

Renovation and revolution: a cultural history of homes in Virginia

by

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CHAPTER 1

JAMESTOWN & HOW WE UNEARTH HISTORY



illustration 1. mud and stud house, Jamestown Settlement

“The new President and Martin, being little beloved, of weake judgment in dangers, and lesse industrie in peace, committed the managing of all things abroad to Captain Smith: who by his owne example, good words, and faire promises, set some to mow, others to binde thatch, some to build houses, others to thatch them, himselfe alwayes bearing the greatest taske for his owne share, so that in short time, he provided most of them lodgings...”

–William Simmons, 1624

An archeologist stands on the banks of James River sifting through tiny fragments of shells, sand, and pebbles. Looking for the petrified inner ears of 400 year old fish, he brushes his sun-stained hand, palm down, over the fine debris. "Here's one!" He excitedly holds up a tiny shard half the size of his fingernail. It looks exactly like all the other broken muscle shells, and I try not to raise a questioning eyebrow. "We can date these in the lab and analyze them to determine environmental factors that affected the river when the fish were alive. They tell us about the climate and ecological conditions near Jamestown when the first colonists lived here." I take the fragment, holding it on the tip of my finger, and bring it close to my face.

"I didn't even know fish had ears."

"Yes. Well. They've been quite informative." I hand the inner ear back, and leave the shade of the pop-up awning the sifters are working under.

It's hot in the sun, and the air is thick and still. The river laps gently against the protective, earthen retaining wall that runs along the bank near the dig. Reeds rustle slightly, and cicadas whirr their insistent hums. The site is a mixture of swampy forest and large expanses of shortly cropped, crispy, baked grass. At the top of a slight rise, near the tent for sifting inner ears, there is about an acre of bald earth surrounded by a palisade of rough, weather worn, gray

timbers. Inside the palisade, a few precise holes in the ground offer windows into the foundations of 17th century houses and the little that remains of Jamestown, the first permanent English settlement in America.

The past has a tendency to get buried, sinking slow and easy into the earth. Houses, even famous ones, are not immune to the ruin of time when left uncared for.ⁱ Many homes like Mount Vernon and Monticello, homes that held the founding conversations of our country, were nearly lost to nature.

Abandonment and neglect lazed about as vines climbed in the windows, roofs sagged, and shutters blew, blankly creaking, in summer storms.ⁱⁱ Before 1994 most historians and archeologists assumed that, like much of early American history, Jamestown had eroded into the river and settled amongst the bass and bluegills. Now, as if to make up for lost time, there are two Jamestowns.

One Jamestown is the archeological dig of the historic site, only a small portion of which actually slumped into the river.ⁱⁱⁱ From the dig and associated research archeologists have learned that 104 English colonists arrived in Virginia in 1607. They found themselves in what they assumed was a primeval forest, filled with hickories, tulip poplars, oaks, woodpeckers, and screech owls.^{iv}

To make a long and very complicated story short, around 1620, thirteen years after their arrival, the Jamestown settlers finally felt safe enough in this haunting new world to expand their settlement beyond the confining walls of their original 1.1 acre, tri-corner fort.^v The forest, as the settlers quickly discovered, wasn't primeval. It was carefully managed by the Algonquian speaking nations who grew pumpkins and tomatoes and all sorts of other strange fruits and vegetables together in rich ecosystems, rather than obvious mono-crop rows.^{vi} Part of the English settling into this land, stretching out and feeling comfortable enough to leave their boots by the door, involved violently forcing the Algonquian speaking nations off of the land they had occupied for 18,000 years.^{vii} Within the first few decades of their arrival, the English either killed or displaced almost the entire Algonquian speaking population.

No longer able to rely on American Indians for food, the colonists faced long stretches of starvation.^{viii} They also shivered in their makeshift houses before expanding outside of the fort. Eventually, the settlers learned that they had to bring farmers and carpenters to the colony, rather than merchants who didn't know how to survive in the wilds of Virginia.^{ix} Once carpenters arrived, the settlers were able to build more comfortable and weather-tight homes. Farmers learned to grow new foods in the warmer climate and ended the

colonists' continuous cycle of starvation. As farmers and builders learned to adapt their English traditions to the new world they became more proficient, started to take ownership of the land, and began to expand outside of the fort.

Records of the original Jamestown fort dated after the rapid expansion of farmland in the 1620's are rare. As they were abandoned in exchange for farmsteads, the largely clay buildings that housed life in the fort melted back into the heavy, Virginia soil. In 1698, the Jamestown statehouse, which served as the original capital, burned down. When the fire was put out, the legislative capital moved to nearby Williamsburg, after which Jamestown as a whole slowly faded from history. A hundred years later, the area that was once the first British toehold in the Americas was entirely buried underneath tobacco fields and pasture.

After the Revolutionary and Civil wars, the site fell into the hands of Mr. and Mrs. Edward Barney. In 1893, The Barneys donated 22.5 acres of land to the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities (now Preservation Virginia), not because they believed it was once America's first British colony, but because it held the remains of a 17th century church tower. By 1934, The National Park Service joined hands with Preserve America, and the two organizations jointly expanded the site.

The land was held for decades, and it wasn't until 1994 that Dr. William Kelso, following a hunch backed by primary source material, started excavating along the banks of the James River. The first shovel of dirt revealed artifacts that dated to the right time period, but it took two and a half years to carefully reveal enough of the palisade post holes to prove that the site was conclusively the lost Jamestown Fort. To date, the archeological teams working at what is now called Historic Jamestown have unearthed the entirety of the palisade post holes that weren't lost to erosion, two wells, fifteen buildings, over a million artifacts ranging from rusty nails, to Chinese porcelain, to human remains, and quite a few inner ears that once belonged to fish.

The Historic Jamestown findings were filed away in field reports and lab records, but they also became the source material for Jamestown Settlement, a living history museum about a mile away from the dig that is administered by the Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation. Jamestown Settlement has a traditional museum with world class exhibits and holds many of the artifacts that were uncovered at Historic Jamestown, but it is best known and most loved for its re-creation of the Jamestown Fort, exploration ships, and American Indian town, Paspahegh.^x Visitors wander through Paspahegh homes, climb aboard the ships,

explore the fort, play games, try some of the chores and crafts that made up early 17th century life, and talk to costumed interpreters. Most people find this bustling and lively site more informative and, let's face it, more fun than the excavation pits laid out in the bare sun and whispering reeds of Historic Jamestown.

When I recently visited Jamestown Settlement, I walked into the reconstructed fort just as a middle aged woman dressed as a soldier (with baggy breeches, a tunic, and breastplate) was about to give a musket firing demonstration. I followed the clamoring and yelping seven-year-old boys over to a bulwark where the woman, who had gathered a decent sized crowd, started her demonstration with a short lecture. "Now, the first thing you need to know about me is that if this were really 1607 I wouldn't be here, because there weren't any women let in the military at that time, especially women of my advanced years, and that's all I'm going to say about that!" She went on to explain the mechanics of the musket, and then prepared to shoot, "Now everyone cover your ears; this is gonna get loud!" The woman lifted the musket, shouted a series of military commands, aimed, and, with a thundering boom, filled one third of the fort with gunpowder smoke, fine and patriotic, while children jumped like fireworks. Despite the historical inaccuracy, more people

want to see guns firing than interns revealing rusty tacks with fan brushes. Jamestown Settlement and museums like it exist to bring history to life in a visceral way so that people will embody it and will hopefully invest more of themselves in the lessons we can learn from the past.

I wanted to embody the architecture of our earliest settlement to see what it had to tell me about the origins of America, so after the musket smoke cleared, I went to explore the houses in the fort. One of the fascinating things about Jamestown is that it was a fairly medieval place. Most Americans, myself included, tend to associate the beginning of our country with democracy, equality, individuality, and revolution: the concepts of the Enlightenment and Renaissance. But, even by 1607 most of the ideas of the Renaissance, especially as far as architecture goes, hadn't filtered down to the regular, common people of England, which meant those ideas weren't in America either.

Queen Elizabeth might have incorporated classical details like pediments and Roman arcades into some of her state buildings, but the average British commoner still lived in a mud house. Many homes at this point were built in what is commonly referred to as Tudor style.^{xi} The frames were generally half-timbered, meaning they had a heavy timber frame, often visible from the

outside of the home, which was filled in with wattle (woven sticks) and covered in daub (a mixture of clay, manure, straw, sand, and water). The windows, if they were covered with glass at all (many just had shutters), were often mullioned or made of a diamond pattern of glass panes.^{xii}

The first houses at Jamestown were much simpler than even the average commoners' homes in England. The architectural techniques used to build them can be traced back to Lincolnshire where John Smith and the only carpenter on the first expedition grew up. Few of the original inhabitants of the Jamestown Fort, largely being lower-tier gentlemen, had any more than rudimentary carpentry skills. Smith and his carpenter taught them the simplest and quickest construction method they were familiar with from home, which was called mud and stud or slight framing. The frame was very lightweight and served more as scaffolding than as a load bearing structure. Wattle and daub was then built up on this scaffolding, and the resulting earthen walls, rather than the scaffolding, became the load bearing structure of the house. The earliest houses at Jamestown didn't even have foundations; instead, the earth walls blended directly with the dirt floor. Wattle and daub homes have been around for thousands of years, and many of the British homes that used this building method are still standing 500 years after they were built. But, if left unattended,

they quickly fall apart, which is exactly what happened to the original Jamestown homes.^{xiii}

Most homes during the 17th century, both in England and America, had only two rooms, a bedroom, and a great hall, which, while not necessarily large, served as kitchen, dining room, parlor, family room, work space, gathering space, and often doubled as a store front. The concept of privacy was almost non-existent, as the great hall was considered a public space where friends, family, customers, and anyone with the same station and some excuse to be there could mill about. Even the bedroom was often public; when visitors came to stay everyone would sleep in the same room with multiple strangers sharing the same bed.

Most historians theorize that privacy wasn't necessary at this point in history because most people didn't have a concept of an individual self. While people must have had enough self-interest to motivate themselves to do the work necessary to survive, most commoners left their families around the age of six to serve apprenticeships, had no chance of improving their circumstances, and genuinely saw themselves as extensions of their lord and king. The concept is so foreign to us now, especially in America where we prize individuality above almost everything else, that it is hard to imagine this way of life.^{xiv} But the

common chimney, a simple architectural development that we take for granted today, that has always been in American homes, changed our entire concept of the individual.

Before chimneys were invented people heated their homes with open hearths, which were inefficient and left houses caked in smoke and soot. Chimneys allowed smoke to ventilate, and a less smoky environment made it possible to use the previously unoccupiable upper area of the house. This space was usually large due to the extremely steep roofs required to let water flow off of thatched roof coverings. With less interior smoke, it became possible to section off the large rafter space into a second story. Having lower ceilings, with a fireplace on both floors attached to a common chimney, not only helped to keep the house cleaner and much warmer, they also profoundly transformed the social structure of the home.

Suddenly it was possible for the average family to have a public space on the first floor and a more private sleeping space on the second floor. For the first time individuals could separate themselves from the public. While other symbolic and decorative aspects of Renaissance architecture took hundreds of years to filter down to the commoners, chimneys were taken up at once by all

classes. Over time, the space they provided allowed commoners to develop a private, individual sense of self—the sense of self America is founded on.^{xv}

Sharp afternoon light streamed through a tiny, glass-paned window in the recreated governor's house and contrasted with the rich, earthen walls. I heard the sound of sandals shuffling, children screaming and laughing, and blacksmiths panging soft, hot metal into nails. Another musket went off, and I stepped back from the governor's fireplace. Walking outside, into the bare heat of the exposed fort, I went to look for information about the most famous person who lived in Jamestown, our first national heroine, Pocahontas.

Pocahontas' life weaves in and out of the history of Jamestown, but it has been simplified and altered so many times that it's hard to tell what is true and what is just a good story.^{xvi} For a long time scholars assumed the Jamestown houses were log cabins smoothly stripped of their bark and chinked with plaster. But further investigation revealed the grittier, and in the end more interesting, reality of make-shift, medieval, slight-frame homes. Pocahontas' life, likewise, is more interesting when its complicated reality is unearthed.

Pocahontas' given name was Matoaka; Pocahontas is a nickname meaning beloved one or little trouble maker depending on which scholars you

consult. Her life is surrounded by colonial rather than Powhatan mythology. Most of us have been taught multiple Pocahontas myths, which come from a combination of sources ranging from our grandmothers, to 4th grade history class, to movies as varied as Disney's *Pocahontas* and Terrence Malick's *The New World*.

All these stories come together to form a narrative somewhat like this: Pocahontas saves John Smith from a skull crushing death. She valiantly throws her head over Smith's head just as a fellow member of her community, following her father's orders, moves to bash Smith's cranium with a large rock. Captain Smith falls in love with his savior who is at least eighteen, tall, supple, and dressed in a buckskin mini-skirt. She is the perfect match for the headstrong but curious and culturally aware explorer. The two live happily ever after surrounded by raccoons, leaping trout, and friendly bears.

We rearrange the myths as we learn more about Pocahontas. We're forced to let go of the friendly bears as we learn that Captain Smith couldn't possibly stay in one place forever. He was an explorer, called by duty and the icy winds of the Hudson Bay, who knew he could find a northwest passage. Knowing she would destroy him if she kept him in Virginia, Pocahontas, in her

love for Smith, wished him well as he left. The lovers tragically parted, never to meet again.

As we get older, we rearrange the myths again. Allowing for more historical accuracy, we sadly admit that John Smith was a schmuck who let a little gun powder wound get in the way of true love. He shipped off to England to be treated after a gun backfired and never returned, leaving Pocahontas to be kidnapped by the colonists, abandoned by her father, and left to marry the quiet, stable, pious, and so much less exciting John Rolfe, who before jumpstarting the Tobacco trade that would end in slavery and cancer, would get Pocahontas killed by dragging her to England to advertise the colonies to potential farmers and meet the queen, where she would catch a European disease and die before returning to her homeland, all of which happened while the British and Powhatan, both wary of each other, waged violent attacks and fought over scarce food during a time of extreme drought.

Whatever historical accuracies we let creep into our myth of Pocahontas, most of us cannot let go of the romantic affair between Pocahontas and John Smith that we learned as children. The academic side of me understands that the relationship most likely never happened, and if it did, it would have been a disturbing case of pedophilia. Pocahontas was ten years old when she met John

Smith. When she “saved” Smith from his skull crushing death, she was most likely acting out a carefully constructed role in a ritual that allowed Smith to be recognized by the Powhatan. Later, she acted as an emissary between her people and the English settlers by bringing food sent by her father to the Jamestown fort in the middle of winter. The time she came closest to saving the settlers is when she warned them of an upcoming raid that nearby tribes were planning.^{xvii} The tragic marriage to the boring John Rolfe, and everything that followed, is true though. I understand all of this as a scholar, but the emotional side of me still believes in the romance between Smith and Pocahontas. If absolutely nothing else, they were odd couple best friends who were both secretly and platonically in love with each other; that’s as far as I’m willing to let the story unravel.

Pocahontas and John Smith represent the story I want our country to be founded on: a melding of cultures rather than genocide, the rise of underdog rebel John Smith, who was shackled for much of his voyage from England to Virginia for mutinous behavior, but ends up favored by the knowledgeable and wise Powhatan and the beautiful “princess,” the princess who (as unfeminist as it is) becomes part of Smith’s reward for exploration and wilderness know-how, while he becomes her reward for having a curious, adventurous spirit.^{xviii} They complete each other in a life of rugged romance. Parts of the myth even allow

for a little Puritan punishment in Smith's gunpowder wound—romantic love and pagan associations finally punished by hellish fire and miserable separation.^{xix} It's so American.^{xx} Most of us can't let it go even though we know it's not true.

I love this story so much I'm willing to give up history to stay ensconced in its fur-lined dream. But by waking up from this dream, questioning the history we are presented with, and bringing the foundations of our past back out of the dirt, I have the opportunity to redefine what it means to be American. Maybe our culture was started by marauding, violent, inept merchants living in make-shift mud and stud houses, but if we look honestly at our past and acknowledge our faults, we can take what we wish the story could have been and apply those regrets and dreams to form who we want to be in the future.

This story is why both Jamestown's are important. Both museums are incomplete without each other. The recreated fort at Jamestown Settlement couldn't exist with any level of accuracy without the work being done at Historic Jamestown. On the other hand, the data from Historic Jamestown can't come to life as easily without the storytelling involved at Jamestown Settlement. In the end, what most people know about history isn't the raw data, but the

stories that come out of it. It's important to understand the complexity of the stories that make up our history, to make sure we're hearing the most complete stories possible, to use our individuality to question them, and to figure out what our commonly held misinterpretations say about us as a culture.

Many history museums and most house museums leave out a lot of the harsh realities of history to make the story family friendly and to keep visitors' experiences sanitary (it is hard for us to imagine the reality of even the smell, the complete stench, that would have overpowered the Jamestown Fort as it filled with smoke, cooking food, molten metal, trash, urine, feces, rotting fish, and dead bodies). But in hearing only a simplified story, which is what most of us take into our adult understanding of our history, we lose the texture of our past and can't learn from the creative process of our successes or the real tragedy of our mistakes. In her poem, "Perhaps the World Ends Here," Joy Harjo wrote, "The world begins at the kitchen table...Wars have begun and ended at this table. It is a place to hide in the shadow of terror. A place to celebrate the terrible victory..."^{xxi} So it goes with houses. They have the potential, with the right interpretation, and a few inner fish ears thrown in for good measure, to tell us about the tragedy of the past and the hope we can have for the future.

CHAPTER 2

PASPAHEGH & THE ARCHITECTURE OF POWER



illustration 2. Paspahugh Yeehawkawn, Jamestown Settlement

"Before a fire upon a seat like a bedstead, Powhatan sat covered with a great robe, made of Rarowcun skinnnes, and all the tayles hanging by. On either hand did sit a young wench of 16 or 18 yeares, and along each side of the house, two rows of men, and behind them as many women, with all their heads and shoulders painted red; many of their heads bedecked with the down of white birds; but everyone with something: and a great chayne of white beads about their necks. At his [John Smith's] entrance before the King, all the people gave a great shout."^{xxii}

-William Simmons, 1624

Six miles upstream from Jamestown Settlement and Historic Jamestown, where the Chickahominy River runs through silt and reeds into the James, there is an exclusive community called The Governor's Land.^{xxiii} It's the kind of community that boasts twenty-year-old, artisan crafted, neo-colonial mansions, ranging in price from four hundred thousand to three million dollars, with easy access to a private country club and championship golf course. When deciding if The Governor's Land is right for you the in-house real estate agent recommends planning a "Discovery Visit," which doesn't involve wading through mussel filled brackish water while wielding a machete, but does include a free round of golf for two (golf cart included), dinner overlooking the James River, and accommodations at Wedmore Place, a nearby winery.^{xxiv}

The community appeals to nature lovers who would like to rough it on the colonial frontier as long as there is enough smoked salmon and wine. Like minded potential members are lured in by the community's website, which describes river views, marshes, hardwood forests, and close to 15,000 acres of land preserved for wildlife, all with the expected bonus of anything unnatural, and therefore unsightly, like power lines, being buried or otherwise hidden from view. The Governor's Land sends a somewhat mixed message of opulence and rugged preservation. It suggests a lifestyle filled with 21st century comforts,

but emulates our 18th century founding fathers who espoused the idea of the “gentleman farmer.”^{xxv}

Like those of 17th century gentleman farmers, the expansive lifestyles of the residents of The Governor’s land were built over the remains of American Indian communities.^{xxvi} Because Virginia’s history is steeped so densely in our country’s foundations, it is common to have to complete an archeological survey before starting a major construction project. Archeologists working for The College of William and Mary identified the site that would become The Governor’s Land as having potential historical significance in 1983, so when construction was about to start in the early 90’s, The James River Institute for Archeology (JRIA) was called in to excavate before the state could grant approval for the project. The survey revealed 48 complete and partial buildings, over 90,000 artifacts, and 25 human burials. These artifacts turned out to be the long lost and largely forgotten town of Paspahegh—home of the first American Indians to encounter the British.^{xxvii} Despite the findings construction continued. After the excavation was complete, and all the artifacts were catalogued, archeologists reburied Paspahegh, landscapers rolled out the sod, and “Discovery Visits” began. Paspahegh currently lies underneath the fairway and green of the 18th hole of the golf course.

