

Pear Valley
State Route 628 Vicinity
Shadyside Vicinity
Northampton County
Virginia

HABS No. VA-960

HABS
VA
66 - SHADY
1 -

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Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

ADDENDUM TO:
PEAR VALLEY
State Route 628 vicinity
Shadyside vicinity
Northampton County
Virginia

HABS VA-960
HABS VA, 66-SHAD.V, 1-

PHOTOGRAPHS

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240-0001

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PEAR VALLEY
State Route 628 vicinity
Shadyside vicinity
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Virginia

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WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

Addendum to PEAR VALLEY

HABS No. VA-960

- Location: Off of Virginia State Route 628, in the vicinity of Shadyside and Machipongo, near the town of Eastville, in Northampton County, Virginia.
- The coordinates for Pear Valley are 75.92485 W and 37.397364 N, and they were obtained through Google Earth in November 2010 with, it is assumed, NAD 1983. There is no restriction on the release of the locational data to the public. (See fig. 1 for quad map).
- Present Owner: Preservation Virginia.¹
- Present Occupant/Use: The historic building is no longer occupied or used as part of a farmstead, but it is carefully maintained and open to the public by appointment. It is not a traditional house museum, however. Pear Valley is, instead, an architectural resource to be studied and protected.
- Significance: Constructed in the first half of the eighteenth century, Pear Valley is a rare representative example of the second generation of housing as it evolved in the early Chesapeake. Its small size combined with high quality craftsmanship exemplifies the character of many early planters' houses now long lost. In its finish, the framed dwelling retains key structural features illustrating the development of early American architecture in the adaptation of English building traditions within the Virginia context. Especially notable are the use of a false plate and lap work rather than complicated joinery at the eave (figs. 2-3); and the treatment of the structural framing members, which are exposed and chamfered (fig. 4). The

¹ Preservation Virginia is the successor to the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities (APVA), founded in 1889, and was created out of a merger between the APVA and the Preservation Alliance of Virginia (PAV) in 2003. From 2003 to 2009 the organization was known as APVA Preservation Virginia and in 2009 the name was truncated to Preservation Virginia. The mission remains the same: "to preserve, promote and serve as an advocate for the state's irreplaceable historic places for cultural, economic and educational benefits of everyone." www.preservationvirginia.org, accessed 25 May 2011. At the time of Pear Valley's acquisition the organization was known as the APVA.

practice of leaving the posts and plates visible and finishing them neatly continued throughout the eighteenth century, carrying forward an emphasis on structure and structural ornamentation in keeping with an earlier mode of building and a practice common to first-period Chesapeake buildings. Structural ornamentation was also expressed through masonry. The glazed headers used in the chimney and north gable end wall of Pear Valley are representative of this (fig. 5). The use of glazed headers in the Flemish bond, moreover, is a treatment employed in well-crafted buildings through the first half of the eighteenth century. Its use not only complements the chamfered framing seen inside Pear Valley but also provides evidence of its construction date. The quantity of intentionally exposed posts and plates found at Pear Valley is known to survive in only one other house today, Belle Air in Charles City County, Virginia. Belle Air was erected in the second quarter of the eighteenth century, and was expanded ca. 1800.²

One construction feature at Pear Valley, however, presents a technique unusual among surviving buildings framed in the manner developed in the seventeenth-century Chesapeake: the roof with clasped purlin-like components. Purlins are horizontal timbers that connect rafter trusses in a roof framing system. In Pear Valley's roof, the purlins link pairs of common rafters (fig. 6). The term "clasped" refers to the placement of the purlins in relation to the rafters and collar beams. The purlins are placed on the underside of the common rafters and pegged into position at the joint of purlin, rafter, and collar beam. This adds rigidity to the roof structure in much the same way as the tilted false plate does. The joinery for clasped purlins is in keeping with the simplification of the English box frame that occurred in the Chesapeake. The clasped purlin joinery

² Willie Graham references two other buildings with articulated frames, in addition to Pear Valley and Belle Air; these are Portland Manor (1754-55) and a farmhouse at Hampton (1746) located in Maryland. Willie Graham, "Preindustrial Framing in the Chesapeake," in *Constructing Image, Identity, and Place: Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture IX*, edited by Alison K. Hoagland and Kenneth A. Breisch, 189 (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2003). For a synopsis of Belle Air, Mark R. Wenger, "Belle Air," in *The Early Architecture of Tidewater Virginia: A Guidebook for the Twenty-third Annual Vernacular Architecture Forum Conference* (Williamsburg: Architectural Research Department, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, 2002), 81; and Mark R. Wenger and Camille Wells, "Belle Air," in *Cradles of Culture: The James River Plantations Guidebook for the Fourteenth Virginia Architecture Seminar* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia, School of Continuing and Professional Studies, Center for University Programs, 2006), 20-24.

technique is seen in only one other Chesapeake building, the brick kitchen at Westover. As in Pear Valley, the purlin-like timbers provide lateral stability to the common rafters but do not carry their weight; this is an important deviation from the English use of both principals and common rafters, and is representative of the modifications to the traditional framing system made in Chesapeake.³

The significance of Pear Valley, therefore, lies in the integrity of its architectural form and structural system and in the expression of structural details like the innovative use of the clasped purlin like elements that rarely survive. It presents key information about the range of framing techniques carpenters employed during the long development of building forms and methods that adapted English precedents to the Chesapeake and broader American setting. Other houses on the Eastern Shore, such as the Mason House in Accomack County, may be older and share construction elements such as the feathered lapped, riven plaster lath secured with one rosehead nail, but alterations have obscured or removed much of their original fabric while Pear Valley survived with its framing largely intact (fig. 7). The closest comparables to Pear Valley are the Rochester House on the Northern Neck, which is also a one-room dwelling but constructed a decade later, and a barn at Burrages End in lower Queen Anne's County, Maryland, notable for its early framing.⁴

Historian: Virginia B. Price, HABS, 2010-2011.

