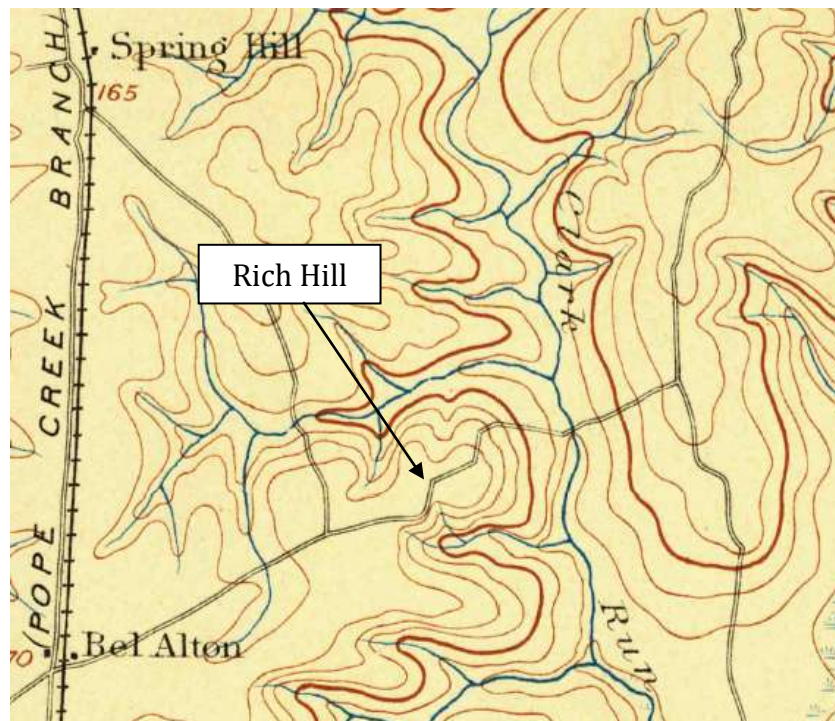
The importance of the historic landscape at Rich Hill must not be overlooked. The setting is a critical component to the historicity of the house. An historical photograph from the mid twentieth century depicts at least six outbuildings and dependencies associated with the house (see Figure 2). Additionally, historical photographs depict a well worn drive or road parallel to the southeast gable end of the house that passed several outbuildings (Figure 3). Approximately 300 feet beyond the house at the end of the field within the woods is a well worn drive that map research has shown to be the original path of Bel Alton-Newtown Road that is now abandoned. A 1902 USGS map depicts this section of abandoned road as Bel Alton - Newtown Road (Figure 4). By 1953, maps show it as a dirt road going past the house in a northeasterly direction, making several curves before ending up back on the main road (Figure 5). This shows that originally, Rich Hill was directly off the main road and not set back from the road as it is today. The barns and outbuildings were originally on the south side of the road while the house was apparently on the north side of the road. Further USGS map research shows that the sometime between 1920 and 1943, the road was straightened making the original path simply a dirt drive.

The description of the landscape provided by Century Magazine in 1884 stated that there was "an outer and inner yard, to both of which are gates. With its trellis-work and vines, fruit and shade trees" (Townsend 1884). Historical photographs, especially the Oldroyd photograph from 1901, seem to corroborate this statement. Additionally, historical documents clearly note the presence of a family graveyard somewhere on the Rich Hill estate. When Samuel Cox purchased the property in 1807, the "grave place or graveyard" where Dr. Gustavus Brown was buried was reserved from the sale (Taylor, ND).



Source: Charles County Department of Planning

Figure 3: Ca. 1950 (?) Photograph of Rich Hill



Source: USGS 1902

Figure 4: Map Showing Bel Alton - Newtown Road in 1902.



Source: USGS 1953

Figure 5: Map Showing Bel Alton - Newtown Road in 1953.