I wanted to see the next best thing to the actual town of Paspahugh, so I wandered along a winding path through the woods of Jamestown Settlement to the partially reconstructed Paspahugh town, which was built using data from The Governor's Land excavation. Tour guides dressed in faux buckskins taught ten-year-olds how to shoot arrows in the dappled light of Tulip Poplars, and I inspected the yeehawkawn or wigwams.^{xxviii} Paspahugh yeehawkawn were oval shaped and on average about fifteen feet long by about ten feet wide. They were made by burying green saplings part way in the ground and then bending and lashing them together to create a series of incrementally sized, U-shaped hoops. The hoops were connected together with horizontal saplings, which formed a domed framework. Tightly woven, overlapping reed mats covered the frame and created a waterproof dwelling. When finished, the houses looked somewhat like cupped palms facing the earth.^{xxix}

In the summer, during the day, the mats could be rolled up or removed to invite warm breeze. They were always lowered at night, so the smoke from a small fire would ward off malaria plagued mosquitoes. In the winter, the mats could be doubled up and stuffed with insulating layers of leaves and fur to create a cozy refuge. The English admired the functionality of the houses and

were impressed that they were warmer in the winter, cooler in the summer, and more weather resistant all year round than waddle and daub structures. They never adopted Paspahegh construction methods though. Sometimes our attachment to tradition outweighs practicality.^{xxx}

As I walked inside one of the yeehawkawn, the light filtered through the reed mats and softened further to a warm glow. At one end of the house there was a storage area made out of built-in shelves, which were constructed out of a framework of branches lashed together and covered in folded mats. The storage area was filled with baskets containing corn, nuts, and other necessities. At the other end of the house there was a loft that held extra mats and larger tools. Hatchets, fishing nets, baskets full of arrows, and raccoon, fox, and deer pelts were tied to the walls. Built-in benches covered in furs lined the house and provided a raised sleeping platform that doubled as a place to sit.

Unlike the English settlers, who always placed their fires against a wall, the Paspahegh put the hearth in the center of their homes where the ceiling was highest. Directly above the hearth, they installed a hatch that could be raised and lowered to adjust the amount of heat and smoke that stayed in the house. The house was both functional and comfortable, and as I looked at the artifacts attached to the walls, children enjoying the cool, shady retreat flopped

themselves on the benches. It was easy to imagine Paspahagh children doing the same.

One of the model houses stood out from the others. It was about twice as long and a good five feet wider than any other house in the Paspahagh town. When I went inside, rather than walking directly into a single room, I found myself in a half-circle shaped foyer where guards might have greeted me if the Paspahagh actually lived there. I followed a winding, interior path partitioned from the rest of the house by structures resembling cubicle walls made out of saplings and reed mats. At the end of the path, I passed a bear pelt. Turning away from the bear, I found myself in a small room with a large, raised platform layered in furs and situated behind a fire pit. At night the fire would have sent sparks flying up to light the bear's teeth in shocking glints. Whoever sat on the platform would have been shielded in flickering shadows and smoke. This house obviously conveyed power. Despite being designed centuries ago and bearing no resemblance to palaces or castles from other parts of the world, everyone who walked into the house while I was there said something along the lines of, "Oooh, look, Max, see that bear skin! All the other houses had fox furs.

Look at that bed. This is the chief's house. Climb up there; I'll take your picture where Powhatan sat. Smile!"

From what evidence archeologists (both non-native and American Indian) have been able to muster up, everyone visiting this house is probably right. Powhatan was the mamanatowick, or paramount chief, of the area and led about 25,000 people who were organized into over 30 Algonquian speaking nations, including the Paspahegh. He lived in a bigger home in nearby Werowocomoco. This house was most likely the home of Wowinchopunck, the werowance, or leader of the Paspahegh.^{xxx}

It's interesting that without any other cues we can gauge the status of people, across time and culture, based on the size, layout, and quality of materials of their houses. Around the world, a big house has long been a symbol of status. Most people tend to strive for that extravagance.^{xxx} Like couture clothes, epicurean meals, and designer water, big houses show that their owners have achieved a high level of certainty in obtaining their basic needs and now have the freedom to pursue other interests. When I see a big house, I don't want the house itself, but I do want the freedom that I imagine their owners have. I want to get up in the morning, decide I want to go to Barcelona to see Picasso

paintings, eat tapas, and hike in the Pyrenees, and just go. Who needs work?

Who needs someone telling you what to do?

Of course, the power and peace of mind that come along with a big house are just as mythical as Pocahontas' life. As Wowinchopunck could testify, status is messy, complicated, and can disappear just as quickly as it materializes. The easiest way to gain the personal freedom most of us desire probably isn't to get a stressful, high-status job and live in a big house. The simpler we make our lives the more freedom we have. A smaller house, for example, means a smaller mortgage, smaller utility bill, smaller insurance bill, fewer unnecessary possessions, less time spent cleaning, which all results in more resources and time to spend on the things we are passionate about. Maybe it is the medicine men, living in their simpler houses, who have it figured out more than werowances, kings, and gentleman farmers of The Governor's Land.

Like the Pocahontas myth though, many people find it hard to give up the idea of the power and prestige associated with a large, extravagant house. But it might be possible to rethink what we mean by power and how we display our status with our houses. In America most of us have a tendency to hoard resources, whether money, food, or space. Our big houses show that we have

the power to own space, either to keep people out of our lives with expansive privacy, or to keep people in our lives with extravagant parties and guest rooms.

Wowinchopunk's and Powhatan's houses both conveyed power, but a different conception of power than McMansions. They saw power not as accumulated wealth, which essentially buys freedom, but as the ability to provide for others. Members of the various nations paid tribute to their leaders in exchange for protection and resources. The collected tribute was then redistributed according to need, rather than status. It was considered antisocial and amoral to hoard resources when someone else needed them.

Wowinchopunk's large home, unlike those in the Governor's Land, demonstrated his capability and intention to house and care for more people than the average person. That definition of power isn't perfect, and it isn't built into Wowinchopunk's house; it is built into the way people used his house.^{xxxiii}

Our houses, no matter what size they are, provide us with the space to rethink how we define and use status. I wonder what other conceptions of power our houses could display if we change the way we act in them.

CHAPTER 3

MOUNT VERNON & AMERICAN INNOVATION



illustration 3. Mount Vernon, West Front

“On the side opposite the front is an immense open portico supported by eight pillars. It is from there that one looks out on perhaps the most beautiful view in the world. One sees there the waters of the Patowmak rolling majestically over a distance of 4-5 miles. Boats which go to and fro make a picture of unceasing motion...It is there that in the afternoon and evening the General, his family, and guests go to sit and enjoy the fine weather and the beautiful view. I enjoyed it more than anyone.”

–Julian Ursyn Niemcewicz, 1798

I want to believe George Washington was a punk. I like to think of him kicking back in his big, bright-teal dining room, slouching into an upholstered side chair, and resting his boots on the embroidery covered mahogany table. The delicately encrusted rhinestone buckles on his shoes shine in the light of the fireplace while the moon streams through the large Palladian window. He suddenly slams his feet to the ground, pounds his fist on the table, rails on British officials, and writes a revolutionary pamphlet for Patrick Henry to copy and throw out on the streets for the masses. Joan Jett's "Bad Reputation" plays in the background. But Washington rarely let his rebellious inclinations slip into the public arena. If he ever did any fist pounding or boot stomping it was in the privacy of his study.

Instead of tattooing his anger and resentment on his sleeve, Washington devoted much of his life to perfecting his appearance in order to gain the prestige and fame he would use to stab the British in the back. Persistent and determined, Washington rose from the second-tier of Virginia plantation society, led America through the Revolutionary War, and became our first president. In history books he loses all his edge and is portrayed as a near saint-like figure. He is known for his attention to civility, duty, and virtue as illustrated in the numerous folk tales that surround his childhood.

The most famous of these legends involves six-year-old Washington obtaining a hatchet and chopping down his father's cherry tree. When his father finds the dead tree and angrily asks, "Who chopped down my favorite tree?!" young Washington comes running and replies, "I cannot tell a lie! It was I, father! It was I!" Washington's father is so proud of his son for telling the truth that he instantly forgives him.^{xxxiv} While most historians agree that this story is a folktale, it illustrates the penultimate goodness that surrounds Washington. But as the story demonstrates, Washington still chopped down the tree despite telling the truth about it. The fact that this story reflects Washington's innocence, rather than his impulsive violence, shows his innate goodness is at least as cultivated as it is natural. Eventually, he would build both his artificial reputation and his rebellion into his home at Mount Vernon.

Washington was born on a modest plantation in 1732.^{xxxv} When he was eleven years old his father died. As the oldest son of his current marriage, Washington's father left him the farm near Fredericksburg where the family was then living. The undeveloped property that would become Mount Vernon, which once belonged to his first wife, went to Washington's older step-brother, Lawrence. Washington was an adventurous youth and wanted to join the British

army at a young age, but that was not to be his fate. After his father's death and Lawrence's move north to Mount Vernon, eleven-year-old Washington was responsible for running his newly inherited plantation.

Never enchanted with Fredericksburg, Washington spent as much time as possible with Lawrence at Mount Vernon. While there, he polished his civility and social grace by attending elegant parties filled with Virginian dignitaries. Lawrence continuously refused to give young Washington approval to join the military, but found him an apprenticeship as a surveyor. In a time when land meant power surveying was a career equal to a doctor or lawyer, and Washington did well for himself. While surveying in the mountains of western Virginia, in addition to gaining financial security, he finally got a taste of the adventurous life he desired.

In 1752 Lawrence died, and Washington became the residuary heir of Mount Vernon. Finally free from Lawrence's watchful eye, Washington started the military career he had always wanted by volunteering to explore the Ohio River Valley in 1753. While there, he was tasked with determining the strength of the French settlement that had started to develop a presence in the area. After returning to Virginia and sharing his findings, Washington was tasked by the British military to drive the French out of the valley. His first attempt ended in

failure and retreat, but his second attempt was victorious. This victory, along with a book that Washington wrote and circulated about his adventures exploring the Ohio River Valley, led to the spread of his courageous reputation. As a reward for his outstanding character and his impressive ousting of the French, Washington was put in charge of all of the Virginia military forces. However, because he was born in the colonies rather than England, Washington could not get a commission in the British Military. This was the start of his life long grudge against the British government.

Meanwhile, Washington started to remodel Mount Vernon.^{xxxvi} When he inherited the property, the house was a respectable clapboard affair with four rooms and a hall on the first floor, four rooms above, and a perfectly symmetrical exterior. Most people during Washington's time lived in two room houses, but he wanted to compete with the rising Virginia Gentry. In order to create a status symbol for himself that would stamp his arrival in the Virginia social sphere, Washington doubled the size of his home by expanding the length on both ends. Washington didn't actually belong to the Virginia Gentry though and didn't have the money to pay for these improvements; luckily a woman could solve this problem for him. Washington needed a wife to serve as an

excuse for building such a big house as well as to manage the house once it was built. A woman with the right dowry could also pay for the additions. Martha Custis, an elite widow with two children and a large inheritance, fit the bill. Washington and Martha were married in 1759, and the couple settled into companionate plantation life at Mount Vernon.

The rest of Washington's life is well known. Happy to have a chance to fight against the British who had made him feel like a second class citizen, Washington served as Commander in Chief in the Continental Army during the Revolutionary War. In an adventure greater than any he had dreamed of as a child, Washington led the country to independence. After the war Washington was unanimously elected President and served two terms in the highest status position he could obtain. Then, having achieved his military, political, and social goals, Washington surprised everyone by relinquishing the power of his high status positions. Having obtained everything that he wanted, the best thing Washington could do to further his image was to surround himself in a mystique of humility. He, unlike European kings, would give up his position as ruler, and retire to the quiet life of a country farmer. As Washington probably expected, the people loved him even more when he gave up his public

responsibilities. Appearing nonchalant and humble in the face of great power became the hallmark quality of aristocratic gentlemen in the early republic.

Washington crafted his image so well that it's hard to find his flaws. He's almost too good. All that success and propriety gets tedious after awhile. Washington's image is so pure that even though he led the Revolutionary War it's hard to see him as a rebel. One of the few places where we *can* find evidence of his rebellious nature is in his house, which he carefully designed as a symbol of his philosophies and alliances as well as his prestige. Many people call Mount Vernon, "America's Shrine" as if it housed a saint. But if you look at his home from the right angle you can see more of Washington's true character. Mount Vernon, it turns out, is less of a temple and more of a powdered wig of a mullet: business up front, party in the back.

When most historians talk about Mount Vernon they mention its "two fronts." Approaching from the west by foot, horseback, or carriage, visitors navigated one of the two identical serpentine paths that wound around a sculptural, neatly trimmed, expansive bowling green. They saw peaks of the house from a distance, then emerged from the cover of trees to find themselves a large, open space by the front door. This entry boasts a large pediment over the

entryway, a faux stone façade made out of carved clapboards, a pattern of doors and windows that was nearly symmetrical, and arched colonnades connecting the outbuildings to the main house.^{xxxvii}

Approaching from the east by boat, an equally important mode of transportation during Washington's time, visitors would have seen a much more naturally landscaped yard, with loose, small groves of trees and a grassy slope, lined in forest, which led down to the river. More than the yard, visitors approaching from the river would have focused on the full-length, two story piazza (or porch), held up by simple, delicate, square columns that housed the main door on the eastern front of the house. At the time it was the only structure of its kind.

This combination of elements would have seemed extremely eclectic during the mid-18th century.^{xxxviii} During Washington's time the design of a house conveyed just as much about a person as his clothes. Perfect symmetry, symbolizing order, logic, and rationality was expected, rather than asymmetry, which gave off a dusty taste of superstition, mysticism, and decorative pretension. But Washington, a very logical and rational person who was concerned about his image, ignored these expectations.^{xxxix}

In designing his house Washington had an unusually difficult task. He wanted to express a clearly American identity while living up to visiting European dignitaries' fashionable expectations. So rather than giving into the tradition of complete symmetry, Washington designed a house that had half of its roots in contemporary English styles and half in pure American invention. In this way the house fulfilled his symbolic, political aspirations and perfectly encapsulated the warring identities that Washington struggled with throughout his life. Luckily for Washington and his fellow Virginia planters, balancing these dueling architectural identities was made easier because of the architectural style in vogue in England at the time—Neo-Palladianism.

Neo-Palladianism has its roots in the writings of Vitruvius, a first century BC Roman engineer and architect, who wrote *The Ten Books on Architecture*.^{x1} These books are the most complete works on architecture surviving from the classical era. Vitruvius believed that humans should use natural materials in their buildings and base their designs on the order and geometry found in nature. Doing so would create spiritual and social order. He is also well known for promoting three qualities that architecture must have: firmness, utility, and delight. In short, buildings should be solid and withstand the forces of nature;

they should have a function or purpose; and they should be beautiful and provide the soul with sustenance. Vitruvius' writings were lost during the Middle Ages. When found again they helped to spark the Renaissance.

When Vitruvius' writings were rediscovered in the mid-1500s they became one of the main inspirations for Italian architect, Andrea Palladio, who wrote his own treatise called *The Four Books of Architecture*. With the relatively recent invention of the printing press, books became much easier to reproduce, and Palladio's architectural ideas spread quickly. His style, as depicted in *The Four Books of Architecture*, mixed new innovations, like the dome, with elements such as columns and pediments that were found in ancient Roman temples. Interest in classicism spread, and people who could afford it started taking "The Grand Tour" to see Venice, Florence, Rome, and Naples in order to study the classical world, including its architecture. When travelers returned home they incorporated classical details such as pediments, arches, colonnades, pilasters, and columns into their houses. This mixture of elements became part of the dominant architectural style of the Renaissance.

Inigo Jones brought Palladianism to England in the early sixteen hundreds, and it quickly became a style used by royalty. A hundred years later in the early 1700's, the trend reemerged with the enthusiasm of Richard Boyle,

the third Lord Burlington, who rallied William Kent, Colen Campbell, and Henry Flitcroft to design buildings based on Palladio's drawings. Lord Burlington emphasized avoiding too much decoration and encouraged a more solid looking and stripped down version of Neo-Classical, Renaissance architecture. He focused on finding elegance in pure form rather than ornate, rococo design. His style was called Neo-Palladianism and became the dominant inspiration for the 18th century British country house.

The logic and philosophy behind Neo-Palladianism encapsulated the political climate in England at the time, which saw a split between the Wigs and the Torries. The Torries, with their fancy, Rococo architecture, supported the royal court and the Catholic Church, while the wigs supported the Protestants and accused the royal court and church of corruption. The Wigs, seeking to isolate themselves from the extravagance of the court, built houses in the country and adopted the streamlined, no-frills, solidity of Neo-Palladianism.

Back in the colonies, especially in Virginia, plantation owners like Washington were just starting to find enough financial stability to build houses that represented the success they had found.^{xli} Before this period most people were still moving too often to waste money on building well appointed houses.

Virginians continued to follow John Smith's advice to build "meane homes" and to use their money to buy up as much land as possible since farming was the only sure way to feed yourself, and exporting cash crops was the most likely way to raise your fortune. As the wealthy settled into more permanent plantations they wanted to build homes that would show they were equal British citizens, not backwater criminals, so they emulated British designs.

Neo-Palladianism was particularly potent for colonists as its neo-classical details symbolized the enlightenment ideals that were quickly becoming the foundation for colonial political and social thought. Its emphasis on living a self-reliant and independent life in the country, far from the agitations of court life in the city, also appealed to colonists. At the same time, while simple in comparison to Rococo, the rich country estates of England still symbolized luxury and a new, humbler form of status that appealed to the democratic spirit. At the same time as they were claiming equal status to Europeans, many colonists increasingly wanted to obtain political freedom from Britain. Neo-Palladian architecture allowed the colonists to ally with the sophistication of British nobility and, at the very same time, to separate themselves politically from the British Court. It was symbolically perfect, and therefore, despite being

quintessentially British, streamlined Neo-Classicism became a prototypical American architectural style.