³ Dell Upton, "Early Vernacular Architecture in Southeastern Virginia," Ph.D. diss., Brown University, 1979, 101. Upton was the first to recognize the clasped purlin roofs. More complete information became available in October 2011 after Hurricane Irene blew through Tidewater; the damage to the roof of the Westover kitchen exposed the timbers and allowed for documentation of the framing system not possible previously. The Westover kitchen had a common rafter roof originally. No principals were used. Clasped purlins (or purlin-like timbers) "are let into the back of the collar's half-dovetail joints and held tight against the bottom of the rafters." There are two over-sized rafters near the upper passage partition, but these appear to date to the nineteenth century. Edward A. Chappell, "West (Kitchen) Wing at Westover, Charles City County, Virginia," Notes 7 October 2011, copy on file with author; Edward A. Chappell to Virginia B. Price, electronic communication, 3-4 November 2011.

⁴ Garry Wheeler Stone, "Society, Housing, and Architecture in Early Maryland: John Lewger's St. John's," Ph.D. diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1982, 233-36; Graham, note 20. Stone attributes the emergence of the bay system, and the use of the false plate, to the building techniques developed for the construction of tobacco barns. Because the framing for the Virginia, or clapboard, house was created before substantially-sized tobacco barns became customary features on the landscape, Graham argues the two methods developed concurrently.

Project Information: The documentation project was sponsored by the Historic American Buildings Survey, a division of the Heritage Documentation Programs of the National Park Service in cooperation with Preservation Virginia. Principals involved were Catherine C. Lavoie, Chief, Historic American Buildings Survey, Richard O'Connor, Manager, Heritage Documentation Programs, Elizabeth S. Kostelny, Executive Director, Preservation Virginia, and Louis Malon, Director of Preservation Services, Preservation Virginia. The large format photography was completed by James Rosenthal, HABS Photographer, January 2011.

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Part I. Historical Information

A. Physical History

1. Date of erection: Pear Valley was constructed in the second quarter of the eighteenth century. Structural evidence in the building itself and contextual evidence drawn from fieldwork in the Chesapeake suggest this time period.⁵ Dendrochronological analysis of

⁵ Edward A. Chappell, "Pear Valley Interpreted," chapter in "Historic Structure Report for Pear Valley, Northampton County," compiled by Joseph Dye Lahendro for the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities (APVA), 1992, 37, 48; Herman J. Heikkinen, "The Last Year of Tree Growth for Selected Timbers within Pear Valley as Derived by Key-Year Dendrochronology," Report, Dendrochronology Inc., Blacksburg, Virginia, for the APVA, 1993, 5; Julie Richter, "Pear Valley,

the timbers places the felling date for the trees in the early 1740s; however, the sample for Southern yellow pine used by Herman J. Heikkenen to establish the region's pine pattern needs further analysis. Nonetheless, the dendrochronological results pushed the date of the house back to 1740 and, until the core samples drilled by Heikkenen from timbers in Pear Valley can be independently verified (a retesting of the samples being a matter of accepted scientific practice), no further refinement or reexamination of the construction date is possible beyond considerations of circumstantial evidence.

2. Builder/Architect: Based on the (1740) date provided by the dendrochronological analysis, Robert Nottingham owned the property at the time of the house's construction and so is responsible for its erection.⁶ Given the practices of the day, such a house would not have involved an architect; rather, the client would have employed carpenters and brickmasons to accomplish the work of their crafts.⁷ The Virginia building technologies

Northampton County," Report, February 1993, revised October 1993, April 1994, for Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, copy on file with the author, 3 and note 12.

⁶ Northampton County Court Records, Wills and Inventories, No. 19, 1740-50, 165-66.

⁷ See, Catherine W. Bishir, *Architects and Builders in North Carolina: A History of the Practice of Building* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990). Architects were few and far between in the eighteenth-century Chesapeake, and those few involved themselves in the most elaborate buildings of the day. A structure like Pear Valley would not have involved an architect.

Architectural practice as thought of today bears little resemblance to the circumstances in which settlers of the early Chesapeake found themselves, and Pear Valley's importance to architectural history is embedded in this distinction. Its framing system is the result of the building tradition that had formal origins in England and was adapted in key ways to meet the settlers' changed environmental and social conditions. See, for example, Dell Upton, "The Origins of Chesapeake Architecture," in *Three Centuries of Maryland Architecture* (Annapolis: Maryland Historical Trust, 1982), 44-57; Cary Carson, Norman F. Barka, William M. Kelso, Garry Wheeler Stone, and Dell Upton, "Impermanent Architecture in the Southern American Colonies," in *Material Life in America, 1600-1860*, edited by Robert Blair St. George (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1988), 113-58; Willie Graham, Carter L. Hudgins, Carl R. Lounsbury, Fraser D. Neiman, and James P. Whittenburg, "Adaptation and Innovation: Archaeological and Architectural Perspectives on the Seventeenth-Century Chesapeake," *William and Mary Quarterly* 3rd series, 64, no. 3 (July 2007): 451-522; Cary Carson, Joanne Bowen, Willie Graham, Martha McCartney, and Lorena Walsh, "New World, Real World: Improvising English Culture in Seventeenth-Century Virginia," *Journal of Southern History* 74, no. 1 (February 2008): 31-88; and Graham, 179-96.

The architect John Hawks was in practice in New Bern, North Carolina, in the late 1760s, though the more widely known Benjamin Henry Latrobe is generally described as America's first trained architect. Besides Hawks, many professional builders and amateur architects preceded Latrobe, including the gentleman-architect whose knowledge of architecture was the privilege of class, dependent as it was on having leisure time for reading and for travel, and whose knowledge of the classical world positioned him as an arbitrator of taste. Thomas Jefferson is perhaps the most famous of this kind of architect. The emergence of the architect and the perpetuation of a classical-design ethos in what was British Colonial America is tied to Andrea Palladio and the diffusion of his designs through translations of his treatise *Quattro Libri (Four Books of Architecture)*; however, like the architect, the American-authored pattern book was a late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century phenomenon. The first was Asher Benjamin's *Country Builder's Assistant*, but shortly thereafter, Minard Lafever followed suit with the *Modern Builder's Guide* and Owen Biddle with the *Young Carpenter's Assistant*. House-builders selected motifs or particular design elements from these guides, rarely adopting a full reproduction. In the (southern) British American colonies, for example, only two houses are true pattern-book models. Drayton Hall (HABS No. SC-377) outside of

so pointedly exhibited in this dwelling were the result of English architectural tradition as it evolved in the early Chesapeake.