Rich Hill in 1865

Although the appearance of Rich Hill in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries remains somewhat problematic, the appearance of the house during the ownership of Samuel Cox in 1865 can be fairly well established. As previously alluded to, there are several accounts of the appearance of the house in the nineteenth century. Samuel Cox Jr., adopted son of Samuel Cox, described the house in some detail in a letter written in 1891:

'Pa's bedroom was on the first floor – and to the extreme eastern end of the house, and to approach the front door, which opens into the hall, Pa had to pass through the dining-room, where Mary and Martha slept. The stairway to the 2nd floor is approached through a door midway the hall and at the head of this stairway Mrs. Walker slept. My room is on the second floor and directly over the hall and two windows in this room are immediately over the front door looking out upon the yard and lawn in full view of the road which approached the house. When I was aroused by the knock I jumped out of bed and went down in the hall and as I approached the front door where I found Pa standing with the door partially open with Mary standing just behind him in the doorway of the dining room only some six feet away. As I approached him I heard him say to someone on the front piazza "You cannot come in, I will not admit strangers who refuse to give me their names"' (Cox 1891).

Furthermore, in 1884, George Alfred Townsend, reporter for *Century Magazine*, interviewed Thomas Jones who described the house as it was during Booth's visit. He described the house as "a two-story house, with handsome piazzas front and rear, and a tall, windowless roof with double chimneys at both ends; and to the right of the house, which faced west (sic) was a long

one story extension, used by Cox for his bedroom. The house is on a slight elevation, and has both an outer and inner yard, to both of which are gates. With its trellis-work and vines, fruit and shade trees, green shutters and dark red roofs, Cox's property, called Rich Hill, made an agreeable contrast to the somber short pines which, at no great distance, seemed to cover the plain almost as thickly as wheat straws in the grain field" (Townsend 1884).

These two descriptions confirm that at least by 1865, the hall was in its present location at the southeast end of the house and the entrance door was located at the south corner of the front façade. The archway must have been present as the staircase could be accessed by traveling from the front door to an entranceway at the head of the staircase. The letter also provides details as to the color of the roof and shutters as well as details regarding the landscape.

The descriptions also confirm that Samuel Cox Sr. was sleeping in the extension or wing of the house and that it was evidently divided into two rooms, one used for sleeping and one for a dining room where Mary and Martha slept. Therefore, there must have been a door from the extension on the southeast wall of the hall located about six feet away from the front entrance to the house.

The exterior of the house in 1865 probably looked similar to its appearance just 35 years later in 1900, having the double pent chimney on its northwest side but probably not having the present interior chimney in the hall, but rather, either a single or double exterior chimney on the southeast side. In 1865, the house had both front and rear porches, or "piazzas" as they were generally called at that time. According to Rivoire, the house had beaded random-width clapboards prior to renovation, and photographs appear to corroborate this. There is some older siding present behind the brick of the northwest chimney. Careful inspection of this may reveal it to be original siding or a later replacement.

Extant photographs show the roof of the main house as being variously seamed metal or at later times, asphalt roll roofing. However, wood shingles still remain on the sheathing boards of the roof and are likely earlier than any metal coverings. It was common for wood shingles to be treated with linseed oil or a paint made with iron oxide as a preservative during this period and this is likely why the roof was described as being dark red during Booths visit.

Brick infill between the stone piers may have been present by 1865. Windows were likely the same two-over-two wood sashes visible in photographs of the house from the early twentieth century. With a likely construction date of around 1730, it is not likely that the "Venetian" or louvered shutters that appear on early photographs were original to the house. Georgian style paneled shutters predominated until the end of the eighteenth century, when the louvered variety came into favor. It is very possible, however, that by the 1860s, the old style shutters had been replaced with the more popular louvered shutters as they could obstruct the sun while still letting in light and air. The shutters would likely have been replaced at the same time as the windows.

5 STRUCTURAL EVALUATION

The Ottery Group retained the firm of Silman to observe structural conditions of Rich Hill and make recommendations for immediate and short term stabilization of the house. Field assessments were conducted on April 14 and September 1 of 2015. The following conditions were observed:

Foundation

The foundation appeared to be generally in fair condition. Piers visible from the exterior of the house were intact. Brick infill had some loss of mortar.