Books, like architecture, were status symbols, and Washington ordered many architectural pattern books from Europe, which gave him design ideas for his house. When redesigning Mount Vernon, it made sense for Washington to incorporate Neo-Classical details like pediments and arcades into his home. But, he didn't want to comply entirely with English taste, so on the eastern front of his house he created a grand American statement, his piazza. The piazza makes a whimsical, rather than stolid, Palladian impression. It is a two-story porch created by a flat extension of the roof held up by eight thin, square columns. It runs the full length of the house and holds twenty four green rocking chairs made by artisans in Philadelphia. With public spaces on the first floor and increasingly private spaces on the second and third floors, the house was fairly regimented. But the piazza, where Washington spent much of his time, created an entirely democratic space with chairs that are all exactly the same, on the same level, providing equally good views of the river for visitors of all ranks.

The piazza also merges the formal interior with the relaxed, natural surroundings on the Eastern side of the house. Washington's choice to

emphasize this view, rather than the formal western yard, showed his preference for casual, American wilderness over sculpted, English landscaping. On a practical level, the Piazza allowed people to escape the oppressive Virginia heat by sitting in the shade and enjoying the gentle breeze that flowed up from the river. Most people who visit Mount Vernon, even today, are enthralled with the western front of the house, the large dining room, and the unexpected, bright verdigris green breakfast room. But after a few days, they remember, more than anything else, the comfort of sitting on the piazza, the ease of the shady, rocking breeze, and the meditative experience that comes from watching hawks and seagulls catching the wind currents over the river.

When asked which side is the front of the house, tour guides at Mount Vernon will smile, expecting the question like night expects day, and say, "Both." People approached by boat from the river about as often as they approached by carriage or horseback from the road. But in reality, most guests would have approached Mount Vernon, as visitors do today, from the west. People arriving by boat would have caught a fleeting glimpse of the piazza before sailing onto a small harbor where the view of the house is blocked by forest. Guests would have then taken a carriage or walked up a side road

through the forest and approached the house from the Neo-Classical, western front like everyone else. But one more element, the cupola, would have thrown visitors off as they approached the more conventional side of the house.

Washington topped his home with a large, central cupola with glass windows that provide a 360 degree view of the surrounding area. The windows open, which ingeniously creates a cross breeze from the bottom to the top of the house that draws all of the hot air up and out of the home. Several public buildings in America during Washington's time featured cupolas, but very few homes included them. Washington, who was well known for sampling architectural elements and supplementing the ideas he found in books with mixtures of different features that he saw in homes throughout the colonies, could have seen one of the few other houses with a cupola. But the cupola that Washington would have been, by far, the most familiar with was the one that topped the governor's mansion in Williamsburg. This public building was the heart of British power in the colonies. By stealing the symbolic crown of the British colonial house of power, Washington essentially claimed the right for citizens, rather than the monarchy, to govern the colonies. Washington's architectural choices at Mount Vernon were one of his few public statements that satisfyingly lift the gauze of his saint-like image and reveal his inner rebel.

CHAPTER 4

SLAVE QUARTERS & SIGNS OF RESISTANCE



illustration 4. Single Family Slave Cabin, Mount Vernon

"Befo' the wah we never had no good times. They took good care of us, though. As pa'taculah with slave as with the stock - that was their money, you know...We had very bad eatin'. Bread, meat, water. And they fed it to us in a trough, jes' like the hogs. And ah went in may shirt till I was 16, nevah had no clothes. And the flo' in ouah cabin was dirt, and at night we'd jes' take a blanket and lay down on the flo'. The dog was supe'ior to us; they would take him in the house."

—Richard Toler circa 1930

I stood in James Monroe's small dark green study, pressed together with nineteen strangers, and absent-mindedly stretched the elastic lanyard that held my guide badge around my neck.^{xlii} It was a big group for an 8x8 room, and I tried to make sure no one leaned against the 18th century secretary that stood in the corner. A five-year-old boy was about to sit in one of the horse hair covered chairs, but I gave him the evil eye, and he slouched like a sly cat to the carpet. Someone ran their fingers along the text of a reproduction newspaper that was sitting on a side table, and I cringed but reminded myself that the curator had set a fake paper there because so many people had done the same in the past.

I was on edge. The air-conditioning was broken, and we weren't allowed to open the windows, so it was hot and muggy especially with so many people in such a tiny room. People were fanning themselves with their brochures and impatiently checking their watches while shuffling back and forth in their fat, white sneakers. Sweat dripped down my stomach, and I considered skipping the portion of the tour that covered Monroe's public policy. Only retired military visitors want to hear that stuff anyway, and they go on house tours on rainy days in the spring. In the summer, people want to hear gossip. They want to learn that Napoleon had the audacity to give 2,000 marble busts of himself to friends and dignitaries, and the one he gave Monroe is sitting in the corner.

But there was a woman standing next to me waving a straw fan who had been listening with her eyes closed and head down, nodding in affirmation from time to time. I wanted to give her the full tour. So I took a deep breath and dove into the irony of Monroe declaring an end to the international slave trade while still keeping people enslaved on his own plantation. The woman nodded again, tilted her head slightly, and with her eyes still closed, said, “Mmm hmmm. Amen, Sister. Preach It.” I had been hoping for that approval for a long time.

Many people who visit the old plantation houses of the south don't focus on symbols of democracy, equality, and independence; instead they see a history of bondage, mutilation, rape, torn apart families, lost traditions, and poverty. For this reason, while working at Ash Lawn-Highland, my fellow guides and I spent a lot of our time between tours sitting around the break room talking about race. We wanted to figure out how to bring up race in a tour without undermining the legacy of the house and family we were supposed to champion. How could we balance vacation entertainment with reconciliatory education? How much should we discuss slavery in our tours so as not to come across like we were just giving a token of information? Was it wrong to only talk about slavery in the slave quarters and kitchens? Should we create a separate,

full-length slavery tour or include slavery more fully in the regular tour? How much gruesome reality should we discuss with young school groups? Figuring out how to talk about race was a constant concern.

This concern was highlighted by the fact that everyone who worked at the house was white, except for Russell, who only worked in the outbuildings. Most of us were acutely aware of the privileges we have, even in the twenty-first century, as a result of the color of our skin. We understood that our privileges exist because African Americans were forced to build them for us. Even though it could never make up for the past, most of us felt a need to give as balanced of a portrayal of history in our tours as possible.

I'll be honest; most of us didn't know what we were doing. Half of us were college students hired for the summer rush. Only a few guides had any background in 18th century history. We felt somewhat comfortable talking about race to white people. We could lay on the guilt enough to get serious and then pull back; we could weave in and out of slavery and light hearted banter. We felt like we were doing a decent, not perfect, but decent job. But on the rare occasion when we had an African American family on a tour, most of us were suddenly scared of our ignorance.

We'd always get through these tours and come back to the break room, collapse into fake 18th century armchairs, pale and exhausted with pumping adrenalin, and tell whoever was around the story of the tour, "There was an African American..." Whoever was in the break room would rise from their slouch and scoot to the edge of their seat, wide eyed.

"Did it go okay?"

"Yeah I think so....I don't know. I hope so," head lowered in hands.

The truth about that sweltering tour on the day the air-conditioning was broken was that I was acutely aware of the African American woman standing next to me. I wanted to give her the full tour, not because she was attentive, but because I didn't want her to think I was the kind of ignorant guide who doesn't talk about slavery at a plantation. Some of the conservative, retired, old wives who worked at Ash Lawn for something to do on a Tuesday afternoon, rather than because they needed the minimum wage pay-check to buy groceries, refused to talk about slavery on their tours. They said, "There isn't time to talk about everything in a forty minute tour. Russell will tell them about it in the Kitchen." When African American high schools showed up for field trips, the same guides were too scared of saying the wrong thing and refused to give them a tour.

I wanted the woman on that broken air-conditioning tour to know that some white people care enough about righting history to risk being wrong. At the same time, I wanted her approval so badly because I was terrified of my own ignorance, of what that ignorance says about our society, and of spreading that ignorance by not being able to do justice to African American history. This fear of trampling race was our biggest secret in the tour guide world. I later learned that this fear is especially characteristic of growing up in the South where these issues still linger like heavy curtains over all of our histories and, therefore, over all of our presents.

Because of the systems of oppression that are still in place, it's hard to do justice to African American history. The history that most Americans are told is largely a white history. There are lots of reasons for this. Upper and middle class white people tend to dominate the education system and the academic study of our past. Without even knowing it, with good intentions even, scholars make all kinds of assumptions that aren't correct. I've probably made a hundred of them in this book that I won't be able to identify as hard as I try to catch all of my mistakes.

In addition, white people's recordings of history (their letters, journals, treatises, books, and other records) far outnumber minority records, particularly those written by African Americans. In the south it was illegal for most of America's history to teach African Americans to read and write. Even if they somehow learned to write, most slaves didn't have time to keep a diary or other records. If they could write and did find the time, the chances of those documents getting somewhere where they would be preserved was slim. African Americans have kept rich oral histories, but oral history generally isn't valued as much as written history and has been ignored until very recently. All of which brings us back to houses, which stand as a small window into the lives of the people who lived in them. Much of the relatively new field of Antebellum African American History is based out of the archeology surrounding slave houses and the landscape they were immersed in.

There are two main types of slave houses: quarters and cabins, both of which were featured in multiple variations at Mount Vernon.^{xliii} Quarters were usually brick or clapboard barracks that housed many people who were unrelated to each other in communal rooms segregated by sex. They reflect the lack of families amongst early slaves.

Lerone Bennett might have described the indiscriminate horror of the early slave trade most succinctly when he wrote of the experience of an African captured and sold into slavery who, “stepped out of his hut for a breath of fresh air and ended up, ten months later, in Georgia with bruises on his back and a brand on his chest.”^{xliv} As Bennett’s description shows, Africans were not always captured with their families. If they were, the chances were high that half of the family would die during the journey to America. Once in America, families that arrived intact were often split apart at the auction block.^{xlvi} All of this resulted in a high percentage of single people with a dominance of single men. Without family units there was no need to build family houses, so plantation owners designed quarters for their first slaves, which were much cheaper and faster to construct than cabins. This type of housing was particularly common during the earlier days of slavery when slaves were still heavily imported from Africa and the Caribbean.

By the 1770’s when international slave trade began to slow, and certainly by 1808 when international slave trade was abolished in America by Monroe, the gender split amongst slaves began to even out. Children born into slavery became the main source of new slaves and had a 50/50 chance of being born with either gender. This resulted in fewer single men and more families. The

majority of slaves at this time lived close to the fields they worked in, rather than near the main house. Living in the far flung corners of the plantations, with less observation from their masters who tended to break families apart, made it easier for slaves to start living in family units. Slaves who lived far away from the main house were sometimes responsible for designing as well as building their own homes. With this small amount of freedom, they started to build single family log cabins rather than communal quarters.

Slave cabins were similar in size and structure to houses built by poor, white people in the same period. The average house was about 16' x 14' and would have held, on average, between four and fourteen family members. In Virginia, the cabins were made of V notched logs or half hewn timber, both of which were chinked with daub. Usually there was just one room and the potential for a loft that would provide extra sleeping space. Sometimes there were two rooms, arranged in what is known as the "Virginia House," with a hall for cooking, gathering, and any public functions, and a more private bedroom where everyone slept.

According to architectural scholar Garett Fesler, the few surviving and excavated slave houses from this later period of slavery show possible signs of

resistance.^{xlvi} During excavations archeologists have discovered numerous pits in the foundations of both quarters and cabins. These pits vary in size and number depending on the type of housing. Multiple smaller pits generally occur in quarters. Single, larger, sometimes 6'x6' pits have been found in cabins. The pits were covered by floor boards or some other covering if the house had a dirt or brick foundation. Both archeologists and oral history accounts theorize that the pits had multiple uses. Some pits simply functioned as cellars where slaves stored long lasting fruits, vegetables, and roots. Others seem to have hidden shrines that allowed slaves to continue to practice their African religions. Some archeologists theorize that slaves sometimes stole tools, household items, and food from their owners as a form of protest and hid these goods in the pits.^{xlvii} Still other pits held similar materials as well as extra clothing and basic utensils; in short, everything a slave needed to run away. Whatever their use, the pits allowed slaves to create a small amount of autonomous space for themselves, which, under the conditions of slavery, is enough to make them a form of resistance.

Other archeologists have started to look outside of slave houses for signs of resistance and are studying the yards associated with both quarters and cabins. In many West and Central West African cultures houses are just one

feature of the domestic sphere. The yard, split into various areas meant for different tasks, is just as important as the house itself. In some cultures sweeping the yard of any debris on a regular basis is part of a spiritual practice that keeps bad spirits at bay. In America sweeping likely started as a natural way to continue a spiritual practice, and it changed into a method of claiming space and taking ownership of the yard. It's possible that sweeping could have simply been a hygienic process as the yard would have been covered in droppings from the chickens and other small animals that most slaves kept. In any case, the practice allowed yards to become highly functional spaces where slaves spent much of their free time. Sweeping spread through the south and is sometimes still used to mark ownership today.

One last form of resistance that archeologists have unearthed from slave yards is the common kitchen garden. Most slaves had a small plot that they tended in order to augment their food rations. In addition to produce, slaves grew herbs and plants used for traditional medicines. They could grow a surplus of food and natural medicines and then sell these goods, often along with eggs, chickens, and crafts like baskets to each other, the master and his family, or other white families at the weekly market. By saving their money

from garden products and crafts made in the yard, it was difficult but possible for slaves to buy their own freedom, which was the ultimate form of resistance.

After fighting for independence and equality in the Revolutionary War, often serving side by side with slaves who were fighting (willingly or not) for white people's freedom, some plantation owners, including many of the founding fathers who had been involved in writing the Declaration of Independence and thinking through the inalienable rights of men, started to question the morality of slavery.^{xlvi} Washington was among those who began to see slavery as unjust and inhumane. But he couldn't figure out a way to end slavery without putting his family in financial straights. He also believed that granting his slaves their freedom, which in his mind included throwing them off of the plantation without shelter, food, or a way to make a living, would have put them in a worse situation than they were already in.

Washington refused to free his slaves until after his death. He must have thought that he wouldn't be guilty for their fates at this point, as all the other factors affecting both his slaves' and his family's well-being would have been the same after his death as when he was alive. Washington did, however, come up with a plan that he thought might lead to both his family and freed slaves

maintaining financial independence. Inspired by Layette, Washington attempted to lease large portions of his land to small farmers who would agree to hire freed slaves to work the land.^{xlix} This would give freed slaves a place to live and a way to make enough money to feed themselves while still allowing Washington to gain a small profit off of his land. This plan never worked though, probably because Washington had a hard enough time making a profit on the land himself. No one wanted to lease his used up fields especially if they were forced to pay freed slaves to work them. It is unclear why Washington didn't just give his slaves the houses they had built themselves (that he would have had no use for) and a small patch of his unprofitable land to start their lives as free people, but somehow he didn't see that as a possibility. He also didn't seem to think it was possible to hire his slaves himself. So, instead, he tried to hide the existence of his slaves.

When Washington's brother built "The House of Families," a large, two-story slave quarter near the main house, slaves were considered status symbols. Plantation owners placed their slave quarters in prominent positions, sometimes even lining the driveway, in order to show off the number of slaves they owned. By 1793, however, Washington no longer wanted to put his slave-holding status

on display. He tore down the House of Families and replaced it with two additions extending from either side of his new greenhouse. Using quarters was rare at this point; most plantation owners had accepted family life amongst slaves and built exclusively family cabins. But Washington's new quarters were almost invisible behind a row of trees, and their design blended into the greenhouse so well that they almost disappeared, which is exactly what he wanted.^l

Washington couldn't disguise the slave cabins in the far fields, so he tried to make them look orderly and carefully constructed. He hoped this would create the appearance that he took good care of his slaves. He attempted to make the slave cabins more orderly by forcing the slaves to move their houses into neat, symmetrical rows facing the overseer's cabin in the center of the fields. Neither the slaves nor the overseer, preferring privacy to symmetry, liked this idea though. Washington, who was away from Mount Vernon serving as President for a large portion of his later life, was never able to make the slaves move their homes.

Other plantation owners made similar attempts to create the appearance of treating their slaves better by building new cabins for their field slaves.^{li} They built new cabins as duplexes and triplexes. The shared walls made the buildings

cheaper and quicker to construct. The owners finished the new duplexes with upgraded exterior details like big windows, decorative trim, and painted clapboard. These buildings looked nice to white visitors because the finishing details were similar to those used by middle class, white farmers, but inside, these homes were just as spartan as previous cabins and provided less privacy. The impressive façades made it look like the slaves were valued by their owners, but the duplex system clearly differentiated the houses as slave cabins. No free person would have lived in a duplex. The new design furthered the idea that slaves should be treated like whites but weren't actually treated as equals who deserved the same housing as everyone else.^{lii}

In the end, no matter what Washington and other plantations owners did to try to mask the existence of slavery in a post-revolutionary world, it was impossible to hide slavery on a plantation that was so obviously dependent on it. Slaves were in the fields working, in the houses cleaning, cooking, serving food, tending to the animals, making repairs, driving carriages, managing children. Without slaves the plantation couldn't exist. In fact, the existence of slaves, and their traditions as well as their innovations, was built right into the design of many Virginia plantation houses.

Porches are so common in America that we take them for granted, but they are rare in Europe.^{liii} Many Europeans see porches as a characteristic element of American houses. Some scholars theorize that porches were obvious adaptations made by the colonists in reaction to the hot, muggy climate of Virginia. But colonists who built homes in more tropical areas didn't develop porches. American Indians who had lived in the same climate for perhaps 18,000 years never developed porches.^{liv} But West Africans incorporated porches into their traditional homes. Just like the Jamestown colonists, Africans in Virginia built their first homes in a way that mirrored the houses they built in their homeland. Since porches appeared in American houses around the same time that African slaves arrived, colonists most likely got the idea from their slaves. Washington could never hide the existence of slaves at Mount Vernon because the most visibly unique feature of his house, his symbol of American ingenuity, his back porch, was actually inspired, like so much of American culture, by Africans.

CHAPTER 5

LOG CABINS, IMMIGRATION, & THE BACK COUNTRY



illustration 5. Log Cabin, Frontier Culture Museum

"Come in, come in, my own true love,
 And have a seat by me.
 It's been three-fourths of a long, long year,
 Since together, we have been.

"I can't come in and I can't sit down,
 For I've only a moment's time.
 They say you're married to a house carpenter,
 And your heart will never be mine.

"I could have married a King's daughter, fair,
 And she would have married me,
 But I have forsaken her crowns of gold,
 And it's all for the love of thee.

"Now you forsake your house carpenter,
 And go along with me.
 I'll take you where the grass grows green.
 On the banks of the deep blue sea."

-from "The House Carpenter"
 (Appalachian folk ballad with Irish origins)

On the way to climb Humpback Rocks, a popular trail just outside the southern boundary of Shenandoah National Park, I happened upon an old log cabin. The Humpback Rocks visitor center has developed a model farm museum complete with a period cabin relocated from a nearby property. It was a hot day in late spring and I felt bad for the interpreters who were doing the same work that Appalachian settlers would have done in the 18th and 19th century, namely, breaking through thick clay dirt with hoes and picks in order to could plant their garden. I waved and shouted an overly enthusiastic, "Hello!"