3. Original and subsequent owners, occupants, uses:

a. Chain of Title:⁸ Presently owned by Preservation Virginia, the house and about one and one-half acres were given to the organization, then known as the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities (APVA), by Robert C. Oliver in 1986.⁹ The property was subsequently leased for two years to E.A. Underhill, Jr. A plat was drawn to demarcate the property conveyed (figs. 8-11).¹⁰

1986 Oliver to APVA Deed Book, No. 224, 179-81.

The Deed of Gift for the house known as Pear Valley and 1.421 acres near Machipongo was dated 11 December 1986 and recorded on 23 December 1986. It also contained an easement for a 25' right-of-way west of the property to ensure ingress to and egress from the site. The legal description of the parcel is as follows:

All that certain lot or parcel of land, with the buildings and improvements thereon, containing 1.421 acres, more or less, situate near Machipongo, Eastville Magisterial District, Northampton County, Virginia. Said lot or

Charleston, South Carolina, followed Palladio (book two, plate 56) and Mount Airy in Virginia (HABS No. VA-72) corresponded to James Gibbs's *Book of Architecture* (plate 58). The Hammond-Harwood House (HABS No. MD-251) in Annapolis, designed by William Buckland in 1774, was modeled on Palladio's Villa Pisani, and so is also a pattern-book house. For a still indispensable overview, see William H. Pierson, Jr., *American Buildings and Their Architects*, vol. I: *The Colonial and Neoclassical Styles* (NY: Oxford University Press, 1970); as well as Thomas Tileston Waterman, *Mansions of Virginia, 1706-1776* (NY: Bonanza Books, 1945). Waterman's presentation of the Virginia house includes a discussion of pattern-book sources, English models, and colonial derivatives throughout the Georgian period. See also Kenneth Hafertepe and James F. O'Gorman, eds., *American Architects and their Books to 1848* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts, 2001), and Dell Upton, "Pattern Books and Professionalism: Aspects of the Transformation of Domestic Architecture in America, 1800-1860," *Winterthur Portfolio* (1984): 131-33. For more information about John Hawks, see <http://ncarchitects.lib.ncsu.edu>, last accessed 30 December 2011.

⁸ This section appears in reverse date-order, beginning with the current property owners and working back through time to the date of construction. Expanding the deed information is a synopsis of the generation each transaction represents and what information is available about the property owner from other primary sources such as census records. Up to the second half of the nineteenth century, the owner was also the occupant.

⁹ In addition to the county court records, see correspondence on file at Preservation Virginia, specifically J. David Faulders, Hunton & Williams, to Mrs. Benjamin W. Mears, Jr., Kendall Grove Point, Eastville, Virginia, 19 December 1986.

¹⁰ The plat associated with the 1986 deed of gift and with the conveyance of the adjacent parcel to Leonard A. Caccioppo was recorded in Northampton County Court Records, Deed Book, No. 221, 348. (see also Plat Book, No. 14, 16; Plat Book, No. 13, 52). Oliver also granted a right of first refusal to the APVA for the tract of land west of the property. That parcel was bound on the north by State Route 628, on the east by Caccioppo's tract, to the south by Oliver's land for 316.87 feet, and on the west by State Route 689. The APVA later (ca. 1990) opted not to purchase this parcel. Louis Malon, Director of Preservation Services, Preservation Virginia, to Virginia B. Price, personal communication, 2010-11.

parcel of land is more particularly shown and identified as Parcel 2-A on that certain plat of survey entitled, “Survey of Parcel ‘2-A’ Being Lot 2, Plat in D.B. 221, p. 348, and Part of Property of Robert C. Oliver, Jr., [...]”

Oliver received title to the parcel by one-half deed from Richard W. Young, et al., Trustees, in 1979 and by one-half deed from Jane O. Drummond in 1983.¹¹ Oliver inherited land from his parents, Robert C. Oliver and Lillian Jacob Oliver in 1979, the same year he and Walter Drummond acquired fifty-five acres owned by Charles and Joni Max since 1973.¹²

Throughout the twentieth century, the property changed hands every ten years or so, but it was in the 1950s, when Lloyd Nottingham sold it, that the tract was reduced from seventy to fifty-five acres. Howard B. Camden bought Pear Valley from Nottingham in 1956, flipped it to the Debaun family in 1963 who in turn ceded it to Charles Max, Jr., and Joni Lee Max in 1973.¹³

1900 To A. Filmore Benson Deed Book, No. 51, 177-78; Deed of Trust, 178-79.

The house now known as Pear Valley benefited from its long tenure within the Nottingham and Widgeon families. The familial link to place ensured an interest in the historic structure; however, Pear Valley was sold out of the Nottingham family in 1900.¹⁴

¹¹ Northampton County Court Records, Deed Book, No. 198, 7-13; Northampton County Court Records, Deed Book, No. 209, 390-94.

¹² Northampton County Court Records, Deed Book, No. 197, 220 (Oliver and Jane Drummond acquire twenty-nine acres from their parents); Northampton County Court Records, Deed Book, No. 198, 9-12 (Oliver and Walter Drummond acquire fifty-five acres through (default) on deed of trust by Max); Northampton County Court Records, Deed Book, No. 174, 110 (Max buys the property in 1973). Oliver himself places a mortgage on seven parcels, the first of which is fifty-five acres and the second is twenty-nine acres, in 1985 just one year prior to the gift of the house. See Northampton County Court Records, Deed Book, No. 219, 312. The smaller parcel came into the Oliver family by will of Helen P. Jackson in 1959; Jackson was the daughter of David Kellum, who had purchased land in the area in the 1890s, including parcels from Mary E. Nottingham, and who continued to buy property in the county through the 1920s. However, the fifty-five-acre tract represents the Pear Valley acreage. Northampton County Court Records, Deed Book, No. 78, 474-75; Northampton County Court Records, Deed Book, No. 139, 171; Northampton County Court Records, Will Book, No. 57, 47-48 (associated plat, Deed Book, No. 120, 517); Northampton County Court Records, Deed Book, No. 46, 413-14; Northampton County Court Records, Deed Book, No. 48, 56-57.