Floor and Wall Framing

Visible floor framing was generally in fair condition. The first floor framing members were not observed. Termite damage and moisture decay was noted in some locations. The southeast gable wall has had heavy deterioration of original fabric. No immediate safety concern was noted. Due to extensive modifications of the walls, a well defined load path for the roof is absent. The roof framing bears on the exterior 2"x4" wall at some locations, sharing the load with original timber framing. Timber downbraces have been cut in several locations diminishing lateral strength.

Roof Framing

The new roof is supported entirely by outriggers which do not provide adequate support. They have deflected significantly and thus some bear on the new 2"x4" wall. The collar ties are too high to provide sufficient resistance to lateral thrust at the roof. No members are present that provide direct resistance to lateral thrust at the base of the rafters.

At north corner, a section of the top plate and corner post have been replaced on the second floor. The replaced top plate is not adequately tied into the adjacent section and does not provide continuity.

Exterior Masonry

The chimney is in poor condition. It has large diagonal cracks that are visible from the interior of the closets adjacent to the chimney. A large lower part of the chimney exterior has been re-pointed with incompatible mortar that is too hard for the surrounding brick. Brick on the north (rear) entrance has deteriorated and presents a tripping hazard.

Site

Site drainage is generally inadequate and soils around the house are not graded away from the foundation. This may result in elevated levels of moisture promoting decay.

Recommendations

- 1: Immediately install cable ties between the base of the rafters at the attic roof to provide lateral restraint to reduce likelihood of collapse.

- 2: Install crack monitors on the chimney.
- 3: Correct site drainage ensuring that ground slopes away from the foundation to shed water.
- 4: Perform a complete structural conditions assessment to identify all issues that may impact the stability of the structure such as termite damage.
- 5: Monitor the structure on a regular basis not less than twice per year.
- 6: Restore the structure within the next five years. Additional measures may be needed to assure stability of the structure.

6 SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTERPRETATION

The ultimate treatment of the building and grounds at Rich Hill depends upon which period or periods of significance of the property will be interpreted as well as the goals of interpretation. This decision must be based upon not only public interest, but economics and, perhaps most importantly, upon which period we have the most reliable information.

6.1.1 SIGNIFICANT INTERPRETIVE DATES

1729

Dendrochronological research dates the construction of the house to approximately 1729, plus or minus a year or two. The construction techniques and materials used corroborate this interpretation. This would mean that the owner at the time of construction of the house was Dr. Gustavus Brown. Although we have a general idea of the appearance of the house from this time, questions remain regarding the exact appearance of the roof, chimneys, room layout, entrances and both exterior and interior finishes.

1783 - 1840

At this time, Rev. Richard Brown made alterations to the house. This may have included a change of roofline and chimneys. Some changes also appear to have been made by the Cox family.

1865

The most definitive description of the house can be made for this date. We can be certain that the changes to the roofline, chimneys, interior finishes and probably windows and shutters were made before this date. The wing was present, as were the front and rear porches. We have statements regarding the general appearance of the house and know that the entrance was at the south corner at this time. This documentary evidence is backed up by early photographs that suggest that the house was little changed between 1865 and 1901. Therefore, it makes sense to focus any restoration efforts towards an interpretation of this time period. The history of the house and its changes through time should be an important secondary interpretation. Furthermore, there is a great interest in the John Wilkes Booth connection with the property.

6.1.2 CHARACTER DEFINING FEATURES

The character defining features are those features that are essential to the historicity and historic interpretation of a building. These features must be preserved during the restoration process.

The original timber framing as well as the later gable roof members, including remaining cut off portions left when the roof was altered, the hewn outriggers, cripple studs and collar ties should all be preserved. Alterations should not be made to damage or obliterate any former joinery or connection points from previous historic alterations as they represent changes to the building

over time and may prove to be important information for future researchers. It may be valuable during restoration of the house to consider leaving some framing members exposed to interpret historic construction methods. However, any exposing of the framing must take into account the problems that may arise from heat loss, moisture migration and associated impacts to walls, roof and heating costs.