One of the interpreters ignored me. The other turned her head, wiped the sweat from her brow onto her calico sleeve, and accusingly asked, "You want something?!" I couldn't tell if she was supposed to be acting out the stereotype of people isolated in the mountains who are supposed to be hostile towards outsiders, or if she was just mean on her own terms. "No, I don't want anything," I replied, "I just thought I'd say hi." Then, out of desperation, I stupidly asked, "What're you planting?"

"What's it look like we're planting?! We ain't planting nothing. Our plow broke and we're trying to turn this land." I still couldn't tell if it was an act, so I decided to move on. "Well, good luck!"

"Umm hmm."

The cabin down the path from the garden was dark and looked abandoned. An uninviting curl of smoke rose eerily into the hot, muggy air. Then a woman walked out of the front door and started sweeping the porch with a willow broom. I waved, and she nodded without stopping her work. I wanted to get out of there and up the mountain, so I kept walking with newfound gratitude for my cushy job at Ash Lawn-Highland. Looking back on it, I wish I would have worked harder to interact more with the interpreters at the Carter Farm. In a lot of ways I passed over them with the same hesitant suspicion as the townsfolk who overlooked and condemned the immigrants who originally lived in this region.

In the mid-1700's, a large influx of Irish and German immigrants streamed into the colonies.^{lv} By 1775 over 155,000 Irish had immigrated to the colonies, and by 1790 over 100,000 Germans had arrived.^{lvi} Many went to Pennsylvania and found relative happiness there. Others faced much more discrimination than they had bargained for. The first colonists, some of whom now had family roots in the colonies going back close to 200 years, were wary of newcomers and feared the large influx of Irish and Germans would take over the colonies. In order to prevent this, they refused jobs to the Irish, threatened

Germans who refused to speak English, and required immigrants to sign agreements counter to their religious beliefs before voting.

Even the founding fathers harbored unexpected intolerance towards new immigrants. They worried that immigrants who could participate equally in the republic would vote to revert the country to a monarchy or Feudal system and ruin the democratic experiment. Thomas Jefferson, despite his lifelong interest in other cultures, feared that foreigners would overpopulate America and thought it was impossible for multiple cultures to participate in a democratic America. In his *Notes on the State of Virginia* he wrote:

They [emigrants] will bring with them the principles of the governments they leave, imbibed in their early youth; or if able to throw them off, it will be in exchange for an unbounded licentiousness...These principles with their language, they will transmit to our children. In proportion to their numbers, they will share with us legislation. They will infuse into it their spirit, warp and bias its direction, and render it a heterogeneous, incoherent, distracted mass.^{lvii}

Benjamin Franklin, likewise, asked in 1751 why “Palantine Boors” should be, “suffered to swarm into our settlements, and by herding together establish their language and manners to the exclusion of ours?”^{lviii}

Homesick and surrounded by unfamiliar customs, immigrants naturally formed communities where they found support from their fellow countrymen. English prejudice only helped to foster the creation of minority enclaves. This impulse towards self-protective segregation continued the spiral of English fear, suspicion, and intolerance, which caused more seclusion. The situation escalated until many immigrants decided to leave major population centers and headed into the mountains. Large numbers of Irish and Germans moved south through the western valleys and settled in the relative isolation of Virginia's Blue Ridge Mountains. By 1785 an estimated 140,000 Irish had made their way to the Blue Ridge. Germans, following the same route, quickly became the largest non-English speaking population in the state. The isolation they found in the mountains allowed Irish and Germans to maintain their cultures. At the same time it forced them to rely on each other and to meld their traditions together, which led to the development of a new, Appalachian culture that would come to define the Blue Ridge and Allegheny regions of Virginia.^{lix}

One of the cultural products that defines Appalachia is the All-American log cabin, which, like hamburgers and frankfurters, actually has roots in Germany.^{lx} Irish immigrants came from largely deforested and rocky terrain,

which led them to build stone houses. But stone houses weren't practical in Virginia where masonry work was expensive and wood was plentiful and easy to harvest. Like the Irish, the English came from deforested land. They adapted to their lack of wood by building with wattle and daub instead of stone. When they came to America, English colonists found that wattle and daub didn't hold up well in Virginia's fluctuating climate. Faced with crumbling homes, they invented clapboard. Making clapboard was a relatively easy process that involved sawing logs into five foot sections and then splitting the sections into long, thin planks. These planks were layered over the frameworks the English had previously used for wattle and daub homes. Slight-frame clapboard didn't hold up well over time, but it was fast and cheap, which is what was most important in the early colonial settlements.

Unlike the Irish and English, Germans came from heavily forested areas and understood how to build sophisticated houses out of logs. When the Germans arrived, English colonists were unwilling to take construction advice from newcomers. Because of this the English colonists never perfected the art of building with logs. Their log homes can be identified by simple V notch joinery, which creates large gaps between the logs that have to be filled with mud or daub. The daub has to be repaired constantly and the logs have a tendency to

shift.^{lxi} German settlers, on the other hand, used dovetailing to hold hewn logs together. In addition to being sturdier, dovetail joinery creates a much tighter and more weatherproof seal.

Unlike the English, the Irish didn't feel a loss of pride from adapting their homes. They quickly adopted German building traditions. Likewise, the Germans adopted Irish masonry techniques for their foundations. This collaboration resulted in an overall sturdier and more permanent home for many immigrants who had relegated themselves to the back country.^{lxii} Like log houses, the collaborative "mixing pot" of immigrant cultures has become a hallmark of America that strengthened the framework of our culture.^{lxiii}

Despite improved construction techniques, very few log houses still exist in Virginia. Some log homes were never meant to last. They were simple, make-shift structures intended as temporary shelters while settlers made plans for more permanent homesteads. They might have been used longer than intended, but when abandoned these cabins quickly rotted into the forest floor. On the other hand, well constructed log homes were a symbol of status in early Appalachia. Like all designs, they eventually fell out of fashion and became synonymous with poverty. When this happened, those who could afford to tore

town their log homes to make way for new, trendy houses. Other log homes were burned and shot full of cannons and shells during the Revolutionary and Civil Wars. The most destructive element to attack Virginia's early log homes wasn't weather, fashion, or war, however, but the National Park Service.

I love the National Park Service. It protects wilderness areas and endangered species, allows scientists to perform important research, and provides spaces where we can find adventure, escape, solitude, and spiritual sustenance. The National Park Service demonstrates that the majority of Americans believe the natural world has enough value to prioritize parts of it over economic development. But, it isn't without large flaws, one of which is that creating many of our most loved National Parks involved displacing large numbers of low income and indigenous people.

Shenandoah National Park, a long thin strip of land that flows north-south along Virginia's Blue Ridge, was created in the 1930's.^{lxiv} The park covers 193,000 acres, 79,579 of which were designated as wilderness by congress in 1976. While certainly natural in comparison to suburban Northern Virginia, the land that makes up Shenandoah National Park hasn't been wild for thousands of years. American Indian tribes carefully cultivated the area in a system of agroforestry that combined slash and burn techniques with farming multiple

crops together in a rich man-made eco-system. After the American Indians were pushed off of their land, new waves of immigrants and freed slaves moved into the Blue Ridge Mountains that defined America's frontier.

Nearly two centuries later, the depression hit Virginia with full force as plans for the park were approved.^{lxv} The park planners, who had originally designed Shenandoah National Park with the intention of competing with the great parks in the west, now saw it as a public service. Building roads, visitor centers, trails, and reconstructing the "wilderness" would provide people with jobs. The park would also boost morale by creating inexpensive recreation opportunities for millions of people who lived within a day's drive.

Marketers depicted the area that would comprise the park as largely empty. They created an image of a place where only a few scattered settlements of backcountry farmers lived who were so isolated and destitute that forcing them off of their land and into towns was seen as a humanitarian act. In 1932, Mendel Sherman, a sociologist, and Thomas Henry, a journalist, published a pamphlet titled "Hollow Folk" that contained typical characterizations of families living in the Blue Ridge:

Here, hidden in deep mountain pockets, dwell families of unlettered folk, of almost pure Anglo-Saxon stock, sheltered in

tiny, mud-plastered log cabins and supported by a primitive agriculture. One of these settlements [Corbin Hollow] has no community government, no organized religion, little social organization wider than that of the family and clan, and only traces of organized industry. The ragged children, until 1928, never had seen the flag or heard of the Lord's Prayer; the community is almost completely cut off from the current of American life. It is not of the twentieth century.^{lxvi}

Many of the sociologists and journalists who wrote stories about the people living in the Blue Ridge were hired to create an image that would make it easier for mainstream society to justify displacing families to make way for recreation. But the inhabitants of the Blue Ridge were not isolated from the 20th century, and they had just as wide a spread of economic prosperity as the rest of Virginia.

Recent archeological findings show that some families lived in make-shift cabins while others lived in three-story houses with intricately laid stone foundations. Most lived in two to four room log or clapboard homes, where they wore the same clothes as other middle class people throughout the country, drank soda, gave their children factory-made toys, listened to records, read books, occasionally drove model T's, and caught trains in town. In short, aside

from having an incredible musical tradition that combined medieval Irish ballads with West African beats, they were just like everyone else trying to scrape by in the middle of the depression.

While plans for the park were being approved, sociologists focused their studies largely on Corbin Hollow, which was the area hardest hit by the depression. Corbin Hollow was unique because the people living there gave up their traditional subsistence agriculture in exchange for day labor at the nearby Skyland Resort owned by George Freeman Pollock. Corbin Hollow residents worked at Skyland as cooks, housekeepers, landscapers, builders, cleaners, and porters. They became dependent on money for purchasing their basic necessities rather than producing everything themselves. For a period they did very well. But when the depression hit, visitors stopped coming to Skyland, and many people in Corbin Hollow quickly found themselves without jobs or the self-sufficient means of subsistence that helped other valley communities survive the depression. Corbin Hollow fell into destitution. Because it illustrated the most extreme, and therefore most compelling, differences between back country homesteaders and townsfolk, Corbin Hollow became the face of Virginian Appalachia.

Most outsiders saw only carefully composed photographs that heightened the poverty of Corbin Hollow and, by association, the rest of Virginian Appalachia. Outsiders thought it would be in the best interests of the children living in the hollows if the families were relocated to government housing in town. When the government started trying to relocate people to make room for the park, some families took the offer of subsidized housing and prospered in the lowlands.

But about 500 to 800 families, many of whom had lived in the Blue Ridge for generations, did not want to give up their homes or their ways of life to be “civilized” in town. When homesteaders continued to refuse to move, the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) was tasked with forcing the families off of their land. When the families tried to return to their homes, the CCC once again pushed them out of the valleys, this time setting the families’ houses on fire as they walked away. All that is left of the original Shenandoah homes are a few houses used for educational purposes like the one at Humpback Mountain, and if you have a careful eye, a chimney here, the corner of a foundation there, unusual terraces and an odd pumpkin vines, and shaggy lines of boxwoods growing around cemeteries that are still maintained by those who know how to find them.^{lxvii}

While almost all of the homes within the boundaries of Shenandoah National Park were destroyed in one way or another, a few log houses still remain in Virginia, largely in the mountains outside of the park. Sometimes it's possible to find them hidden, of all places, inside of other homes. When log houses became a mark of poverty, those who couldn't afford to entirely replace their homes made renovations and improvements to their facades. Those who had the most resources obscured their old log houses with additions, which made their humble origins disappear. If additions weren't possible, it was easy enough to transform a log house into a framed house by applying clapboard to the exterior. White finishes became popular as they were associated with cleanliness and wealth rather than dirt and poverty. Those who couldn't afford to cover their homes in white clapboard applied white stucco, which covered up the logs. At the very least, many families painted or whitewashed the exterior logs, which if they were hewn then appeared similar to a framed house.

Weston, near the small town of Casanova, is a perfect example of a log home hidden in plain sight.^{lxviii} When I went to check out the house, the air was thick with mid-morning humidity and whippoorwill calls. At the end of the long, shady, dirt driveway oak groves and shaggy fields parted to reveal a moss

green, Victorian farmstead. This was no symmetrical, antebellum plantation house, and, with three rambling segments, all with different structures and designs, it was hard to tell which part of the house was the front. Intricate trim lined the eaves, tin covered the roof, and three brick chimneys rose from different segments of the house. The structure, which wound like a long line of history, clearly had a story.

Most of that history, as it turns out, has to do with the Nourse Sisters who left the house to the Warrenton Antiquarian Society in 1959. But Richard Anderson, the caretaker, showed me that the Victorian Façade sheltered a two-room log house that was built in 1796.^{lxix} As we walked through the house, which was filled with an eclectic assemblage of furniture that spanned the past hundred or so years, Richard showed me the living room and upstairs bedroom, which both featured the log walls and wooden beams that formed the original house. It was strange to see the rough, wooden grain and gritty plaster of an 18th century log home filled with aristocratic, red velvet, Victorian sofas and 1950's wingback chairs, all cooled with whirring air conditioning and lit with electric lamps. But that is America. As it turns out, Jefferson was right, we did turn into a "heterogeneous mass," but rather than destroying us, our heterogeneity, like dovetail joints and masonry foundations, has made us stronger.

CHAPTER 6

MONTICELLO & BUILDING COMMUNITY



illustration 6. Monticello and Surrounding Area^{lxx}

"I am as happy no where else and in no other society, and all my wishes end, where I hope my days will end, at Monticello. Too many scenes of happiness mingle themselves with all the recollections of my native woods and fields, to suffer them to be supplanted in my affection by any other."

-Thomas Jefferson, 1787

Throughout the 18th and early 19th centuries, homesteaders built log and clapboard houses, not only in the mountains but across all of Virginia's countryside. These houses showed the innovation of immigrants and slaves, but a large number of them, especially outside of the mountains, also illustrated a tendency toward temporary settlement. These houses, especially the clapboard homes, weren't built to last longer than the soil, which lost its nutrients quickly because of intensive agricultural practices.^{lxxi}

Virginia's cash crop was tobacco. If it had favorable weather and survived infestations and mold, tobacco had a guaranteed European market. It provided one of the best returns on investment for both large and small scale farmers. Unfortunately, tobacco was a very labor intensive crop that couldn't grow in the same field more than a few seasons. After that, the earth might be able to sustain a couple years of grain harvests, but sooner rather than later it would only be good for pasture. 17th and 18th century Virginia had no shortage of land, however, so once the nutrients were sucked from the soil, farmers simply picked up their families and moved to a new location. Only the wealthiest plantation owners with the largest land holdings could rotate their crops in such a way that promoted permanent settlement.^{lxxii}

This constant movement is part of what led to the lack of substantial towns during the first portion of Virginia's history. When Thomas Jefferson compiled his *Notes on the State of Virginia* he wrote, "We have no townships," and referred to any areas with significant, permanent populations as villages or hamlets.^{lxxiii} While not in favor of urban life himself, Jefferson understood the importance of communities, and mentioned in *Notes* his concern about the lack of permanent, well designed residences in Virginia:

The private buildings are very rarely constructed of stone or brick; much the greatest proportion being of scantling and boards, plastered with lime. It is impossible to devise things more ugly, uncomfortable, and happily more perishable. ...A country whose buildings are of wood can never increase in its improvements to any considerable degree. Their duration is highly estimated at 50 years. Every half century then our country becomes a tabula rasa, whereon we have to set out anew, as in the first moment of seeing it.^{lxxiv}

Jefferson's arguments for building with brick, rather than wood, in order to create permanent residences weren't the most well-founded. Most people didn't know how to make bricks themselves and couldn't afford to pay others to do it for them. Also, since the homes in Virginia weren't all built at the same time, we never would have ended up with an entirely homeless tabula rasa.

Jefferson was correct, however, in stating that building make-shift wooden homes trapped early Americans in a continuous time consuming and expensive process of renovation and rebuilding. Ironically, Jefferson ended up in the same cycle with his own brick home, Monticello.

Monticello is the only stand-alone home in America designated as a World Heritage Site. It shows the artistic temperament of its designer. When the Marquis de Chastellux described his visit to Monticello in 1782 he wrote, "My object in giving these details is not to describe the house, but to prove that it resembles none of the others seen in this country; so that it may be said that Mr. Jefferson is the first American who has consulted the Fine Arts to know how he should shelter himself from the weather."^{lxxv} Washington's piazza became one of the most duplicated and representative elements in American domestic architecture. On the opposite end of the spectrum, Monticello's idiosyncrasy is what makes it American.

Jefferson loved geometry and, in the end, was much truer to his Palladian influences than Washington. Creating streamlined, solidly massed, perfectly proportioned forms arranged according to Roman orders like Palladio suggested, while retaining light-filled, airy interiors, provided a satisfying

challenge. Jefferson liked to play with unusual forms and used the octagon as the dominant shape for Monticello and many of his other buildings. He flanked the center of his home with rooms shaped in variations on the octagon and avoided simple rectangles. Both of the main entries to the house are pediment topped porticos held up by relatively humble Doric columns. The many angles of the building are balanced with a dome inspired by the Hotel De Salm, one of Jefferson's favorite buildings. The whole house is punctuated with large windows, sky lights, and outdoor living spaces that meld one of America's greatest assets, the wild outdoors, with the geometric symbols of enlightenment, reason, and practicality.^{lxxvi}

Monticello was the place Jefferson loved most, but he was constantly tinkering with it by adapting and improving both small and large details. Because new possibilities always arose, perfection consistently eluded him, and Jefferson ended up living in the midst of a construction site for most of his life. Architecture was one of Jefferson's greatest passions, so he didn't seem to mind the mess, but some of his many guests (sometimes fifty people stayed at Monticello at a time) noted the leaky roof, loose floor boards, and general unfinished state of the house. Anna Thornton, wife of William Thornton who

designed the U.S. Capitol, is known amongst Jefferson scholars for her frank critique of Monticello:

There is something grand and awful in the situation but far from convenient or in my opinion agreeable. It is a place you would rather look at now and then than live at. Mr. J. has been 27 years engaged in improving the place, but he has pulled down and built up again so often, that nothing is completed, nor do I think ever will be.^{lxxvii}

Despite his wealth, Jefferson lived in a more transitory state than many common farmers. Jefferson didn't complete Monticello until late in life, at which point Mrs. Thornton revoked her opinion, and said it was a "quite handsome place."^{lxxviii} Jefferson assumed that once he finished his home it would serve his family for generations. Unfortunately, due to his debts (largely from building Monticello), Jefferson had to start selling off his possessions, including his treasured library, soon after he finished construction. Less than four years after Jefferson's death, his family was forced to sell Monticello to James Barclay who had no interest in the house and only wanted the property to start a silkworm farm.^{lxxix}

James Barclay's silkworm venture never succeeded and Monticello switched hands several times. Other owners had just as difficult of a time maintaining Monticello as Jefferson. By 1862, when Monticello's then owner, Uriah Levy, died, the house was left to the elements during seventeen years of litigation over who would be forced to take responsibility for the abandoned mansion. Even the National Government refused to buy the ruined property, which at the time stood behind confederate lines. Windows broke during the war and shutters hung from single hinges. Moss grew over the house. The ball room was covered with people's names carved into the walls. The caretaker, Joel Wheeler, stored his cows and grain bins inside on the parquet floors. No one other than Wheeler, who was going senile, wanted the responsibility of managing Jefferson's crumbling "Essay in Architecture."