¹³ Northampton County Court Records, Deed Book, No. 132, 531-32; Northampton County Court Records, Deed Book, No. 148, 79-80; Northampton County Court Records, Deed Book, No. 174, 110-12. Max consulted the then director of the APVA, Angus Murdock, about Pear Valley and incurred the approbation of Floyd Nock upon Nock’s discovery that Max wanted to convert Pear Valley into a clubhouse. Nock is also credited with getting a new roof for Pear Valley, an effort that saved the house. Robert A. Murdock to Charles Max, 17 April 1972; L. Floyd Nock, III, to Calder Loth, 17 May 1973; Loth to Nock, 18 May 1973; copies on file, “Pear Valley,” Department of Historic Resources (DHR), Richmond, Virginia; Orlando Ridout V to Virginia B. Price, personal communication, Summer 2010.

¹⁴ The date of the sale corresponds with Mary E. Nottingham’s marriage to William E. Waddy in February 1899. Waddy, a widower, was almost twenty years older than Nottingham, and he owned property in the county. Nottingham sold smaller parts of the tract she inherited in the mid 1890s, and sold the residual

A. Filmore Benson purchased seventy acres, including the house, and owned it until his death in 1924. Benson bequeathed the property to his friend, Howard Scott Forrest.¹⁵ Forrest kept the property together, except for one acre sold to J. Walker Jackson in 1944, and conveyed the residual acreage to Lloyd W. Nottingham in 1946.¹⁶ Nottingham's purchase marks a brief return to the extended Nottingham family, though the nature of his kinship to Mary E. Nottingham and her sisters is unclear.

In 1943, just prior to his purchase of Pear Valley, Nottingham's livestock and farm implements were itemized in the Federal Farm Credit Lien Docket as collateral for \$500. Nottingham had an eleven year old mule, a ten year old horse, a twelve year old horse, plus a horse cart and agricultural equipment such as tractor plows and cultivators, walking cultivators, a two-row potato planter, a corn planter, three row markers, and a fertilizer sower.¹⁷ Nottingham's investment in agriculture in the 1940s suggests that Pear Valley continued to be a working farm under his stewardship.

acreage and house in 1900. Northampton County Court Records, Marriage Register, No. 3, 1899-1922, 1; Northampton County Land Tax Records, 1894-96, 1899-1900; Northampton County Court Records, Deed Book, No. 46, 1892-93, 413-14, 433-34; Northampton County Court Records, Deed Book No. 48, 1895-97, 56-57; Northampton County Court Records, Deed Book, No. 50, 1898-99, 115. In August 1893, Mary E. Nottingham sells two acres, more or less, for \$120 to Nathaniel Fatherly. The two acres were bound to the north and west by other land belonging to Nottingham, to the east by the county road, and to the south by land belonging to Calvin Williams. Fatherly, and his wife Enith [sic], placed the acreage in trust to William Nottingham as security for their payments to Mary Nottingham. In December 1898, Fatherly and his wife Betty deeded property near Shadyside back to Mary Nottingham, for \$300. The parcel was bounded on the north by land belonging to David Kellam, to the east by the county road, to the south by land belonging to E. Calvin Williams, and to the west by land belonging to Stephen Baker. The 1880 agricultural census records Fatherly as renting land for a share of the products; the tract where he lived contained twenty-five improved acres and fifteen unimproved acres described as woodlands. The value of the buildings, fences, and farmland was listed as \$400. While too early to correspond with his legal transactions with Mary Nottingham, the census put him in the county and had him working the land. Perhaps he was renting property belonging to Thomas Widgeon at the time, and later sought to purchase part of it outright from Widgeon's heirs. Tenth Census of the United States, Non-population Census Schedules for Virginia, 1850-80, 1880 Agricultural Census, National Archives Building (NAB), Washington, DC (microfilm T1132, roll 27).

¹⁵ Northampton County Court Records, Deed Book, No. 51, 1899-1900, 177-79; Northampton County Court Records, Will Book, No. 42, 209-10a. Benson was a widower at the time, and in an oral history interview, Forrest was identified as a "nephew of Benson's wife" and the "only family he had." Mrs. Thelma Barnes to Julie Richter and Gina Haney, Interview 28 October 1993, transcript (copy) on file with the author. The author thanks Richter for generously sharing the oral history accounts. Benson is recorded as living in Northampton County as early as 1880 when he was described in the agricultural census as renting ninety acres for a share of the produce; the farm he rented or leased was valued at \$2500 (land, buildings, fences). Tenth Census of the United States, Non-population Census Schedules for Virginia, 1850-80, 1880, NAB. Pear Valley was known as the "Benson Place" during this interval. Personal Communication, Dr. Miles Barnes, Historian, to Virginia B. Price, April 2011. Barnes's mother was Thelma Barnes, who lived in the house "in front of Pear Valley" from about 1913 to around 1926.

¹⁶ Northampton County Court Records, Deed Book, No. 105, 99-100; Northampton County Court Records, Deed Book, No. 109, 118-19.

¹⁷ Northampton County Court Records, Federal Farm Credit Lien Docket, Lien No. 1053, 131. Although the piece of equipment was described as a "fertilizer sower" on the lien docket, fertilizer is spread, not sown. The author thanks Betty Leviner for this clarification.

1886 Thomas E. Widgeon to Mary Nottingham

Thomas Widgeon died without (legitimate) issue and bequeathed the family's land to the late William J. and Susan Nottingham's "direct female heirs" Mary Nottingham, Virginia Nottingham Roberts, and Maria S. Fitchett. At this time, the farm was known as Pear Valley.¹⁸ Thomas Widgeon also mentioned a brother William in his will, specifying that William's tombstone should be fixed at the same time his own was installed.¹⁹ Because his mother Maria Widgeon's will of 1866 referred to only two children, Thomas and his sister Henrietta, William the brother likely died when he was relatively young. Moreover, census records account for only Maria, Thomas (22) and Henrietta (17), in 1850 and in again 1860 when Thomas was thirty-two years old and Henrietta was twenty-six. The William J. Nottingham, deceased, whose heirs were the beneficiaries in Thomas Widgeon's will was probably his uncle, for whom Thomas's brother was named.²⁰