Although it may have been altered, the northwest gable double chimney is a character defining feature that should be stabilized and preserved. The separation of the chimney stacks from the gable roof wall that is seen on historic photographs should be apparent upon removal of the outer modern framing. This was a fire prevention technique used in eighteenth century homes and is a character defining feature. The original inner hearth brickwork is present under the 1970s brickwork and should be exposed and preserved. The interior brick chimney within the hallway probably does not date to the 1865 period as it has a relatively modern liner that was not generally used in the 1800s. However, it should be considered significant until further research and physical investigations are completed. The remnants of the chimney within the southeast gable wall should be preserved until such time that a reconstructed chimney, if contemplated, is undertaken.

Interior finishes, including the door frames, all doors dating to the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, including the door plinths are significant and should be preserved. The original rear center entrance door frame is still intact and should be preserved. The retrofitted staircase was present in the 1860s and should be preserved.

Second story flooring is original and should be preserved. First floor flooring probably dates to the late 1800s or early 1900s and may be removed to facilitate further investigations including archeology, architectural research and stabilization prior to restoration. New flooring should match the upstairs flooring, possibly utilizing salvaged period flooring.

The landscape should be preserved pending continued archeological investigations. Barn and other outbuilding ruins that remain on the northern and eastern portions of the site should not be removed prior to historical investigations and archeological study. No grading should be done without prior approval from MHT and archeological study.

6.1.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1.3.1 Stabilization

The recommendations of Silman should be followed in order to protect the house from any further deterioration. However, if grading for site drainage is to be considered, it could have significant adverse impacts to the archeological record. Any grading may also impact the historic landscape and must be minimal and sympathetic to the historic landscape. Considering that the building has survived so well for three centuries, the Ottery Group recommends deferring site grading until such time that the complete study of the landscape and archeological record of the immediate area around the house has been fully investigated.

6.1.3.2 Documentation

Prior to undertaking any restoration, it is imperative to document its present condition of the property with measured drawings and archival photographs. The Ottery Group recommends HABS Level II documentation which would consist of interior and exterior large-format

photographs of the house as well as landscape. In addition to the traditional photographic views, the Ottery Group recommends photographic elevations of each wall on both stories to fully document the original framing. Although Level II documentation is recommended to avoid the expense of full HABS level measured drawings, the Ottery Group recommends that measured drawings be made consisting of plan views of first and second floors and the framing of each wall of the house sufficient to convey basic measurements and structural elements. Any documentation requirement that would be forwarded to the Maryland Historical Trust (MHT) should first have MHT approval.

6.1.3.3 Further Research

There are many secrets that Rich Hill has yet to reveal. Although many questions have been answered, many have also been generated. Although we have some indication as to the original design of the house, not all of these are certain and more time spent investigating the open structure as well as performing documentary and archeological research has the potential to increase our knowledge.

Rich Hill remains a valuable teaching tool. The Ottery Group recommends that the County make contact with area historic preservation programs including the graduate historic preservation programs at the University of Maryland, School of Architecture and Goucher College. Practical experience doing both research and hands-on preservation work is something that every historic preservation program needs. A partnership that enables students to gain experience in their chosen field while providing the County with dedicated assistance will benefit the County and area colleges.

Physical Research

As work is performed to stabilize and restore the house, any physical evidence that may lead to a better understanding of the house should be sought, such as evidence of paneling or other wood work on the interior framing and signs of the original staircase layout, chimney configuration and evidence of flared roof eaves.

As any restoration is undertaken, it should be done with a flexible mindset. If a new discovery is made during demolition or repairs that may aid in our knowledge of the house, we should be ready to consider whether the discovery alters the restoration plan. Working on Rich Hill is very much like performing archeology on a building. A new layer laid bare may yield new information. For example, when working on the roof, it may be possible to look for clues to whether the house indeed had a flared eave. Additionally, remaining wood roof shingles should be carefully examined for both type of wood, nails used to fasten them and clues to whether the shingles were painted red. This would help confirm the roof covering used during the 1860s. During restoration of a chimney, clues to its original configuration may be found.