Eventually, Jefferson Levy, who was one of Tammany Halls "Big Four" and rich enough to deal with the ruined legacy, bought the house from his family for \$10,500. He began restoring the estate to use as a summer home with the intention of honoring his father as much as Thomas Jefferson. Levy was a very public figure and allowed guests, sometimes as many as sixty a day, to visit his home to pay homage to Jefferson who always seemed to win out over Levy's father. Levy ended up embracing the Jefferson legacy, however, and was known

for throwing extravagant Fourth of July parties, complete with readings of the Declaration of Independence, all of which drew attention to his restored Monticello.

In the 1890's, a resurgence in the popularity of the founding fathers drew further attention to Monticello. Soon enough, visitors started to wonder why Monticello wasn't a national monument. Although only two other homes in the country were open to the public as museums at the time (Mount Vernon and the Alcott house in Massachusetts), many people deemed Monticello worthy of public ownership. Levy, however, refused to sell. It wasn't until the post WWI depression that Levy, in financial trouble, agreed to sell Monticello to the Thomas Jefferson Memorial Foundation that still maintains it today. Jefferson's home, while falling to the elements like the wooden houses he despised, was finally fully restored and has reached a certain level of immortality.

Meanwhile, three miles away from Monticello sat the modest, wooden, Ash Lawn-Highland, home of Jefferson's good friend, political ally, and 5th President of the United States, James Monroe.^{lxxx} Unlike Monticello and Mount Vernon, Highland, as Monroe would have called the property, was a very prudent house. Five of the potentially eight rooms remain today (A fire burnt

down the front hall as well as any additional rooms and all copies of the original house plans around 1840). While much smaller than other founding fathers' homes, Highland was significantly larger than the typical Virginia houses at the time. Monroe affectionately called the simple home, filled with rich, French furnishings, his "Cabin Castle."

Due to the geographic proximity, many people speculate that Highland was designed by Jefferson, but given Jefferson's distaste for wood and love of formal Roman proportions, it's extremely unlikely. The designs for the kitchens, which were made of brick and built into the hill underneath the main house, could have been inspired by Jefferson's slave quarters and workshops, which had a similar design and the enviable practicality of being fireproof. If so, they are most likely the only Jeffersonian influence in the house.

One of my favorite stories from my time as a tour guide at Ash Lawn-Highland involved the arched ceiling connecting two fireplaces in rooms on either side of a hall, which were joined to a common chimney. Rumor has it the arched hallway was designed by Jefferson. The ceiling in the hall is extremely low, so low that guests love to run their hands along it as they walk out the back door. The low ceiling forced 6'1" Monroe to duck his head, bowing towards Jefferson, as he went out his backdoor and faced Monticello.

We were absolutely not supposed to tell that story. Ash Lawn-Highland was always competing with Jefferson's flamboyant popularity and generally survived by riding on his coat tails. Most people came to Ash Lawn, not because they knew about or cared for Monroe, but because it was so close to Monticello and was included, along with Monticello and Madison's Montpelier, on the discounted Presidential Pass. I didn't even know anything about Monroe until I started working in his home. The Monroe Doctrine and Missouri Compromise were distant memories from 10th grade history. The fact that he was responsible for negotiating the Louisiana Purchase and established the free slave territory of Liberia in West Africa never even came up in class. Because Monroe gets so much less attention than Jefferson, tour guides were never supposed to make him look less superior, by, say, being duped by a Jeffersonian architectural design. Really, the arched hallway had such a low clearance because it made the fireplaces much more efficient, which I would always explain after telling my guests, "I'm not supposed to tell you this, but..."

Monroe needs a little levity for his legacy to compete with Jefferson's. He is so upstanding that he's almost unlikable.^{lxxxix} Even Monroe's humble house in some ways was more upstanding than Jefferson's estate. The relatively inexpensive Highland made it possible for Monroe, unlike Jefferson, to die

without any debt. Also, while Monticello was a behemoth to maintain and fell into ruins less than forty years after Jefferson's death, Highland was much easier to maintain and was never left unoccupied. While needing significant restoration before it could be opened to the public, Highland never fell entirely into disrepair.

In the end, I think Jefferson might have been less concerned with the actual building materials than with building homes that are well designed and make their inhabitants want to stay in a place. If people build homes that reflect their ideals, that are unique to their character, and that give their owners a sense of belonging and connection to place, they are less likely to leave when the going gets tough. People who like the design of their homes are more likely to stay in one place and to care for that place, whether that care involves protecting the local environment or getting involved in local politics. Connecting to place and caring about it enough to make some amount of personal sacrifice to improve it is absolutely necessary to the republican ideal that Jefferson upheld, where states and townships have more power than the national government. Jefferson loved his home and stayed on his "little mountain" until his death, serving in public offices, working to find a sustainable form of agriculture, and

promoting public education by founding the University of Virginia. He stayed in the place that he loved even though it led to his ruin. Monroe, who had a less personalized house, and was less attached to Highland, eventually left, selling the property to alleviate his debts.

Many people would argue that Monroe made all the right choices. He represents the character Americans want to have. He was humble, hard-working, perseverant, considerate, careful, practical, deliberate, least of all fiscally responsible, all with origins in the middle class rather than the aristocracy. But those characteristics, like cookie cutter suburban tract houses, are not what make Americans American. We teach our children to maintain Monroe-like characteristics, but we strive to be Jeffersonian. We can admire Monroe, but we love Jefferson, a Renaissance Man, philosopher, renegade farmer, scientist, musician, architect, writer, author of The Declaration of Independence, quirky, passionate, radical, ambitious, voice of America, voice of the underdogs, champion of equality, someone who is strange enough to carry around reusable ivory writing tablets, a set of scales, and small globe in his pockets at all times, but reliable enough to serve as president for eight years, someone who designed Monticello, someone who refused to give up and who

had great commitment to his community.^{lxxxii} Although he is deeply flawed, Jefferson represents the spirit of America, the person we want championing us.^{lxxxiii} Our character might live up to our Jeffersonian dreams if we had more Monticelloes, not necessarily Palladian villas, but unique homes that ground us in a place well enough to make us fight for it.

CHAPTER 7

THE SLAVE PEN & SEARCH FOR THE END OF SLAVERY



illustration 7. Door of slave pen, Freedom House

“Well boy, how do you feel now?” said Burch, as he opened the door. I replied that I was sick, and inquired the cause of my imprisonment, He answered that I was his slave-that he had bought me, and was about to send me to New-Orleans. I asserted, aloud and boldly, that I was a free man-a resident of Saratoga, where I had a wife and children who were also free, and that my name was Northup. I complained bitterly of the strange treatment I had received...He denied that I was free, and with an emphatic oath, declared I came from Georgia.”

-Solomon Northup, 1853

Numerous visits to study slave quarters that had been reconstructed on the grounds of old Virginia plantations left me feeling like I needed a break. I wanted an uplifting story—something to illustrate the tenacity and victory of African Americans in the antebellum period. It's important to give witness to stories of horror and subjugation. But it's also important to share stories about the people who escaped slavery, and despite all odds, in the face of fierce discrimination, succeeded in carpentry, science, medicine, business, or law, to become economic and civic leaders in their communities.

So I went to Alexandria, just across the river from DC, in search of the homes of African Americans who made their way out of slavery before the end of the Civil War. The difficult thing about this kind of search is that the average homes of unknown African Americans have had even less of a chance of surviving the wear of time than the big plantation houses, which almost all faced periods of ruin. Without rich relatives to help maintain them or historic societies to swoop down and restore their buckling frames, few antebellum African American homes are still standing. Those that have survived are rarely open to the public. Generally people are either living in them or they have been sold and turned into shoe stores, hair salons, delis, or realtor offices. Either way,

they blend in with all the other 19th century brick town homes and go largely unnoticed.

George Lewis Seaton's mother, Lucinda, was one of the slaves freed by Martha Washington before her death. He was born into a large family with eleven siblings and became a prominent master carpenter. Seaton also founded the local black YMCA and Oddfellow's society, constructed the first public schools for African American children, served as a jury member during the trial of confederate president, Jefferson Davis, and acted as the first African American state legislator. Eventually, he built himself a brick townhouse at 404 South Royal Street. It seems like his house should be an educational center open to the public, but instead it remains a modest and generally overlooked private residence.

Likewise, Dominick Barecroft was bought by David Henderson in 1800 and freed three months later for unknown reasons. Barecroft saved his money and freed his wife within four years. The couple spent the rest of their lives running a successful tavern known for its crab suppers, which lured DC epicureans across the river to Alexandria. The Barecrofts bought a house at 315 Cameron Street, which, like the Seaton house, is generally overlooked and is now a private residence nestled amongst specialty shops.^{lxxxiv}

So when I found a museum in Alexandria called The Freedom House, which was operated by the Northern Virginia Urban League, I didn't read their website too carefully. Instead, I headed straight over to what I thought would finally be a house museum celebrating a freed slave's life. I had high hopes that it might even have connections to the Underground Railroad, which is rumored to have had risky stops in Alexandria that led to the safety of Washington DC. I should have read the website more thoroughly.

It turned out that the "The Freedom House" is an ironic name The Urban League used to reclaim one of the most wretched places in Virginia.^{lxxxv} Originally, it was known as The Franklin and Armfield Slave Office and Pen. Between 1828 and 1836 it was one of the largest slave trading operations in the country and was responsible for more than a third of all the sales that sent slaves from the Upper South to the Deep South. Slaves were housed at what was known as The Slave Pen, often manacled to the walls, sometimes for months, before being shipped to New Orleans in Franklin and Armfield's private ships or trekked overland, generally chained together in coffers, all the way to Natchez, Mississippi where they were sold to the highest bidder.

The slave pen was originally a complex of several buildings including a main office, kitchen, tailor shop, carpentry workshop, infirmary, and stable. There were two enclosed yards, one for the men and one for the women, with large overhangs that provided the main shelter for sleeping, even in the winter months. Below the main office there was an enclosed area with no windows or ventilation where new and misbehaving slaves were held in cells or chained. The whole operation was surrounded by high, whitewashed brick walls that concealed the pen from the public view and maintained an exterior air of orderly cleanliness. Everything except the main office was torn down in 1870 to make way for new row homes, so now the site of the slave pen, like most of the freed slaves' homes, looks like every other house in old town Alexandria and goes largely unnoticed.

The Urban League's offices are on the ground and upper floors of what was once the main office of the slave pen. Most of the exhibits organized in The Freedom House Museum are in the basement, which once contained the holding cells for the slaves. As I made my way down the steep, narrow stairs I read the names, ages, and prices of some of the slaves who were sold from the pen, which were mounted on the wall like family portraits. At the bottom of the stairs I walked through a haunting, heavy, iron gate, which was the original

door to the pen. In the cold, eerie space I learned about the history of Franklin and Armfield.

Franklin and Armfield's business was precipitated by a number of events, the first of which was the end of the international slave trade in 1808. After 1808 it became illegal to import slaves from other countries, which rather than ending slavery, simply accelerated the domestic slave trade. Around this time the soils in the upper south, including Virginia, started to wear out due to 200 years of intensive tobacco cultivation. The thick clay, which had always been relatively difficult to turn into self-sufficient farms and plantations, was largely stripped of its nutrients. Despite valiant efforts and experimentation, no one could find a series of crop rotations that would balance the soil's nutrients. Many farmers found it more prudent to cut their losses and sell their slaves, rather than continuing to plummet their families into debt while trying to figure out a way to make their farms profitable.

Meanwhile, Eli Whitney invented the cotton gin in 1792. Rather than freeing the slaves who were no longer needed for the time consuming task of separating seeds from lint, plantation owners decided to grow more cotton, a lot more cotton, which led to the expansion of the slave trade in the Deep South.

The region's exponential desire for slaves, coupled with the end of the international slave trade, provided the perfect market for slaves from the spent Upper South. Enter two shrewd men, Franklin and Armfield, who knew a business opportunity when they saw one. They leapt on the domestic slave trade, and after developing the slave pen in the harbor city of Alexandria, became two of the richest slave traders in the country.^{lxxxvi}

I took a heavy breath and stared at the iron gate. I wanted to escape the slave pen, but knew I had to keep reading. Turning from the narrative explaining the origins of the slave pen, I looked at the diorama of faceless bodies chained to the wall with heavy manacles and read accounts left by people who lived there, the most heart wrenching of which was Solomon Northup's.^{lxxxvii}

Solomon Northup was a free African American born in New York in 1808. In addition to successfully running his own farm and working odd jobs for other people, Northup was well known locally as a violinist and often played at dance halls on the weekends. One week, in 1841, when his wife and children were out of town, Northup was commissioned by two men, Merrill Brown and Abram Hamilton, who claimed to be members of a circus making their way south to join the rest of their troupe in DC. They needed a musician to play

music for their act as they traveled and heard Northup was a talented violinist. Brown and Hamilton offered to pay him a good wage for each show he played and to pay for his traveling expenses. After consideration, Northup agreed to the deal, packed his bag, and, thinking he would be back before his wife and children, left without even writing a note.

Traveling swiftly in order to catch up with the rest of the circus as quickly as possible, the three men soon made their way to Alexandria. After arriving, Brown and Hamilton bought Northup several celebratory drinks, and as he finished one, Northup felt, not drunk, but exceedingly ill. After a tortured, sleepless night, he eventually fell unconscious. Northup awoke to find himself chained to the wall of the room I was standing in, in the complete windowless, basement dark. He soon find out he had been sold into slavery.

After being beaten into submission with a cat-o-nine tails Northup learned to never tell white people that he was a free man. He was shipped by James H. Burch, who then owned the slave pen, to Louisiana, where he spent the next twelve years of his life before regaining his freedom and writing a narrative of his experience titled *Twelve Years a Slave*. Northup's story isn't all that uncommon, it just happens to be one of the best documented; thousands of

slaves, many of whom were kidnapped free men and women, were housed and sold every year at the slave pen.

After reading all of the exhibit material in the basement I felt nauseous, overwhelmed, and immensely sad for humanity. I climbed the stairs back out of the slave pen and into the fluorescent offices of the Urban League, then went out into the street where I was shocked by the 21st century, filled with BMW's, smog, and the scent of McDonalds. I wanted to get away from everything and go feel sorry for myself for being part of such a terrible race. The best place I could think of was Teddy Roosevelt Island, an 88 acre chunk of land sitting in the Potomac River about a hundred yards off shore, in a location that has always been inconvenient enough to deter large crowds. I walked back to my car and drove out of Old Town Alexandria and down the tree-lined George Washington Memorial Parkway to the island.

Teddy Roosevelt Island, like the Freedom House, is one of the most overlooked attractions in the immediate DC area. There are no metro stops and there is very limited bus access. By car you can only access the island's parking lot going north on the GW Parkway, which isn't clear on maps. All of this means that while the Jefferson Memorial is filled with throngs of snow cone slurping

tourists even in the heart of winter, Roosevelt Island is used almost entirely by local joggers. Aside from being inconvenient, the two miles of trails that wrap around and through the island are unpaved and lead through swamps blaring with mosquitoes and the occasional (maybe mythical) semi-amphibious, snakehead fish, which is said to eat small babies while slithering from puddle to puddle. The upside of the island is that its inhospitality has made it one of the last remaining semi-wild places in the middle of the DC metropolis.

The most bizarre and appealing part of the island is the Teddy Roosevelt Memorial, which stands on the highest and least swampy plateau. Walking along a meandering path, the forest suddenly opens onto a mossy, leaf strewn plaza paved with small granite stones. The plaza is anchored with giant, chalice-shaped fountains and waterways that no longer operate. A nearly twenty-foot-tall, corroding bronze statue of Teddy Roosevelt, with his hand raised in the air like he is either about to make a proclamation or spite his miniature visitors with lightning bolts, stands at one end of the plaza. A circle of large tablets, standing on end, Stonehenge style, etched with Roosevelt quotes about Youth, Manhood, Nature, and Government surrounds the plaza. Arched, stone bridges lead from the plaza, over what used to be waterways, and down to the swampy lowlands.

Overhead, a canopy of hickory and oak leaves whisper, emphasizing the abandoned quietness of the memorial.^{lxxxviii}

After parking and crossing the long, wooden, pedestrian bridge that leads to the island, I made my way to the Roosevelt statue. Full of my regret for slavery and depression about the capability of humans to be so terrible to each other, I sat under Roosevelt's hand waiting for lightening, which of course did not come. Instead of thunder I heard leaves and cicadas. Knowing no one was likely to come my way, I laid down flat on my back and stared up at the sky until I felt better, like a human rather than a descendent of slave owners, and eventually, like a part of the planet equal to rocks and cactus and wolves and jellyfish.

I thought I could go on with life as a simple speck in an ecosystem instead of a descendent of slave drivers, so I picked myself up off the ground, dusted the chunks of dried pollen off my shirt, ducked my head away from the small group of extremely rare tourists who happened to be standing there with their cameras waiting for the crazy girl to get out of the shot, and quickly headed over one of the bridges into the tangled mass of the island.

I rarely walk around the paths on Roosevelt Island because of all the bugs and muck and spider webs and potential snakehead fish, but, although I felt better, I also felt ridiculous for going to Teddy Roosevelt for forgiveness for slavery. Being in a natural setting always calms me down, so I decided to make a small loop through the bog.

While meandering through the other side of the island, I found a few bricks that were all that remained from the ruins of an old mansion. The bricks caught my eye only because they were near a clematis vine, which seemed out of place in the relatively wild habitat of the island. Nearby there was a sign explaining that John Mason, George Mason's son, built a mansion there and used the island as an experimental plantation. He also hosted exclusive parties on the island that were accessible only by the ferry, which, as the best way to cross from DC to Virginia before the bridges were built, was his main source of income.

Mason built his island mansion around 1802. It was a one story, H shaped house with a central hall and a perpendicular wing on each end. It had a classical revival style and a pediment topped entry with arched, Roman windows. The island was swampy in the early 1800's too, and historians assume that the house would only have been inhabitable in the spring and early

summer. The masons abandoned it before the start of the Civil War, and within a few years it fell into ruins. When I visited, a small mound of dirt and about five visible bricks were all that was left of Mason's legacy.

It turns out that the Mason Mansion had a little help in its disappearing act.^{lxxxix} In the 1930's, Frederick Law Olmstead, the landscape architect responsible for designing Central Park, was hired to design a memorial for Teddy Roosevelt. He decided that the best memorial for the conservation minded president would be to restore the island to its natural state as quickly as possible. The natural island, rather than the giant statue that was erected much later, would be Roosevelt's memorial. After getting approval for his plans, Olmstead went right to work ordering the removal of underbrush, honeysuckle, poison ivy, and other non-native species and weeds. Using the thin strip of woods that Mason left standing around the periphery of the island as a guide for creating his primeval forest, Olmstead planted oaks, hemlocks, maples, tulip poplars, elms, river birches, hickories, and sweet gums. In order to make the forest look diverse, and therefore natural, he also planted smaller trees, like dogwoods, persimmons, and redbuds as well as shrubs and bushes. When building retaining walls, he used rocks of various sizes like those found on the

island, rather than concrete. He decided to preserve the marshy parts of the island as important bird and animal habitats. In short, Olmstead carefully landscaped a wilderness.^{xc}

One thing stood in the way of Olmstead's pristine forest—the ruins of the Mason Mansion. There was fierce debate over what should be done with the old house, which by the 1930's was falling in on itself. Historians, archeologists, and architects wanted to preserve the house and saw it as valuable in its own right. They didn't think it made sense to tear down one part of history in order to commemorate another. On the other hand, conservationists and Roosevelt fans said the island should be devoted entirely to Roosevelt's legacy and that John Mason's home wasn't particularly deserving of preservation since he wasn't all that famous. He was generally known as either the son of George Mason or the father of James Murray Mason, who prompted the Trent Affair in 1861.