In his will, Thomas Widgeon left a substantial bequest to Maggie Widgeon, whom he identified as the daughter of Diana, a woman of color. He did not indicate whether Maggie was his daughter or lover or simply a trusted servant or neighbor, but in any case his will demonstrated his interest in seeing the young woman safely established. Widgeon left funds to be invested for her for a house and land anywhere she chose as well as additional monies and "all the furniture of every description on the first-floor of the house where I now reside" plus a feather bed and its accouterments. Later in the document, Widgeon wrote that his administrator, Robert Taylor, should sell Orphan's Retreat

¹⁸ Names of plantations appear next to the owner's name in the property/land tax records from the nineteenth century, however, no reference to the moniker "Pear Valley" was made. The tract was known instead by its location and acreage. In the earlier wills and bequests, the parcel was identified by residency and occupants, such as "where I now live," rather than by estate name. The appearance of "Pear Valley" in the written record, therefore, indicates it was not the primary residence and indicates a need to clarify and lay claim to the tract. Therefore, Widgeon's will in the 1880s is the earliest legal instance (found thus far) wherein the name "Pear Valley" was associated with the tract of land. By the early twentieth century, when Benson owned the property, the farm was known by his family name. Barnes, for example, did not refer to the tract as "Pear Valley." Yet, "Pear Valley" remained in currency among historians; certainly Upshur, Whitelaw, and Waterman knew the parcel as such in the 1930s and 1940s. Interestingly, orchards were not the county's main agricultural investment in the second half of the nineteenth century when Widgeon referenced Pear Valley by name; the agricultural census records bear this out. Grains predominated. Thus what was produced on or from the land did not correspond to naming practices, and at least two other Northampton County tracts had "pear" in their names. Whitelaw referenced Pear Plain and Pear Cottage, but indicated that Pear Plain was named by 1835 when the moniker appeared in the property deed. George Dunton owned both Pear Plain and Pear Cottage. Whitelaw, 406. Further investigation in the county records, such as court orders for the Nottinghams and Widgeon families and the appearance of family members in court as witnesses, may reveal earlier references to the property as Pear Valley.

¹⁹ Northampton County Court Records, Wills and Inventories, No. 39, 1854-97, 252-53. Widgeon's will was dated 30 January 1886, and was entered into probate on 11 October 1886.

²⁰ Maria's brother was mentioned in the deeds and legal case surrounding the partition of the property in 1819. William Nottingham was married in 1817; his sister the following year. This likely prompted the division of the estate as both siblings established their own households. Seventh Census of the United States, 1850, NAB; Eighth Census of the United States, 1860, NAB. Census records before 1850 do not list the names of the individual household members, so if William was alive in 1840, for example, the census would note the presence of another person in the household but not identify him by name.

excepting the graveyard and “whenever Pear Valley farm reverts to me to sell that also—
”²¹

Widgeon also recognized other people of color in his will, specifically Soloman Widgeon, Littleton Leatherbury, who was the son of Nancy Church, and Ann Collins, who was the daughter of Luky Collins. The reference to color was placed after Soloman’s name and those of the mothers of Littleton and Ann. Perhaps they were neighbors, former servants or slaves, but whatever the connection, reciprocated or not, Widgeon asked that his administrator prioritize his bequests to them over other obligations.²²

The portion of Widgeon’s estate that devolved to William J. Nottingham’s daughters amounted to approximately 332 acres (figs. 12-13). Mary Nottingham and Virginia Roberts each received ninety acres, and the remaining 152 acres were allocated to Maria Fitchett.²³ The 332 acres were described in the plat as “Pear Valley Farm” and two

²¹ Widgeon mortgaged the tract in 1867, an obligation settled by his estate in 1887-88. Northampton County Court Records, Releases, &c., No. 1, 92-95, 98-100, 103-04.

²² Census records, through ancestry.com searches, placed Nancy Church, a free woman of color, in Northampton County in the 1850s. She was identified as the daughter of Littleton and Bridget, data that corresponds with the name of her son, Littleton, identified in Thomas Widgeon’s will. No specific information about Maggie Widgeon, Soloman Widgeon, Littleton Leatherbury, or Ann Collins was generated through the database at this time. www.ancestry.com, last accessed 11 May 2011. Land tax records indicate Maggie Widgeon purchased twenty-seven acres from Virginia Roberts, one of the three sisters to whom Thomas Widgeon left his real estate, in 1889 and sells just over an acre of that land to George Morris in 1894. See Northampton County Land Tax Records, 1889, 1894. In a Chancery case, in 1857, between George Widgeon and John and Patsy Widgeon, a number of enslaved persons were divided between the two parties. In the first lot, assigned to George, was a woman named Diana and her two children, a boy named Soloman and an (unidentified) infant. It is possible this family group was the same Diana, Soloman and Maggie Widgeon mentioned in Thomas’s will thirty years later. Northampton County Court Records, Miscellaneous, No. 1, 1831-70, 169. An initial search of the Freedmen Bank Records, including the closest branch in Norfolk, for Widgeon, Leatherbury, and Collins generated no data.

²³ Fitchett was dead by 1902. See Northampton County Court Records, Chancery Book, No. 5, 1895-1903, 350-51. Land tax records indicate Fitchett’s portion of Widgeon’s estate was 150 acres. Fitchett was taxed for 150 acres from 1888 through 1892; the next year, 1893 through 1898, Fitchett was assessed for 100 acres. There was no note for the transfer of the fifty acres. The 1899 tax list documented the sale of fifty acres to John Wilson. Fitchett’s remaining parcel included the land valued at \$300 and the buildings thereon valued at \$250. In 1900, the land value held at \$300 but the worth of the buildings dropped to \$200. Court records indicate that William T. Fitchett and Maria S. Fitchett conveyed the fifty acres to Mary Wilson in a deed dated October 1891. The tract was bounded to the east and south by that belonging to Calvin Williams, to the west by land belonging to Maria S. Fitchett. Of interest here is the notation that the “said west line to run north/south down the fence now between the lands” and that the parcel was part of the real estate Fitchett was entitled to by will of Thomas Widgeon. Northampton County Court Records, Deed Book, No. 45, 1890-92, 408. In March 1900, Fitchett sold 100 acres. This parcel was bounded to the north by the lands of Virginia Roberts, to the east by lands of Mary E. Nottingham and Mary Wilson, to the south by lands of E. Calvin Williams and others, and to the west by lands of P. Jackson and others. This appears to have been done to secure a payment to William Nottingham for \$560; Nottingham released his lien, as noted in the deed book margin, but the Fitchett re-mortgaged the property (103 acres) with Otto Mears as their trustee to secure a \$600 bond to the Board of Supervisors. Mears released the lien in December 1903. These transactions likely account for the fluctuation of the acreage attributed to Maria Fitchett that was noted in the land tax records. Northampton County Court Records, Deed Book, No. 45, 1890-92, 408; Northampton County Court Records, Deed Book, No. 51, 1899-1900, 157-58.