Present dendrochronological research was limited to ascertaining the original construction date of the house. Further tests roof rafters would be helpful in determining the exact date of the roof alteration. Testing of the few remaining sections of siding behind the double chimney should also be done as should the log sections that support the central summer beam under the first floor.

Archeological Research

Additional archeological test units around the foundation may corroborate the dendrochronological research. Certain artifacts may be specific enough in date to aid in interpretation. Additional archeology may be useful near the chimney sites. Information is needed on the chimney configuration on the southeast side to determine whether there was a single or double exterior chimney present around the time of Booth's visit and whether this chimney was original to the structure. Archeology may be helpful in confirming the existence or lack of existence of a central front entrance as well as the dates of construction of front and rear porches.

Historic photographs show the location of several outbuildings in the distance that also appear to be in locations of tree clumps in LIDAR imagery. Future archeological research may be useful at these locations.

Documentary Research

An assessment of whether all available deeds, wills, plats, inventories, tax assessments and any other records of all owners of Rich Hill have been thoroughly researched. If there are any gaps in the record, it is possible additional information may be gleaned from new sources.

A thorough examination of all tax records may help reveal construction and alteration dates. A sudden change in value often represents the construction or major alteration of a main structure. A thorough search of any plats should also be made. Although inventories of property for Gustavus and Richard Brown have been located for the time of their deaths, inventories for the Coxes as well as the Neales may be helpful. Wills, such as the will of Lucy Neale, may be valuable as well. Original deeds rather than transcripts may have additional information such as plats included.

All historical maps should be consulted for evidence of the property. Comparative map studies should continue to be performed to determine the configuration of roads near the house during the historical period. This will benefit the interpretation of the property as well as that of the activities of Booth and Herold during their flight. In addition, a full search of aerial photographs over time should be made, as these will be beneficial to the interpretation of the landscape over time as well as benefit future archeological research.

In addition, census records may help with the interpretation of the property. For example: the 1797 Federal census records Samuel Cox as living in a house owned by the Browns. The deed to Cox records him as purchasing the property in 1807. If Cox was living at Rich Hill previous to his ownership in 1807 then this would be confirmed by census records. Personal papers of any of the owners should also be investigated for details concerning the structure and landscape over time.

The landscape is a crucial component to the interpretation of Rich Hill. The property was a working farm with considerable acreage and the Bel Alton - Newtown Road historically passed closer to the house. Outbuildings were scattered upon the landscape. There is also a family cemetery somewhere on the larger property that has yet to be discovered. Through historical research, it should be possible to ascertain the extent of the property boundaries during the period of significance and it may also be possible to discover more details regarding the landscape. Metes and bounds from deeds should be mapped out with simple mapping software.

6.1.3.4 Adaptive Re-use

The ability to utilize a historic property in a practical manner aids in its preservation by providing public interest and therefore, funding for the continued maintenance and preservation of the property. While there is interest by the County and some private groups in the continued preservation and restoration of Rich Hill, having a practical modern use for the property is essential to its upkeep. The following uses have been considered:

Museum

Utilizing Rich Hill as a historic house museum is a practical solution from the standpoint of preserving the historic fabric of the house. It may serve as a museum interpreting the colonial period as well as the Booth period. The house could display period artifacts and also interpret the changes in the house through time. From information on its historic owners, life during the different periods of significance could be presented. Although an entrance fee could be charged, it is unlikely that it would significantly defray the costs associated with restoration and maintenance.

Private Events Venue

The use of Rich Hill as a venue for private events could be considered hand in hand with museum. This could increase the revenue for the upkeep of the property as well as generate additional interest in the property. The needs inherent in such a use would have to be carefully balanced with the needs to protect the historicity of the resource.