Eventually, wanting to end the debate and get on with his work, Olmstead decided to quietly tear down the walls of the house without consent from the community of scholars that had become involved with the project. He did, however, leave the foundations of the house, not out of a desire to preserve a trace of the Mason family living on the island, but because tearing them out of the ground would damage the roots of important old growth trees. Instead,

Olmstead disguised the foundations with a nice layer of top soil and a few shrubs.

Removing the ruins of the mansion didn't just eradicate the history of the Mason family. It also destroyed the headquarters of the 1st United States Colored Troops, a regiment of free and runaway slaves who volunteered to fight for the Union during the Civil War. The troops faced harsh criticism and violent attacks while working in the streets of DC, which, although it was the federal capital, was still a southern city full of all the prejudice that implies. Eventually, the troops were moved to Mason Island for their own protection. Its relative isolation kept their location so secret that, for a time, even Abraham Lincoln couldn't find the regiment. The troops were trained and outfitted on the island and then slowly transitioned into life in the city. With their new uniforms and official postures, white citizens began to accept the presence of armed African Americans in the city.

Towards the end of the war, as emancipation spread, more and more slaves finally realized freedom. But, as Washington had predicted, freed African Americans suddenly found themselves without shelter, food, or jobs. Slaves from all over the south made their way north to DC where they hoped to

find resources. In 1864, soon after the troops had left, Roosevelt Island became one of the many freedmen refugee camps surrounding DC. Conditions in the camp started out abysmally as hundreds of freedmen occupied the old house and small military barracks. The freedmen found themselves without access to warm clothing, ample clean water, or methods to cook donated food before it spoiled. Most people were starving, freezing, sick, and without hope.

The Association of Friends, a group that branched out from the Quakers, decided to focus much of their efforts on the camp at Mason Island. Using their strong networks of supporters, they quickly gathered supplies such as clothing, medicine, and ovens to cook food. The Friends also opened a hospital, school, and church, which dramatically improved morale in the camp. Soon freedman could take organized classes in employable skills, such as sewing garments, and the friends helped connect camp members with viable urban jobs. Sometimes the camp operated better than other times, but its existence serves as an example of the difficulty that freed slaves faced even after emancipation. When the Mason House was torn down, the home of the 1st US Colored Troops and the refugee camp were buried along with the record of Mason's famous parties and agricultural experiments.

Some people are glad this landmark is buried. Memorials of slavery are controversial in the south. Many people think the houses and other landmarks from the nation's early history, like the slave pen and the refugee camp based out of Mason's dilapidated mansion, should be preserved and stand as reminders of the lives of the slaves whose labor and torture made America possible. These sites should honor the terrible side of our country's heritage and allow space for grief and regret. But other people, both black and white, want these landmarks to be torn down. They want the evidence of the past to be erased to make way for the freedom to be found in the future. Many people think that concentrating on the past simply continues stereotypes and prejudice. Focusing on slavery too much when talking about African American identity can make that the focal point in a culture that has since thrived, evolved, innovated, and incorporated itself into mainstream-pop and avant-garde culture.^{xc}

But maybe we do need those memorials; maybe we do need to stand in the buildings that housed slavery in our country, not just to remember the past, but to remember the present. While the chains of bondage are broken in the South and plantations have disappeared from the rural areas of Virginia, racism still roams our country and our lives still depend on unfair, forced labor that we

can't see because it is buried in factories and mines that are hidden both in the states and overseas. When seeing the shadow of slavery in houses on our own soil, I am forced to think about our current involvement in slavery and exploitation abroad. By recognizing the injustice that our country was founded on, hopefully, people can see connections to the injustice that we are all, myself included, currently implicated in.

Like the founding fathers, almost all Americans face a conflict between maintaining our current lifestyles and treating our fellow humans with respect, dignity, and equality. It seems nearly impossible to end the systems of injustice that make our lives possible. I find it hard to stop buying t-shirts that were made in sweatshops, and the thought of not using computers that depend on lithium mined from indigenous lands seems impossible.

Some people argue that it is better to pay people in third world countries fourteen cents an hour to make our consumer goods than for them to be paid nothing. Similar arguments state that it is better to force indigenous people to live in cinderblock houses, far away from their homeland, than to let them live in the earthen houses they've used for thousands of years. It's all for their own good, part of their economic development, or so the argument goes.

This line of logic has a similar tone as well-meaning people living in the 1800's, who argued that we shouldn't end slavery because slaves would then have nowhere to live and no food to eat. These arguments are simply a refusal to change basic cultural norms and to acknowledge people we see as "others" as equals. In looking at places like the slave pen and the freedmen's refugee camp, places that represent the injustices of our country's beginnings, we can see that people had the bravery and audacity to overcome oppressive cultural systems in the past, and we can do it again today.

CHAPTER 8

HENRY HOUSE & THE WAR IN WOMEN'S HOMES



illustration 8. Henry House, Manassas Battlefield

“Father came forward with a very grave face to say that General Kimball’s brigade would be in immediately to quarter in the meadows in front of the house. We were all perfectly thunderstruck and had not time to recover our scattered ideas before we heard the notes of the band and looking over toward the depot, saw the head of the column advancing into the field. On they came, a dark mass of human beings winding through the meadows like a great black serpent until the whole four thousand were in the two fields.”

—Lucy Buck, 1862

Judith Henry was eighty-five years old and unable to move from her bed when confederate sharpshooters burst into her house at Spring Hill Farm, near Manassas Junction, during The First Battle of Manassas. Picnickers from the suburbs of Washington DC sat on a nearby hill, in hoopskirts and top hats, watching what they thought would be a festive fight that would quickly end the war. Meanwhile, Judith's son, John, and daughter, Ellen, tried to carry their mother away from the battle in a cot. They knew they couldn't make it to their closest neighbors' home, which was a mile away, so they headed towards an old spring house tucked into a depression that seemed safer than their house on top of Henry Hill.

But a depression isn't any safer from cannon fire than a hilltop. Surrounded by yelling soldiers from both sides, Judith begged to be taken back home. She wanted to die in her bedroom, rather than cowering in the dirt. After determined protest, Ellen and John hauled Judith back inside, but confederate soldiers followed with the intention of using the house as a blockade. Union soldiers knew a good trap when they saw one and quickly surrounded the house before opening fire on both the confederates and the family inside. Judith's neck leaked blood. Her flank blew open. Her foot evaporated. All around her she heard screams, horses, rifles. The air filled with smoke, and

canon balls flew through her parlor wall. As the war encircled her home, like many women who would soon find themselves in similar positions, she refused to leave. Judith died that afternoon, the only civilian casualty of The First Battle of Manassas. Her daughter, who climbed into the hearth in the center of the home, the safest place she could find, suffered permanent hearing loss, but lived to tell the story.^{xcii}

What most people don't understand about the word civilian is that during times of war it is nearly synonymous with woman.^{xciii} During The Civil War ninety percent of the male population in the South either volunteered or was conscripted into the confederate military. By the end of the war, both deaf, limping, old men and ten-year-old boys were forced to fight in what was referred to as "The Lost Cause."^{xciv} This meant women, many of whom had never tilled a field or killed a hog, were left to find a way to clothe, feed, and shelter their children (often ten or more children) as battles surrounded them. Women had to make life-altering decisions: should they stay in their family houses while they were occupied and shot with shell fire, or join the growing numbers who had become refugees?^{xcv} As they made these decisions, the meaning of home in Virginia drastically changed.

Women in Virginia faced more conflict than much of the south because they were stuck directly between The Union and Confederate capitals.

Winchester, for example, changed hands 76 times. While men knew they would be surrounded by death on the battlefield, women were unexpectedly forced into a war zone. Many women, like Judith Henry, found the front lines running through their dining rooms. Those who abandoned their homes were followed by battle wherever they moved. Even if they didn't want to leave, as their homes were flattened to their foundations many women had no choice but to gather their children and head to new locations in search of food, clothing, medicine, and safety from attacks.

This move was relatively easy for some women who could relocate to their families' summer homes or secondary plantations. Sarah Dandridge and her family, for example, worried for their safety as troops headed towards their home in New Kent, Virginia. Since the trains were unpredictable and often full of wounded soldiers on their way to hospitals in Richmond, the family made arrangements with a local train conductor who agreed to blow the whistle upon approaching their home with a train that had room in the boxcars. When they heard the signal, the family ran towards the tracks with all the possessions they

could carry and hopped the train, which took them to their second home in Chester, Virginia. The Dandridges suffered through constant bouts of illness and several attacks, but they always had a comfortable roof over their heads.

For many of the yeoman, or hardworking middle class farmers, and the poorest people who didn't own property of their own, there was nowhere to move.^{xvii} Apartments were hard to find, and by the middle of the war prices had risen from sixty dollars a month for part of a house to over a hundred dollars a month for a single room. Many women and their children were forced to take up residence in abandoned churches, sheds, corn cribs, barns, cellars, and, most interestingly, boxcars. Unlike barns, boxcars offered inconspicuous shelter because they weren't associated with farms or plantations, which were subject to inevitable searches. Women tried to make these makeshift homes as comfortable as possible and brought carpets and what furniture they could find into the cars. They covered wobbly tables with linens and china for tea. Some even dragged marble stairs from nearby blown apart houses and set them near the doors of their boxcars to create a sense of permanence and stability. A few of the richer women who found themselves in boxcars managed to transport their pianos into their new shelters, and passersby would hear solemn songs drifting out

from the abandoned trains, shadowed in the flickering candlelight of the misty nights.

Before bringing their families into homelessness, women sought help from every avenue they could think of. The south was built on a complex system of local and familial alliances, and many women sought refuge from their well-off neighbors. Women who lived on wealthy plantations, if they were lucky enough to avoid occupation or battle in their front yards, still lived in large houses with enough space to house neighbors. They also ate pies, cakes, muffins, candy, and ham while their neighbors survived on as little as a single cracker a day. When rich, planter class neighbors wouldn't house yeoman and poor women, resentment grew, and poorer women started to question the purpose of the war.

In most southerners' minds the war wasn't about slavery, at least not in the beginning. For them it was a conflict over the structure of legislative power that hinged on local versus federal governance. The south had always been based on individual farmsteads, plantations, and local alliances, and therefore thought power should be kept at state and township level, rather than a national level. Without as many concentrated, industrial cities as the North, southerners

saw themselves as having radically different priorities and didn't think it was possible for the federal government to balance everyone's needs. Slavery was the most glaring example of the southern and northern states' different priorities and became the issue that represented the legislative conflict that started the war.

Not everyone in the south owned slaves though. Those who didn't own slaves, generally poorer people, started to wonder why they were putting their families through so much misery so that rich planters could keep what poor people didn't have. These questions were highlighted when landowners who held more than twenty slaves were given special privileges during the war. For example, men with twenty or more slaves had a much easier time obtaining furlough. The argument behind this policy was that women couldn't stop a slave uprising on their own; they needed men to protect them from their slaves. As the war went on, and resentment between the classes grew, these exemptions only served to further highlight the fact that local rights didn't mean equal rights even amongst whites. Class issues came to a head and poorer women started to riot against the rich who were still having dinner parties while the poor took up residence in corn cribs and buried children who had starved to death.

While their houses were burned and shot full of holes, the yards and gardens that women relied on for food also became casualties of war. As Union troops moved through the farms of Virginia, their armies destroyed as many fields as they could, sometimes even setting them on fire. They knew the confederacy relied on farms and plantations to supply their military with food. The more farms the union destroyed, the weaker they made the confederacy. If women and children had to starve in the process, so be it. Soldiers on both sides pillaged for whatever food they could find and left women and children with little or nothing to eat. Confederate soldiers pressured women into giving up their food, even when presented with starving children. They argued that it was women's patriotic duty to provide troops with whatever resources they had. Sometimes confederate soldiers even went so far as to accuse women who refused them food of treason.

The situation became even more difficult when soldiers on both sides stole women's horses, mules, and other livestock. It was hard enough for most women to plow a field. Without a horse, mule, or cow to help pull the plow, farming became almost impossible. Even women who managed to keep their livestock and had the strength to turn their fields, simply couldn't do all of the

work necessary to keep the farms going. There was a reason families were large, and with all the physically able men off at war, the work force of small farms was cut in half. It was impossible to perform the labor to grow enough food for women to feed themselves and their children as well as to provide rations to soldiers.

Meanwhile, inflation soared while confederate money lost its value. Women with destroyed fields faced 21st century prices for grocery staples in a 19th century economy. Eventually, middle and lower class confederate women turned on their own government. In Richmond, Mrs. Mary Jackson, a painter's wife, led 1000 women through Cary Street to demand provisions from the city. In another incident, women armed with axes attacked a government grain depot and hauled away ten barrels of flour. As their houses and the entire domestic sphere shattered around them, women no longer felt a need to remain loyal to the stalwartly dainty expectations for southern belles.

Eventually many women had enough. Tired of war, starvation, disease, constant fear, and displacement, they gave up their halting image of patriotism and wrote letters begging for their husbands to come home. They also sent letters to the confederate government seeking furloughs for their husbands so

the men could come home to replant the fields and rebuild their homes, which would give them some ounce of hope for survival. Thousands of these letters were intercepted and discarded by government officials.

But many men wanted to come home even without their wives' pleas. Tired of a war that many were never entirely invested in, some chose to "take a walk" in the direction of home. Historians estimate that in the confederacy as many as one in three soldiers deserted. In 1864, the Army of Northern Virginia lost eight percent of its soldiers in a single month.^{xcvii} Women were overjoyed to find their husbands walking towards what remained of their front porches, but if their husbands returned, they faced new risks. Conscript officers roamed the south searching for "lay-outs" or runaway soldiers. A newly plowed field often turned out to be too much of a risk as it pointed so clearly to the sudden presence of an able-bodied man who should be off fighting. Generally, it was even too dangerous for a man to stay in his own house. Women were threatened, accused of treason, and sometimes tortured by conscript officers who were looking for their husbands. Unless the house had a hidden cellar or secret attic access it was too dangerous for a man to stay at home. Caves, makeshift forest shelters, and far flung outbuildings became houses for runaway soldiers.

The war was full of unexpected changes for women. As they lost their homes, many experienced a shift in their sense of self and purpose. Some, seeing their own strength for the first time, started to think they should have rights more equal to those of men. These women laid the ground for the suffrage movement. Other women saw that their suffering was not all that different than African American refugees who made their way into the same cities for the same reasons: to find food, clothing, and shelter for their children. These women joined the abolitionist movement before the war was over and worked with African American women who laid the first foundations of the civil rights movement. But a lot of white southern women didn't want change. They wanted to go back to the way things were when they were safe and their children weren't hungry. They wanted to go back home. But it was too late. Their old homes no longer existed and their entire way of life had blown up along with their houses.

END NOTES

 CHAPTER ONE

ⁱ It should be noted on the outset that there is an important distinction between houses and homes. Houses are structures that we live in on a permanent basis that shelter us from the elements. Homes are houses that create a feeling of belonging. Houses are architectural; homes are social. While I tried to use these words appropriately throughout my work, sometimes it was necessary to shake it up a little bit and interchange them in order to avoid repetition.

ⁱⁱ See *Saving Monticello: The Levy Family's Epic Quest to Rescue the House that Jefferson Built*, and *Experiencing Mount Vernon* for more information about these houses in their ruined states.

ⁱⁱⁱ For information on the dig see:

Historic Jamestown. "The Dig." *Historic Jamestown*. Preserve Virginia and The National Park Service, n.d. web. 14 Jan 2013.

http://www.historicjamestowne.org/the_dig/

Historic Jamestown. *Historic Jamestown*. Preserve Virginia and The National Park Service, n.d. web. 14 Jan 2013. <http://historicjamestowne.org/>

Historic Jamestown. "Publications." *Historic Jamestown*. Preserve Virginia and The National Park Service, n.d. web. 14 Jan 2013.

http://apva.org/rediscovery/page.php?page_id=9

Lucchetti, Nicholas, William Kelso, Beverly Straube. *Jamestown Rediscovery Field Report 1994*. Jamestown: Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities, 1994.

^{iv} The Jamestown colonists knew that American Indians lived in North America. The Spanish had already been in the Americas for over a hundred years and brought stories of Indigenous Americans back to Europe. Previous unsuccessful English colonies had also encountered American Indians. The British didn't seem to understand quite how large the American Indian population in Virginia was though, and they certainly didn't think of Native Americans as altering

their environments in any significant way. To the colonists, America was an almost entirely wild place.

^v There are numerous well researched books and scholarly articles about the history of Jamestown. For the basic information in this chapter I consulted the websites of the sites that I visited and primary resources. For primary resources see footnote 9. For chronologies and timelines visit:

Historic Jamestowne. "History of Jamestown." *Historic Jamestowne*. Preserve Virginia and The National Park Service. N.d. web. 28 March 2013.

http://apva.org/rediscovery/page.php?page_id=6

Jamestown Settlement. "A Brief History of Jamestown." *Jamestown Settlement and Yorktown Visitor Center*. Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation. n.d. 21 Jan. 2013.

<http://www.historyisfun.org/History-Jamestown.htm>

Shifflett, Crandall. *Paspahegh: Visualizing A Seventeenth Century Algonquian Indian Village in the Virginia Chesapeake*. Blacksburg: Virginia Tech, 2009.

http://www.bcs.org/upload/pdf/ewic_ev09_s3paper2.pdf

Stebbins, Sarah. "A Short History of Jamestown." *Historic Jamestowne*. The National Park Service. 2011. web. 28 March 2013. <http://www.nps.gov/jame/historyculture/a-short-history-of-jamestown.htm>

"Timeline of Paspahegh-English Interaction." *Virtual Jamestown*. Virginia Center for Digital History and University of Virginia. web. 21 Jan. 2013.

<http://www.virtualjamestown.org/paspahegh/timeline.html>

The term "New World" is problematic because America was only new to colonists, not Native Americans.

^{vi} For a fascinating account of American Indians altering their landscapes see "The Artificial Wilderness" in Charles Mann's controversial *1491*.

Mann, Charles. *1491: New Revelations of the Americas Before Columbus*. New York: Random House, 2006.

Throughout my work I try to make a distinction between what people in their historic time periods would have thought of as unusual and what we think of as unusual in the 21st century. This is meant to highlight differences in concepts of culture throughout time, and shouldn't be confused with exoticism. For example, when I refer to strange fruits and vegetables like tomatoes and

pumpkins, I do not mean to say that I think Native Americans and their food are strange. Rather, I mean to show that European colonists, who had never seen tomatoes or pumpkins before because they are native to the Americas, would have thought they were unusual.

vii As with Jamestown, there are numerous books and articles that cover Eastern Woodlands and Algonquian Speaking Nations. I consulted the website for the sites that I visited and found the following brief histories and books particularly helpful:

BRIEF HISTORIES

Brimhall, Melanie, Carole Nash, Karenne Wood (Monacan). *Beyond Jamestown: Virginia Indians Past and Present*. Virginia Museum of Natural History, Virginia Foundation for the Humanities, and Virginia Indian Heritage Program. 2008.

web. 16 Jan 2013.