buildings were denoted by a square. The house known as Pear Valley today fell on lot one, which was assigned to Mary Nottingham, and mapped as “commenc[ing] at post in ditch, marked A, 5 64/100 chains from pine on South side of neck road and runs 9 10 19.60 chains following old fence line, to post; thence runs S 82 East through open field and woods, to post near black gum on line of Read land, thence follows line of Read land to public road and public road to point at beginning.”²⁴ Nottingham placed her part in trust as security for a payment of \$925, representing debts owed from Widgeon’s estate that she, as a beneficiary, also inherited.²⁵

1837 To Maria B. Widgeon Will Book, No. 38, 72-73.

John Widgeon conceded his wife her dower rights in his estate and requested that the land be sold at her death and the proceeds to go to his children. For the next two years, land tax lists indicate Maria Widgeon maintained the 115-acre parcel, and a sixty-eight-acre parcel, but in the next year she acquired additional real estate amounting to another 143 ½ acres and is taxed for it throughout the ensuing decade.²⁶ In 1866, when Maria died, her property was divided between her son, Thomas, and her daughter, Henrietta, who had married John Scott in 1864.²⁷ The settlement is recorded in court in 1867, and tallies Widgeon’s estate at 318 acres. Thomas drew the west end, containing 188 acres and the buildings “added thereto” while the Scotts had the east end. Structures mentioned in the partition were a framed house, the “North kitchen, one and half story, store room, log corn stack and two stables of two stalls each, (sawed log).” While these subsidiary structures were said to be “standing on the other part land” the verbiage appears to be distinguishing the location of the framed dwelling from the outbuildings, “leaving to the

²⁴ Northampton County Court Records, Deed Book, No. 43, 1887-89, 273-78.

²⁵ Northampton County Court Records, Deed Book, No. 43, 1887-89, 278-82.

²⁶ Northampton County Court Records, Deed Book, No. 31, 1838-42, 67-68; Northampton County Land Tax Lists, 1838-50. The 143-acre tract which was known as Baker’s Field was mapped; see Northampton County Court Records, Plat Book, No. 3, 1834-1923, 22.

²⁷ Northampton County Court Records, Marriage Book, No. 2, 17; Northampton County Court Records, Wills and Inventories, No. 39, 1854-97, 249; *Baltimore Sun* March 17, 1875, 2B. By right of marriage, Scott had lifetime interest in the property (138 acres). Northampton County land tax records duly note this in the yearly assessments for 1867-1886. In 1887, the land tax records indicated the parcel reverted to Thomas Widgeon from Scott’s estate. Northampton County Court Records, Land Tax Lists, 1867-1887. Scott had remarried, and his will probated on 14 June 1886, yields no further information on Pear Valley. Scott’s then wife was named Eliza, likely a nickname for Elizabeth Bell who married John T. Scott in 1875. The property in Scott’s will included a lot in Portsmouth and two farms, Waterford and John Godwin’s. Of concern was his oldest son, John, by his first marriage, who was mentally impaired in some way. Scott wrote his will in July 1885 and provided a codicil in August 1885. Census records record the birth of John and Henrietta’s daughter, Hennie, in 1867 (she was three years old in 1870, notably younger than her half-siblings) and suggest the death of Henrietta. By 1880, John was married to Eliza, and Hennie was absent from the household. Records from the Bureau of Vital Statistics confirmed Henrietta Widgeon Scott’s death in childbirth in January 1867. However, what happened to her daughter Hennie between 1870 and 1880 could not be deduced from the available copy of the microfilm. Bureau of Vital Statistics, Deaths, 1853-96, Library of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia (microfilm reel 21); Tenth Census of the United States, 1880, NAB (database on-line, www.ancestry.com, accessed April and May 2011); Ninth Census of the United States, 1870, NAB (database on-line, www.ancestry.com, accessed April and May 2011).

other lot of land, being the east end” selected by the Scotts, 130 acres and the “remaining” buildings erected within those boundaries.²⁸

It was during this interval, when Maria Widgeon owned the property, that the house was expanded.²⁹

1786 To Joseph Nottingham Will Book, No. 27 1783-1788, 371-73.

A minor, Joseph W. Nottingham, inherited the property from his mother, Leah, who had “use of all my tract of land to the westward on the main County road...” according to the will of her late husband, William Nottingham. His will also stipulated that the land over the County road be sold.³⁰ Land tax records confirm that the bequests were honored; Leah Nottingham was credited with the 188 ½ -acre parcel in 1784, her son Joseph in 1787. Tax records indicate Joseph kept the property intact throughout his lifetime; his estate continued to be assessed for the same acreage through the year 1819. His daughter Maria married John Widgeon in March 1818 and this event elicited the settling of the estate, including a court ordered inventory and appraisal, between Widgeon and her brother William (figs. 14-15). Maria Widgeon’s brother William Nottingham sold his portion of the property, about sixty acres, to Edward C. Wilson in 1819 and John Widgeon bought it from Wilson the following year. The county assessed John Widgeon for 115 acres, the original allotment from his father-in-law’s estate, and for sixty acres, the portion he bought from Wilson representing the residual acreage of Nottingham’s real estate, from 1821 to 1837.³¹

1773 To William Nottingham³² Will Book, No. 25 1772-1777, 179-80.

William Nottingham inherited the property from his father Addison, however, Addison’s will indicates his son was already living in the house and on the plantation. William Nottingham also received the plantation his father purchased from Abel Powell.³³

²⁸ Northampton County Court Records, Deed Book, No. 37, 1867-1871, 11-12, 83-84.