Country Inn

Use of the property as a country inn has been suggested. However, converting the house to use as a place for food and lodging would require the installation of facilities such as restrooms, kitchen, power and light as well as likely ADA requirements that would not be consistent with interpretation of the historic periods of significance. If such a use is contemplated, it should be considered the least preservation friendly alternative and thus less desirable. If no other use is considered feasible, then use as a country inn would certainly be preferred to continued deterioration of the house. Such a use would have to be carefully planned through the cooperation of an architect and historian.

Bed and Breakfast

Use as a bed and breakfast would present similar difficulties contrary to best preservation goals of Rich Hill as with the country inn concept.

Additional Uses

Other uses for Rich Hill could include allowing college preservation programs to use space for studies or special projects, the building may serve as a community center, or it could be used as an art studio or as a gallery.

6.1.3.5 Preservation and Restoration

Once stabilization is achieved, the Ottery Group recommends that the County hire a historical architect and consulting historian to collaborate on a design, schedule and costs for the restoration of Rich Hill to the 1865 period while also providing avenues for the interpretation of earlier and later periods of the house. Details for all aspects of each room should be clearly defined prior to restoration. Details that no longer exist at Rich Hill may be ascertained by examining other local period examples. The following should be considered part of the restoration:

- The removal of the outer and inner 2"x4" walls after stabilization is complete. This must be done in conjunction with additional steps to support the roof structure. An architect/engineer and historian must work together to achieve an appropriate solution.
- The interior chimney within the hallway should be removed.
- The first story flooring should be removed and replaced with flooring similar in appearance to the second floor. This may be reproduced flooring or flooring salvaged from another donor historic structure.
- Electrical and Mechanical Systems are poor to non-existent. Electrical systems should be removed and correctly installed as part of the restoration process. The County should consider a waiver from strict code standards given the historic nature of the house and the fact that it would not be used as a permanent dwelling place. As electrical appliances would not have been present in any period that the house is restored to, it should be all but invisible after restoration.
- Septic systems, if required, should be separate from the house as a water closet would not have existed within the house during its historical time period. Any facilities should be in another building adjacent to the house, possibly disguised or combined with an outbuilding. Facilities and mechanical systems, if deemed necessary, could be housed in a reconstructed wing if it is decided to reconstruct it as part of the Booth period interpretation.
- Front and rear brick stoops are non historic and should be removed.
- Remaining plaster should be removed as it does not generally appear to be historic. The arch in the hallway should be carefully removed, each part labeled and mapped so it may be reconstructed after additional investigations of framing are conducted and building is stabilized for restoration. Trim in hallway may not be original but may date from mid 1800s, so it should be preserved along with all other trim in the house.
- The house would have been heated solely with fireplaces during its historic period. Heating and ventilation systems need to be designed by an architect with experience in historic building restoration so as not to be visible.

- The present well is shared with a neighboring house. It is outdated. The shared situation should be eliminated. Indoor plumbing would not have existed in the house during the restoration time period and therefore should not be visible if installed.
- Restoration to the 1865 period should include the reconstruction of the demolished porches as they were clearly present during Booth's visit.
- One potential interpretation would be to reconstruct the east wing of the house as it was present during the 1860s and would play a part in the interpretation of the Booth period. Part of the reconstructed wing could be used for services that would not be practical or prudent to include in the historic house such as mechanical systems, storage, an office and possibly a restroom or kitchen. The uses would depend upon the needs of the County and the ultimate uses of the property. A reasonable interpretation of the wing could be made from historic photographs. It would also be advisable to interview anyone who was familiar with the house before alterations in 1975.
- The landscape, including the fields to the north of the house and the abandoned historic road would be worth considering as additions to the historic property. The landscape is an essential ingredient to the interpretation of the property. The house was originally a working farmstead. Outbuildings were located to the east and north of the house and the fields to the north were utilized for orchards and crops. The drive that is located on the east side of the house was the original roadway during Booth's visit and during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.
- Recommendations for treatment should follow the general guidelines of the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Treatment of Historic Properties*.
- A plan for continued maintenance of the building and grounds should be prepared.

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