<http://virginiaindians.pwnet.org/resources/BeyondJamestown.pdf>

Davidson, Thomas. "Despite loss of Power, Territory, and Population, Powhatans Retain Identity in Late 17th Century Virginia." *Jamestown Settlement and Yorktown Victory Center*. Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation, n.d. web. 15 Jan 2013. <http://www.historyisfun.org/powhatan-identity-in-late-17th-century-virginia.htm>

Egloff, Nancy. "Pocahontas and the Powhatans of Early Virginia." *Jamestown Settlement and Yorktown Victory Center*. Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation, n.d. web. 15 Jan 2013. <http://www.historyisfun.org/pocahontas-and-the-powhatans-of-virginia.htm>

Egloff, Nancy. "'Trusty Servants' and 'Converted Infidels': Cultural Intermediaries in Early Virginia." *Jamestown Settlement and Yorktown Victory Center*. Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation, n.d. web. 15 Jan 2013. <http://www.historyisfun.org/cultural-intermediaries.htm>

Historic Jamestowne. "History of Jamestown." *Historic Jamestowne*. Preserve Virginia and The National Park Service. N.d. web. 28 March 2013. http://apva.org/rediscovery/page.php?page_id=6

National Park Service. "The Powhatan Indian World." *Historic Jamestowne*. National Park Service. 3 March. 2013. web. 25 March 2013. <http://www.nps.gov/jame/historyculture/the-powhatan-indian-world.htm>

"Timeline of Paspahegh-English Interaction." *Virtual Jamestown*. Virginia Center

for Digital History and University of Virginia. web. 21 Jan. 2013.

<http://www.virtualjamestown.org/paspahegh/timeline.html>

BOOKS

Egloff, Keith, Deborah Woodward. *First People: The Early Indians of Virginia*.

Charlottesville: The University of Virginia Press in association with the Virginia Dept. of Historic Resources, 2006.

Richter, Daniel. *Facing East From Indian Country: A Native History of Early America*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003.

Rountree, Helen. *Before and After Jamestown: Virginia's Powhatans and their Predecessors*. Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 2002. Print.

Rountree, Helen. *Pocahontas, Powhatan, Opechancanough: Three Lives Changed by Jamestown*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2005.

Rountree, Helen. *The Powhatan Indians of Virginia: Their Traditional Culture*. Norman: University of Ohio Press, 1989.

viii American Indians tried to teach the colonists how to farm in the New World, but the first colonists wouldn't listen. Many of the early colonists, being gentlemen, saw farming as a task that was beneath them. While they knew they might have to lower themselves to farming, they expected to trade goods with the American Indians in exchange for food. Unfortunately for everyone involved, the colonists arrived during an unusual period of drought and nearby American Indians didn't always have enough food to trade. For the Algonquian Speaking Nations refusing anything, including food, to people who needed it when you had extra was an amoral act. With the shortages, however, several nearby tribes feared they would starve if they gave their winter stocks to the colonists who kept attacking them. They hid in the woods rather than being faced with colonists asking for food. Eventually they threatened to move rather than continuing to feed the colonists. This, in addition to violent conflict, is why many American Indians left Virginia. Some did remain, however, and are still in the area, trying to gain recognition over 400 years later.

ix Primary Sources were invaluable for my work in this chapter and throughout this book. To understand life in Jamestown as the settlers saw it I consulted: Barbour, Philip ed. *The Jamestown Voyages Under the First Charter, 1606-1609: Documents Relating to the Founding of Jamestown and History of the Jamestown Colony*. London: The Hakluyt Society, 2010.

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- Haile, Edward Wright ed. *Jamestown Narratives: Eyewitness Accounts of The Colony of Virginia: The First Decade: 1607-1617*. London: Round House, 1998.
- Smith, John. *Captain John Smith: A Selection of His Writings*. Kupperman, Karen Ordahl ed. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988.
- Smith, John. *A General Historie of Virginia, New England, and the Summer Isles*. 1624. Charleston: Nabu Press, 2010.

^x I avoided using the term village to refer to Native American communities throughout this work. The term village implies a small, rural, somewhat makeshift community. Many of the Native American communities that the English settlers encountered were larger than English villages and were larger than most English settlements during the first hundred or so years of Euro-American history. In addition, the English nearly generally referred to Native American communities as towns, rather than villages.

^{xi} The term Tudor Style isn't as precise as some architectural historians wish it could be, as the popularity of half-timbered houses doesn't line up exactly with the dates of the Tudor Dynasty. I decided to use Tudor anyway because that is the term most people understand.

^{xii} McAlester, Lee, Virginia McAlester. *A Field Guide to American Houses*. New York: Knopf, 1984.

^{xiii} For more information about mud and stud houses and the Lincolnshire tradition of architecture see:
Cousins, Rodney. *Lincolnshire Building in the Mud and Stud Tradition*.
Lincolnshire: Heritage Trust of Lincolnshire, 2000.

^{xiv} One way to imagine a lack of individual identity and complete loyalty to a monarch is to think about signing up for the selective service or being drafted. Many American men don't ever want to go to war and don't agree with America's political motivations, but they are required to sign up for selective service anyway. All American men do this, putting aside their individuality and making part of themselves an extension of the government. In the middle ages the vast majority of your choices and actions would have been determined for you, in a different, but similar way to participating in selective service.

^{xv} One of the most influential books that I read while doing the research for this project was Witold Rybczynski's *Home*. It offers a compelling and enjoyable history of the impact of architecture (including the chimney) on the development of privacy and comfort in the home.

Rybczynski, Witold. *Home: A Short History of an Idea*. New York: Penguin, 1986.

^{xvi} For more information on Pocahontas see footnote 6.

^{xvii} I tried to avoid using the term tribe to refer to groups of Native Americans. Most Native American groups refer to themselves as nations, which are more complex than tribes. In certain circumstances, however, the term nation becomes confusing because it also refers to a country. In these rare cases I use the word tribe to quickly avoid confusion.

^{xviii} Princess is a highly charged term when referring to Pocahontas. While she was Powhatan's daughter, her social status, as well as that of her sisters', bore no resemblance to European princesses, partly because social positions were passed down through the mother rather than the father. I use the term princess here to highlight that this story is part of the mythology that surrounds Pocahontas, rather than historical fact.

^{xix} While Protestantism, obviously, isn't the national religion of American, and while I'm not a protestant myself, American culture as a whole has been so affected by the majority protestant population that, whether we are aware of it or not, it filters the way Americans see the world.

^{xx} Even though it was one of my main themes, I had a lot of difficulty writing about American identity as I put together my thesis. Many of the people who read drafts of these essays said that it is almost impossible to define an American identity because we have such a diverse population. But, I believe that there is a difference between generalizing people and acknowledging how culture shapes us. Can you say that Americans all like big cars? No. But am I offended when a Spaniard makes fun of Americans for liking big cars? No, because the majority of Americans DO like big cars. Making generalizations is always a dangerous pastime, especially when you get away from cars and into

perceptions of the world. However, I do think there are certain cultural elements that bind Americans together. To ignore that is essentially to ignore the effects of the cultural and physical environment that we are surrounded by. If we ignore this background it's difficult to understand how we are motivated and why we think about things in the way we do. Like it or not, Americans are going to perceive the world differently than Haitians. This doesn't make Americans or Haitians better or worse than each other, it simply makes us different, which is a good thing. Many scholars seem to think that any time you say someone is different than yourself that you are seeing them as lesser than yourself. I think this is a sad and ignorant assumption in the scholarly world. Difference does not equate lesser value. To talk about what brings us together as a culture and separates us from other cultures does not involve judgment, it simply involves observation and the understanding that there are always exceptions to generalizations.

^{xxi} Harjo, Joy. *How We Become Human*. New York: Norton, 2002. Print. (123-124)

CHAPTER 2

^{xxii} Smith, John. *A General Historie of Virginia, New England, and the Summer Isles*. 1624. Charleston: Nabu Press, 2010. (101)

^{xxiii} The Governor's Land. *The Governor's Land*. The Governor's Land. 2012. web. 16 Jan 2013. <http://governorsland.com/about.html>

^{xxiv} The Governor's Land. "Premiere Williamsburg Real Estate Listings. *The Governor's Land*. The Governor's Land. 2012. web. 16 Jan 2013. <http://governorsland.com/real-estate.html>

^{xxv} Gentleman farmers were renaissance men wealthy enough to dabble in science and the arts when they weren't managing their plantations and leading the country. They, by a matter of form, were required to put up an experimental house garden as well as cash crops to display their communion with the land, scientific know-how, and self-sufficiency. At The Governor's Land the house garden is replaced by its symbolic remnant, the large, neatly kept, private lawn, but the sentiment and status of these "country estates" remains.

^{xxvi} The Governor's Land provides a link to a .pdf of a surprisingly honest report of the Paspahagh archeological dig on the front page of their website. The Virtual Jamestown project, a collaboration between The Virginia Center for Digital History and The University of Virginia backs up their history and provides much more information from the dig:

The Governor's Land. "The Governor's Land, A Part of History." *The Governor's Land*. The Governor's Land. 2012. web. 16 Jan 2013.

<http://governorsland.com/PDF/history.pdf>

Virtual Jamestown. Virginia Center for Digital History and University of Virginia. web. 21 Jan. 2013. <http://www.virtualjamestown.org/page2.html>

^{xxvii} White people may have forgotten the Paspahagh, but the Paspahagh have not forgotten themselves. While there are very few Paspahagh left in Virginia, they are there. 400 years later, they are still seeking official recognition from the U.S. Government.

^{xxviii} I tried to use American Indian terminology, such as Yeehawkawn, whenever possible.

^{xxix} While visiting the reconstruction of Paspahagh gave me a more visceral sense of how the yeehawkawn were built, a few sources helped me flesh out the building process:

Rountree, Helen. *The Powhatan Indians of Virginia: Their Traditional Culture*. Norman: University of Ohio Press, 1989.

Smith, John. *The Generall Historie of Virginia, New-England, and the Summer Isles*. Richmond: Republished at Franklin Press, 1819.

"Understanding Paspahagh Structures" *Virtual Jamestown*. Virginia Center for Digital History and University of Virginia. web. 21 Jan. 2013. <http://www.virtualjamestown.org/paspahagh/structure8.html>

^{xxx} In his accounts of early Virginia, John Smith describes the virtues of nearby American Indian homes and writes that they are smokey but stay as warm as stoves in the winter.

Smith, John. *The Generall Historie of Virginia, New-England, and the Summer Isles*. Richmond: Republished at Franklin Press, 1819.

^{xxx} See footnote 7 for more information about Paspahegh History and Culture as well as that of other Algonquian Speaking Nations.

^{xxxii} An interesting counterpoint to leaders and high status people building extravagantly large houses is Uruguay's president, Jose' Mujica, who chose to continue living in the modest home he and his wife had lived in for years rather than moving to the presidential mansion:

Romero, Simon. "After Years in Solitary, an Austere Life as Uruguay's President." *The New York Times*. 5 Jan. 2013, Washington Ed.: A1. Print.

^{xxxiii} For more information about the cultural dynamics of the Paspahegh and Powhatan nations I highly recommend Helen Rountree's Books. For a short version read the National Park Service's history of the Paspahegh:

National Park Service. "The Powhatan Indian World." *Historic Jamestowne*.

National Park Service. 3 March. 2013. web. 25 March 2013.

<http://www.nps.gov/jame/historyculture/the-powhatan-indian-world.htm>

Rountree, Helen. *Before and After Jamestown: Virginia's Powhatans and their Predecessors*. Gainesville: Univesrity of Florida Press, 2002. Print.

Rountree, Helen. *The Powhatan Indians of Virginia: Their Traditional Culture*. Norman: University of Ohio Press, 1989.

CHAPTER 3

^{xxxiv} Weems, Mason Lock. "The Fable of George Washington and the Cherry Tree." *The Papers of George Washington*. Mount Vernon Ladies Association and The University of Virginia. 2011 web. 29 March 2013.

<http://gwpapers.virginia.edu/articles/weems.html>

^{xxxv} The information for the basic biographical sketch in this chapter was taken from the Mount Vernon Ladies Association website and University of Virginia's collection of George Washington's Papers:

Mount Vernon Ladies Association. "A Brief Biography of George Washington."

George Washington's Mount Vernon. Mount Vernon Ladies Association.

2013. web. 28 Jan 2013. <http://www.mountvernon.org/meet-george-washington/biography-and-influence>

Mount Vernon Ladies Association. "The George Washington Timeline." *George Washington's Mount Vernon*. Mount Vernon Ladies Association. 2013. web. 28 Jan 2013. <http://www.mountvernon.org/content/timeline>

Lengel, Edward ed. *The Papers of George Washington Digital Edition*. University of Virginia Press. 2008. web. 28 Jan 2013. <http://rotunda.upress.virginia.edu/founders/GEWN>

xxxvi For an extended chronology of the development of the house view the following:

Mount Vernon Ladies Association. "Growth of Mount Vernon." *George Washington's Mount Vernon*. Mount Vernon Ladies Association. 2013. web. 28 Jan 2013. www.mountvernon.org/educational-resources/encyclopedia/growth-mount-vernon

Mount Vernon Ladies Association. "Development of Mount Vernon." *George Washington's Mount Vernon*. Mount Vernon Ladies Association. 2013. web. 28 Jan 2013. <http://www.mountvernon.org/educationalresources/encyclopedia/development-mount-vernon>

Mount Vernon Ladies Association. "The Mansion." *George Washington's Mount Vernon*. Mount Vernon Ladies Association. 2013. web. 28 Jan 2013. <http://www.mountvernon.org/educationalresources/encyclopedia/mansion>

xxxvii The western front wasn't exactly symmetrical because of remodeling complications. I never noticed the asymmetry of the windows until I was told to look for it. Once you know about it though, the asymmetry is surprisingly glaring.

xxxviii You can find several collections of first hand accounts written by visitors to Mount Vernon. The one I referenced was:

Lee, Jean B. *Experiencing Mount Vernon: Eyewitness Accounts, 1784-1865*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2006.

xxxix Dalzell provides a fascinating cultural interpretation of Mount Vernon and other Colonial Architecture in *George Washington's Mount Vernon*.

Dazell, Robert. *George Washington's Mount Vernon: At Home in Revolutionary America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1998.

^{xl} The Royal Institute of British Architects has created a handy and insightful online encyclopedia of Architecture. I used these articles to learn about Palladianism:

Royal Institute of British Architects. "The Grand Tour." *architecture.com*. Royal Institute of British Architects. 2011. web. 29 Jan 2013.

<http://www.architecture.com/LibraryDrawingsAndPhotographs/Palladio/AndreaPalladio/TheGrandTour.aspx>

Royal Institute of British Architects. "Inigo Jones." *architecture.com*. Royal Institute of British Architects. 2011. web. 29 Jan 2013.

<http://www.architecture.com/LibraryDrawingsAndPhotographs/Palladio/PalladianBritain/Architects/InigoJones.aspx>

Royal Institute of British Architects. "Neo-Palladianism." *architecture.com*. Royal Institute of British Architects. 2011. web. 29 Jan 2013.

<http://www.architecture.com/LibraryDrawingsAndPhotographs/Palladio/AndreaPalladio/PalladianismDefinitions/NeoPalladianism.aspx>

Royal Institute of British Architects. "Palladianism some Definitions."

architecture.com. Royal Institute of British Architects. 2011. web. 29 Jan 2013. <http://www.architecture.com/LibraryDrawingsAndPhotographs/Palladio/AndreaPalladio/PalladianismDefinitions/Palladianism-definitions.aspx>

^{xli} Duncan Faherty and Robert Dalzell provided much of the inspiration for this chapter. In his book *Remodeling the Nation* Faherty takes a fascinating look, not only at the history of early American architecture, but at how the vocabulary of architecture permeates American English in phrases such as "Founding Fathers," "framework of the Constitution," and "constructing an argument." Robert Dalzell is probably the leading scholar on early American Architecture, and definitely on Mount Vernon. I was excited whenever I found a source written by him. These were particularly useful:

Dalzell, Robert F. "Constructing Independence: Monticello, Mount Vernon, and the Men Who Built Them." *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 26.4 (1993): 543-580.

Dalzell, Robert. *George Washington's Mount Vernon: At Home in Revolutionary America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1998.

Faherty, Duncan. *Remodeling the Nation: The Architecture of American Identity, 1776-1858*. Durham: University of New Hampshire Press, 2007.

CHAPTER 4

^{xlii} James Monroe was America's 5th president and lived at Ash Lawn-Highland near Charlottesville, Virginia. For more information about his house see chapter 5.

^{xliii} Clifton Ellis and Rebecca Ginsburg have put together an anthology of essays called *Cabin, Quarter, Plantation* that offers an excellent balance of breadth and depth on domestic slave architecture. It was one of the most foundational resources for this chapter. I found the introduction as well as these essays particularly helpful:

Ellis, Clifton, Rebecca Ginsburg. *Cabin, Quarter, Plantation: Architecture and Landscapes of North American Slavery*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010.

DuBois, W.E.B., "The Home of the Slave." Clifton and Ginsburg 17-26. Fesler, Garrett. "Excavating the Spaces and Interpreting the Places of Enslaved Africans and Their Descendents." Clifton and Ginsburg 27-50.

Upton, Dell. "White and Black Landscapes in 18th Century Virginia." Clifton and Ginsburg 121-140.

Ellis, Clifton. "Building for 'Our Family, Black and White': The Changing Form of the Slave House in Antebellum Virginia. Clifton and Ginsburg 141-155.

Heath, Barbara. "Space and Place in Plantation Quarters in Virginia, 1700-1825." Clifton and Ginsburg 156-176.

Anthony, Carl: "The Big House and The Slave Quarters: African Contributions to the New World." Clifton and Ginsburg 177-192.

^{xliv} Anthony, Carl: "The Big House and The Slave Quarters: African Contributions to the New World." Clifton and Ginsburg 178.

^{xlv} When slavery started in America the few African families that arrived intact were almost always broken apart and sold to different plantations in order to prevent alliances from forming. Later, as families became more prominent amongst slaves, many slave holders tried to keep them together because slaves were less likely to run away if they had to leave their families behind.

^{xlvi} Garrett Felser and Barbara Heath provided much of the information that I used in this chapter about the forms of resistance in slaves' homes:
 Fesler, Garrett. "Excavating the Spaces and Interpreting the Places of Enslaved Africans and Their Descendents." Clifton and Ginsburg 27-50.
 Heath, Barbara. "Space and Place in Plantation Quarters in Virginia, 1700-1825." Clifton and Ginsburg 156-176.

^{xlvi} Some African American oral histories refute accusations that slaves stole goods from masters as a form of protest. Other oral histories claim this history as an empowered act.

^{xlvi} Dennis Pogue, the associate director at Mount Vernon provides an excellent history of George Washington's relationship with and reactions to slavery. His essay "The Domestic Architecture of Slavery at George Washington's Mount Vernon" provided an in-depth supplement to the wealth of information available on Mount Vernon's website.