²⁹ Edward A. Chappell and Julie Richter, “Wealth and Houses in Post-Revolutionary Virginia,” in *Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture VII: Exploring Everyday Landscapes*, edited by Annmarie Adams and Sally McMurry (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1997), 3-22; also, Julie Richter, “Women and the Housing Revolution in Eastern Virginia, 1782-1850,” paper on file, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation; and Richter, “Pear Valley, Northampton County,” (cited in note 5).

³⁰ Northampton County Court Records, Will Book, No. 27, 1783-1788, 62-63, 371-73; Northampton County Court Records, Orphans Accounts, No. 2, 1785-1813, 104-05.

³¹ Northampton County Court Records, Orders, No. 36, 1816-1822, 209, 292; Northampton County Court Records, Land Causes 1815-1834, 49-52; Northampton County Court Records, Deed Book, No. 27, 1819-24, 19, 66; Northampton County Land Tax List, 1787-1837; Jean Mihalyka, ed., *Marriages: Northampton County, Virginia, 1660/61-1854* (Bowie, MD: Heritage Books, 1991), 125. The plat, showing the division of property had William’s parcel (sixty acres) on the west end, and including a house, and the Widgeons’ parcel (106 acres) to east. Northampton County Court Records, Plat Book, No. 2, 1791-1833, plate 58.

³² It is during William Nottingham’s tenure that the county’s land tax and personal property tax lists begin to enumerate information about the acreage and value of buildings thereon. Records begin in 1782. Nottingham was taxed for two tracts, one containing 188 ½ acres and the other, 100 acres. He died the following year. Northampton County Court Records, Will Book, No. 27, 1783-1788, 62-63.

In the 1760s, William Nottingham bought twenty acres of land from Joseph, and his wife Tabitha; this parcel adjoined Addison Nottingham's and was part of the "tract whereon his mother lives, ..." ³⁴ In 1765 Joseph Nottingham died, having appointed Addison Nottingham as his executor and requesting that Addison sell land as necessary to pay his debts with the remainder entrusted to his widow (Tabitha) for her natural life or until she remarried. At such time, it was to be sold and the proceeds divided among his four children, Robert, Sarah, Betty, and Joanna. His widow also had life rights to – or as Joseph wrote, he lent her – "all [his] other estate in doors and out doors of whatsoever kind," and at her remarriage or decease, it too was to be sold for the benefit of the children. Accordingly, to satisfy liens against the estate, Addison sold twenty-seven and one-half acres to William Nottingham, property adjoining that which he already owned (having bought it from Joseph). ³⁵

1762 To Addison Nottingham Deed Book, No. 19, 510-11.

Joseph Nottingham bequeathed to Addison Nottingham five acres of land from a larger (seventy-five acres) parcel. It is unclear if Addison is his uncle or his cousin. ³⁶

1744 To Joseph Nottingham Wills and Inventories, No. 19, 165-66.

Robert Nottingham to his son, Joseph Nottingham, but with life-rights to his widow. ³⁷

Robert Nottingham, whose ownership of the land corresponds to Heikkenen's dating of the Southern pine timbers (the 1740 felling date) inherited the property from his father, Joseph Nottingham, in 1721. The plantation Joseph bequeathed to Robert, his eldest son, included a dwelling and acreage that extended to the main county road. ³⁸ Joseph, in turn,

³³ Northampton County Court Records, Will Book, No. 25, 1772-1777, 179-80. His will was written in January 1773 and recorded on September 14th of that year. William Nottingham had to pay £150 to his father's estate for the Powell plantation. Northampton County Court Records, Wills and Inventories, No. 25, 1772-1777, 179-80.

³⁴ Northampton County Court Records, Deed Book, No. 20, 1763-1771, 65-67.

³⁵ Northampton County Court Records, Deed Book, No. 20, 1763-1771), 65-67, 304-06; Northampton County Court Records, Wills &c., No. 23, 1763-1765, 423-24.

³⁶ Because of familial references in Robert Nottingham's and Joseph Nottingham's wills, it is likely that Addison is Joseph's uncle. Robert Nottingham, Jr., mentioned his brother Addison, his son Joseph, and his three daughters. Addison's will mentioned his son William, and three younger children in his care; one of those children was named Addison. That child would have been too young to be Joseph's executor, further suggesting the Addison named was his uncle. Northampton County Court Records, Wills and Inventories, No. 19, 1740-1750, 165; Northampton County Court Records, Wills and Inventories, No. 25, 1772-1777, 179-80.

³⁷ Northampton County Court Records, Wills and Inventories, No. 19, 1740-1750, 165-66. The will was recorded on 12 March 1744.

³⁸ For Joseph Nottingham's will, written in December 1720 and recorded 14 June 1721, see Northampton County Court Records, Deeds, Wills, &c., No. 21, 1718-1725, 125-26; transcriptions of the will – excerpts rather – are found in James Handley Marshall, comp., *Abstracts of the Wills and Administrations of Northampton County, Virginia*, 2 vols. (Camden, ME: Picton Press, 1994). See also Jean Mihalyka, *Additions and Corrections for Northampton County to Virginia Wills and Administrations, 1632-1800*,

received the property from his father, Richard, who came by the land through his wife. In 1684, Richard's father-in-law Teague Harmon left him 150 acres. That gift represented half of Harmon's land; the other 150 acres were given to William Nottingham, likely Richard's brother.³⁹ Harmon bought the property from William Whittington in two transactions during the 1670s. The patent for the land held by Whittington was confirmed in 1669; prior to Whittington's claim, William Stone held rights to 1800 acres due to the "personal adventure of himself and his brother Andrew and the transportation of thirty-four servants."⁴⁰ Stone's patent was dated 1635.

b. Occupants: From the time of its construction in 1740 through Maria B. (Nottingham) Widgeon's death in the 1860s, Pear Valley served as the primary residence for the family. Pear Valley, therefore, was occupied by several generations of the Nottingham family, and the household also would have included servants or slaves.