Pogue, Dennis J. "The Domestic Architecture of Slavery at George Washington's Mount Vernon." *Winterthur Portfolio*. 37.1 (Spring 2002): 3-22.
<http://www.jstor.org.proxy.lib.iastate.edu/stable/10.1086/376340>
 Mount Vernon Ladies Association. "George Washington and Slavery." *George Washington's Mount Vernon*. Mount Vernon Ladies Association. 2013. web. 28 Jan 2013. <http://www.mountvernon.org/educationalresources/encyclopedia/george-washington-and-slavery>

^{xlvi} Mount Vernon Ladies Association. "Marquis de Lafayette's Plan for Slavery." *George Washington's Mount Vernon*. Mount Vernon Ladies Association. 2013. web. 28 Jan 2013. <http://www.mountvernon.org/educational-resources/encyclopedia/lafayettes-plan-slavery>

¹ Mount Vernon Ladies Association. "Greenhouse Slave Quarters." *George Washington's Mount Vernon*. Mount Vernon Ladies Association. 2013. web. 28 Jan 2013. <http://www.mountvernon.org/educationalresources/encyclopedia/greenhouse-slave-quarters>
 Mount Vernon Ladies Association. "House for Families." *George Washington's Mount Vernon*. Mount Vernon Ladies Association. 2013. web. 28 Jan 2013.

<http://www.mountvernon.org/educational-resources/encyclopedia/house-families>

Mount Vernon Ladies Association. "Slave Quarters." *George Washington's Mount Vernon*. Mount Vernon Ladies Association. 2013. web. 28 Jan 2013.
<http://www.mountvernon.org/educational-resources/encyclopedia/slave-quarters>

^{li} Ellis, Clifton. "Building for 'Our Family, Black and White': The Changing Form of the Slave House in Antebellum Virginia. Clifton and Ginsburg 141-155.

^{lii} Some scholars theorize that the duplex and triplex slave cabins built close together in regimental rows became the model for low-income apartments in the early 20th century.

^{liii} Visiting the Frontier Culture Museum in Staunton provided my first insight into the origin of porches. Carl Anthony's "The Big House and Slave Quarters" provided an excellent supplement to the museum's educational materials. Anthony, Carl: "The Big House and The Slave Quarters: African Contributions to the New World." Clifton and Ginsburg 177-192.

CHAPTER 5

^{liv} American Indian architecture in Florida includes porches, but the nations in Virginia didn't attach porches to their houses. The Powhatan sometimes worked under stand-alone porch like structures, but these were more like awnings or shade screens than porches.

^{lv} Appalachian Studies is a slowly growing field. A few survey histories of the area have recently been published. I used John Alexander William's aptly titled *Appalachia: A History*, and supplemented his work with background sheets from the library of congress.

Library of Congress. "The Germans in America: Chronology." *Library of Congress European Reading Room*. Library of Congress. 21 Sept. 2010. web. 4 Feb. 2013. <http://www.loc.gov/rr/european/imde/germchro.html>
 Library of Congress. "America as a Religious Refuge: The Seventeenth

Century." *Library of Congress, Religion and the Founding of the American Republic*. Library of Congress. 23 July. 2010. web. 4 Feb. 2013.

<http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/religion/rel01.html>

Williams, John Alexander. *Appalachia, a History*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002.

Sometimes people refer to this early period of Irish immigrants as the Scots-Irish or Scotch-Irish who has roots in Scotland. The distinction didn't seem necessary to me, so I just refer to Irish immigrants as Irish.

^{lvi} Successive crop failures in Ireland made finding enough food a struggle for most commoners. While families tried to scrape together meager meals, the linen market plummeted. This left many flax farmers who were already struggling to grow enough food without the income to buy the necessities they were used to producing themselves. At the same time rents rose steeply, and new taxes fueled by prejudice added further economic pressures. These factors came together to cause a period of starvation on par with that of the potato famine of the 19th century. Immigration was the only option for many Irish families. Meanwhile in Germany, peasants were still subject to a feudal society. They saw commoners in neighboring countries gaining more rights and grew frustrated with the inequality and unjust labor expectations that trapped them in the middle ages. Many Germans eventually left their homes with the dream of owning their own farms in the colonies.

Both groups also fled violent, religious persecution. Word of religious freedom in Pennsylvania reached Europe where the concept was essentially unheard of. Many people decided the four to seven years of indentured servitude they would have to endure in order to pay for their passage to the colonies was a better fate than the torture and death that loomed over Protestants at the time.

^{lvii} Jefferson, Thomas. *Notes on the State of Virginia*. 1787. Penden, William ed. New York: Norton, 1954. (85)

^{lviii} Franklin, Benjamin. "Observations Concerning the Increase of Mankind." 1783. *The Papers of Benjamin Franklin*. Leonard W. Labaree et al. ed. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008. (225–34)

^{lix} Appalachian culture has spread from Georgia to Maine along the Appalachian Mountain ranges.

^{lx} Dell Upton edited a wonderful book called *America's Architectural Roots*, which looks at how building customs brought by immigrants have affected American Architecture. It was the starting point for this chapter.

Upton, Dell ed. *America's Architectural Roots: Ethnic Groups the Built America*. Washington DC: The Preservation Press, 1986.

The McAlesters' *A Field Guide to American Homes* was another invaluable source while working on this project. The first three chapters were particularly useful for this chapter.

McAlester, Lee, Virginia McAlester. *A Field Guide to American Houses*. New York: Knopf, 1984.

^{lxi} Later developments in plaster helped to solve these problems. Improved log joinery also led to the development of the modern cabin, which, once again, is a symbol of status.

^{lxii} Because of these construction differences most people at the time used the word cabin to refer to a make-shift shelter or temporary log homes. A log house, on the other hand, was a symbol of permanence and care.

^{lxiii} It was surprisingly difficult to find sources about Appalachian architecture, but the following essays about how culture shaped architecture in Virginia, especially the Blue Ridge gave me the information I needed to start formulating the ideas for this chapter:

Carson, Cary, Norman F. Barka, William S. Kelso, Gary Wheeler Stone, Dell Upton. "Impermanent Architecture in the Southern American Colonies." *Winterthur Portfolio*. 16.2/3 (Summer-Autumn 1981): 135-196.

Carson, Gary, Joanne Bowen, Willie Graham, Martha McCartney, Lorena Walsh. "New World, Real World: Improvising English Architecture in Seventeenth-Century Virginia." *Journal of Southern History*. 74.1 (Feb. 2008): 31-58.

Horning, Audrey. "Myth, Migration, and Material Culture: Archeology and the

Ulster Influence on Appalachia." *Historical Archeology*. 36.4 (2002): 129-149.

- Kniffen, Fred, Henry Glassie. "Building in Wood in the Eastern United States: A Time Place Perspective." *Geographical Review*. 56.1 (Jan 1966): 40-66.
- Landsman, Ned. "Roots, Routes, and Rootedness: Diversity, Migration, and Toleration in Mid-Atlantic Pluralism." *Early American Studies*. 2.2 (2004): 267-309.

^{lxiv} For general information about Shenandoah National Park see:
National Park Service. *Shenandoah National Park*. The National Park Service U.S. Department of the Interior. 26 Feb 2013. web. 29 Feb 2013.
<http://www.nps.gov/shen/index.htm>

^{lxv} The National Park service is attempting to reconcile its past and is currently working with descendents of the families they displaced in order to create Shenandoah National Park. They are hoping to create a more balanced and honest history of the park in their educational materials. Part of that effort can be seen in the fact that I got the leads for much of my information about displacement from the park's website. The park has published several articles by Audrey Horning, the leading scholar on the displacement caused by the park, directly on their site. Her information can be corroborated by other archeologists and oral history. The following sources were particularly useful:

Dean, Eddie. "Appalachian Trail of Tears." *Washington City Paper*. 28 Feb 1997.

Horning, Audrey J. "Shenandoah's Secret History." *Archeology*. 53.1 (Feb 2002): 44-51.

Horning, Audrey J. "Survey of Rural Mountain Settlement: Archeological Investigations in Nicholson, Corbin, and Weakley Hollows." *Shenandoah National Park*. The National Park Service U.S. Department of the Interior. 1 March 2013. web. 6 March 2013.
<http://www.nps.gov/shen/historyculture/mtnsettlement.htm>

Horning, Audrey J. "When Past is Present: Archeology of the Displaced in Shenandoah National Park." *Shenandoah National Park*. The National Park Service U.S. Department of the Interior. 3 March 2013. web. 6 March 2013.
<http://www.nps.gov/shen/historyculture/displaced.htm>

Laing, Carol. *Children of Shenandoah*. Children of Shenandoah. n.d. web. 6 March 2013. <http://www.usgennet.org/usa/va/shenan/>

National Park Service. "Mountain Residents." *Shenandoah National Park*. The National Park Service U.S. Department of the Interior. 26 Feb 2013. web. 29 Feb 2013. <http://www.nps.gov/shen/historyculture/mtnresidents.htm>

^{lxvi} Horning, Audrey J. "Shenandoah's Secret History." *Archeology*. 53.1 (Feb 2002): 44-51.

^{lxvii} One of the best places to see old Appalachian homesteads is The Frontier Culture Museum in Staunton. This living museum holds a collection of log and clapboard houses that were moved from nearby areas, as well as traditional Irish, German, English, and West African houses that show immigrants' influence on early American architecture.

^{lxviii} For much more information about Weston, including a great collection of oral histories, read *Weston, A Place Apart*, put out by the Warrenton Antiquarian Society.

Anderson, Betsy ed. *Weston: A Place Apart*. Morrisville NC: Lulu Enterprises, 2010.

^{lxix} A special thanks to Richard Anderson, my Grandmother, Mary Margaret Byergo, who is in the Warrenton Antiquarian Society and has worked with Weston for decades, and my Grandfather, Keith Byergo, who suggested I visit Weston and drove me out to meet with Richard.

CHAPTER 6

^{lxx} ^{lxx} Phillips, Leonard. *Monticello Mountaintop*. 2012. *Thomas Jefferson Monticello*. Web. 11 Feb. 2013.

^{lxxi} Carson, Cary, Norman F. Barka, William S. Kelso, Gary Wheeler Stone, Dell Upton. "Impermanent Architecture in the Southern American Colonies." *Winterthur Portfolio*. 16.2/3 (Summer-Autumn 1981): 135-196.

^{lxxii} National Park Service. "Tobacco: Colonial Cultivation Methods." *Historic Jamestowne*. National Park Service Department of the Interior. 12 March 2013. web. 6 March 2013.

<http://www.nps.gov/jame/historyculture/tobacco-colonial-cultivation-methods.htm>

^{lxxiii} Jefferson, Thomas. *Notes on the State of Virginia*. 1781. Peden, William. New York: Norton, 1954. (108)

^{lxxiv} Jefferson, Thomas. *Notes on the State of Virginia*. 1781. Peden, William. New York: Norton, 1954. (152)

^{lxxv} Peterson, Merrill D. *Visitors to Monticello*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1989. (12)

^{lxxvi} Jefferson's interest in architecture is extremely well documented and historians are always learning new information about the meaning of his designs. For more information consult the following sources:

Faherty, Duncan. *Remodeling the Nation: The Architecture of American Identity: 1776-1858*. Durham: University of New Hampshire, 2007.

Howard, Hugh. *Dr. Kimball and Mr. Jefferson: Rediscovering the Founding Fathers of American Architecture*. New York: Bloomsbury, 2006.

Hugh, Howard. *Thomas Jefferson, Architect: The Legacy of Our Third President*. New York: Rizzoli, 2003.

Thomas Jefferson Foundation. *Thomas Jefferson Monticello*. Thomas Jefferson Foundation. 2012. web. 11 Feb. 2013. <http://www.monticello.org/>

Wilson, Guy. "Thomas Jefferson's Classical Architecture: An American Agenda." *Thomas Jefferson, The Classical World, and Early America*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2011.

^{lxxvii} Peterson, Merrill D. *Visitors to Monticello*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1989. (35)

^{lxxviii} Peterson, Merrill D. *Visitors to Monticello*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1989. (34)

^{lxxix} As can be expected, The Thomas Jefferson Foundation has a well documented history of Monticello both during and after Jefferson's life: Thomas Jefferson Foundation. "Monticello in Transition." *Thomas Jefferson*

Monticello. Thomas Jefferson Foundation. 2012. web. 11 Feb. 2013.
<http://www.monticello.org/site/house-and-gardens/monticello-transition>
 Thomas Jefferson Foundation. "Sale of Monticello." *Thomas Jefferson Monticello*.
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<http://www.monticello.org/site/house-and-gardens/sale-monticello>
 Thomas Jefferson Foundation. "Jefferson Monroe Levy." *Thomas Jefferson Monticello*. Thomas Jefferson Foundation. 2012. web. 11 Feb. 2013.
<http://www.monticello.org/site/house-and-gardens/jefferson-monroe-levy>

^{lxxx} Ash Lawn-Highland. *Ash Lawn-Highland*. William and Mary. n.d. web. 11 Feb. 2013. <http://www.ashlawnhighland.org/>

^{lxxxi} Despite his current lack of popularity, people in Monroe's time apparently like him a lot. When reelected for a second term, he received every electoral vote except for one. This nay saying vote was symbolically cast so that Washington would remain the only unanimously elected president.

^{lxxxii} More information about what Jefferson carries in his pockets as well as numerous quirky details about his life can be found on the Thomas Jefferson Foundation's "Day in a Life" pages:
 Thomas Jefferson Foundation. "I Rise With the Sun." *Thomas Jefferson Monticello*.
 Thomas Jefferson Foundation. 2012. web. 11 Feb. 2013.

CHAPTER 7

^{lxxxiii} Some people, rightfully, have no love for Jefferson, despite his innovative and revolutionary spirit. As I mention, he did have large flaws some of which were that he owned slaves, although morally opposed to slavery he didn't end it, he was wary of immigrants, and he was responsible for the Lewis and Clark expedition, which led to the displacement and genocide of western American Indian nations.

^{lxxxiv} For more information about the African American history of Alexandria see the following:
 Alexandria Black History Museum. "Alexandria's African American History."

Alexandria Black History Museum. City of Alexandria. 2013. web. 18 Feb. 2013.

<http://alexandriava.gov/historic/blackhistory/default.aspx?id=37214>

City of Alexandria. *A Remarkable and Courageous Journey: A Guide to Alexandria's African American History*. City of Alexandria. n.d. web. 18 Feb. 2013

<http://alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/historic/info/blackhistory/BH CourageousJourney.pdf>

lxxxv The Black History Museum of Alexandria has written a good history of The Slave Pen:

Alexandria Black History Museum. "A Loathsome Prison: Slave Trading in Antebellum Alexandria." *Alexandria Black History Museum*. City of Alexandria. 2013. web. 18 Feb. 2013. <http://alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/historic/info/blackhistory/BH Lesson Plan Slave Trading.pdf>

lxxxvi The Freedom House provided much of my background information about the circumstances that shaped the domestic slave trade in the early 1800's. The Schomberg Center for Research in Black Culture, funded and managed by the New York Public Library, helped me flesh out my research on the domestic slave trade.

Schomberg Center for Research in Black Culture. "The Domestic Slave Trade." *In Motion: The African American Migration Experience*. Schomberg Center for Research in Black Culture. 2005. web. 18 Feb 2013. <http://www.inmotionaame.org/migrations/topic.cfm?migration=3&topic=5&bhcp=1>

lxxxvii While the Freedom House presented a good biographical sketch of Northup, I also read his own account of his experiences:

Northup, Solomon. *Twelve Years a Slave*. 1853. Eakin, Sue, Joseph Logsdon ed. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1968.

lxxxviii Budget cuts as a result of the recession led to Roosevelt Island, which is a less visible monument than, say The Lincoln Memorial, falling into disrepair.

lxxxix The Historic American Landscapes Survey of Roosevelt Island created by the National Park Service was a key source for this chapter. It provided

background information about the entire history of Roosevelt Island from its American Indian inhabitants, through the civil war and depression, and right up to the present day.

Historic American Landscapes Survey. *Theodore Roosevelt Island*. Washington DC: National Park Service U.S. Department of the Interior. n.d.
<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/pnp/habshaer/dc/dc1000/dc1044/data/dc1044data.pdf>

^{xc} Obviously, the island isn't wild if it was carefully landscaped. Here I am playing with the idea of distinguishing between man-made, altered, natural, and wild landscapes.

^{xcii} This article about the debate surrounding the preservation of a slave pen in Kentucky provides a good example of both sides of the argument about preserving slave sites.
 Bauer, Marilyn. "Slave Pen Now Holds History." *The Cincinnati Enquirer*. 8 Feb. 2004. http://www.enquirer.com/editions/2004/02/08/slavepen/tem_sunlede08.html

CHAPTER 8

^{xciii} For information about Judith Henry see the following sites:
 National Park Service. "Untimely Death of Judith Carter Henry." *Manassas National Battlefield Park*. National Park Service U.S. Department of the Interior. n.d. web. 14 March 2013. http://www.nps.gov/mana/forteachers/upload/Res10_DeathofJudithHenry.pdf
 National Park Service. "Civil War Series: The First Battle of Manassas." *History E-Library*. National Park Service U.S. Department of the Interior. 14 March 2013. web. 14 March 2013. http://www.nps.gov/history/history/online_books/civil_war_series/17/sec4.htm

^{xciii} Several books were invaluable in pulling together information about women and their relationships to houses during the Civil War. I highly recommend *Civil Wars* by George Rable, *Scarlet Doesn't Live Here Anymore*, by Laura Edwards, and *Occupied Women* edited by Whites and Long.
 Rable, George C. *Civil Wars: Women and the Crisis of Southern Nationalism*.

Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1989.

Edwards, Laura. *Scarlet Doesn't Live Here Anymore: Southern Women in the Civil War Era*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2000.

Long, Alecia, LeeAnn Whites. *Occupied Women: Gender Military Occupation and the American Civil War*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press. 2009.

^{xciv} This time period is well documented by the women who lived through it. There are numerous collections of women's first hand accounts of the Civil War, and I have the utmost respect for the scholars who read through thousands of pages of letters that waiver between accounts of the weather, what was on the menu for dinner, racist tirades, and honest, heart-felt reactions to tragedy. The two collections I consulted were *Women of the Civil War South* (for its breadth) and *Shadows on My Heart* (because it contained only letters written by a young woman living in Winchester, Virginia).

Baer, Elizabeth ed. *Shadows on My Heart: The Civil War Diary of Lucy Rebecca Buck of Virginia*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1997.

Culpepper, Marilyn Mayer. *Women of the Civil War South: Personal Accounts from Diaries, Letters and Postwar Reminiscences*. Jefferson NC: McFarland, 2004.

^{xcv} This by no means was the first time that women had to make decisions that altered the shape of families, but it is an interesting case study.

^{xcvi} Outside of historical circles, yeoman has a somewhat derogatory connotation. There really isn't another way to refer to this class of people though, and telling their story is important, so I use the term yeoman throughout the paper. Obviously, in the case of this chapter, I am almost always referring to women when I use the term yeoman.

^{xcvii} Hamner, Christopher. "Deserters in the Civil War." *National History Education Clearing House*. n.d. web. 14 March 2013.
<http://teachinghistory.org/history-content/ask-a-historian/23934>

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<http://www.virtualjamestown.org/paspahegh/paspaheghHome.html>

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<http://alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/historic/info/blackhistory/BHCourageousJourney.pdf>
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