Most likely Thomas Widgeon was not living at Pear Valley at the time of his death in the mid-1880s. If he was not in residence, Pear Valley would have been occupied by tenants, by laborers, or left vacant. It remains unclear who occupied the property from the 1860s to the 1880s when Widgeon died, but oral history interviews indicate at least one tenant family lived in the house during those years.⁴¹ The Dunton family lived there until acquiring property of their own. Oral history accounts refer to the place where the Dunton family moved from Pear Valley as the Badger Farm; significantly for Pear Valley, however, is the recollection of the birth of William T. Dunton's twin boys in the house and references to the "back room" which likely was the shed addition (now gone). Census records confirm the birth of Henry and Devereux Godwin Dunton in 1875, and other genealogical data suggests William and Emily Dunton were married in 1868,

compiled by Clayton Torrence (S.I.: Virginia Daughters of the American Revolution Genealogical Records Committee, 1984).

³⁹ Harmon's will identified Mary's husband as Richard, Junior, and William as the son of Richard, Senior.

⁴⁰ Nell Marion Nugent, ed., *Cavaliers and Pioneers: Abstracts of Virginia Land Patents and Grants*, I 1623-66 (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Inc., 1974), 27-28 [patent to Stone dated 4 June 1635]; Nugent, ed., *Cavaliers and Pioneers*, II: 1666-95 (Richmond: Virginia State Library, 1977), 64-65 [patent to Whittington dated 29 October 1669]; Northampton County Court Records, Deeds, &c., No. 11, 1668-1680, 28, 94; Northampton County Court Records, Orders & Wills, No. 12, 1683-1689, 99-102. The author thanks Julie Richter for generously sharing her earlier work on Pear Valley, research that guided the Historic Structure Report and that culminated, in part, with the essay with Edward A. Chappell, "Wealth and Houses in Post-Revolutionary Virginia," (cited in note 29).

⁴¹ An oral history interview with Mrs. George Jarvis conducted by Gina Haney in 1993 revealed that the Dunton family was renting and living in Pear Valley in the 1870s. Jarvis said that her father and his twin brother were born in the dwelling. Her grandparents, William T. and Emily Dunton, lived there until Dunton inherited property of his own. Lloyd Nottingham, who bought the Pear Valley parcel in 1946, was her husband's cousin. Mrs. George Jarvis to Gina Haney, Telephone Interviews 2-3 November 1993, transcript (copy) on file with the author; copy courtesy of Julie Richter. The agricultural census recorded Thomas E. Widgeon in the Johnstown District (rather than Eastville) as having 130 tilled acres, plus another fifty-eight of woodland. His farm had \$5000 in value based on the farmland itself and the buildings and fences. Notably he spent \$550 for laborer's wages. Tenth Census of the United States, Non-population Census Schedules for Virginia, 1850-80, 1880, NAB.

around the same time their grand-daughter thought they began renting Pear Valley.⁴² Land tax records for the mid 1870s assess the estate of William Dunton for sixty-five and one-third acres in Seaside (seven miles northeast of the courthouse) as well as, in 1876, assess William T. Dunton for thirty-five acres in mid-wood (ten miles north of the courthouse). Possibly this is the Badger Farm. In the 1880 agricultural census, Widgeon's 188-acre farm is enumerated (130 improved, plus fifty-eight of woodlands, for a total value of \$5000) but it is not evident which of the other farms listed in the census belonged to the Duntons who lived for some years at Pear Valley.⁴³

A rental agreement, or lease, in effect with either the Dunton family or another individual when Thomas Widgeon wrote his will would account for the reference to the Pear Valley farm "reverting" to him, as would a mortgage or lien on the property. Widgeon's brother-in-law John Scott retained life rights in the eastern half of the estate Maria Widgeon accumulated and bequeathed to her two children, and Scott's claim to the property is duly transferred to Thomas Widgeon for land tax purposes in 1887. Both men, however, were dead by October 1886, so it is Widgeon's estate and ultimately his heirs that received the title.⁴⁴ While Mary Nottingham owned the property (1886-1900), it is unclear who occupied Pear Valley. Most likely it continued to be leased or rented, but the tenants' or laborers' names are unknown at this time.

A. Filmore and Olivia G. Benson bought the property in 1900, and after Olivia's death in the 1910s, Benson boarded with another family in a house nearby. It is possible while his wife was alive that Benson occupied Pear Valley; regardless, the parcel was known as the Benson farm during his ownership.⁴⁵ Migrant workers lived in the house at various times throughout the first quarter of the twentieth century; the workers came from Norfolk and harvested the potato crops for the Miles family. Miles's daughter Thelma Miles Barnes remembered a family of seven or eight people living in the house for the harvesting season which lasted from four to six weeks. Pear Valley was separated from Barnes's childhood home by a fence; social segregation kept the children from playing with those of the migrant workers. During the off-season, the house was utilized for storage and, as Barnes recalled, for butchering. After 1925, when Barnes's family moved away and another family, the Fowlers, rented the farmhouse and adjoining land that included Pear

⁴² Mrs. George Jarvis to Gina Haney, 2-3 November 1993; Tenth Census of the United States, 1880, NAB (database on-line, www.ancestry.com, accessed May 2011). Twelfth Census of the United States, 1900, NAB (database on-line, www.ancestry.com, accessed May 2011). Jarvis's parents were Devereux and Clara Dunton, her grandparents, William Thomas Dunton and Emily Jane Godwin.

⁴³ Tenth Census of the United States, Non-population Census Schedules for Virginia, 1850-80, 1880, NAB; Northampton County Land Tax Records, 1875-76.

⁴⁴ Scott's will was entered into court in June 1886; Widgeon dated his will 30 January 1886 and the document was probated in October 1886.

⁴⁵ Census records in 1920 place Benson, a widower, in a household with John and Bessie Metz; oral history accounts place Benson, as a widower, in the Miles's household, a family living in the house adjacent to Pear Valley. Mrs. Thelma Barnes to Julie Richter and Gina Haney, 28 October 1993. Today, the farm is identified as "lot one" on the plat recorded in Deed Book 221, 348 and in Plat Book 14, 52. See figs. 1-4.

Valley, the house ceased to be lived in and survived as an agricultural outbuilding for storage.⁴⁶

4. Builder, contractors, suppliers:⁴⁷ The names of the craftsmen who built Pear Valley are unknown. Very rarely do any documents survive--and few were ever created--to record the names and roles of the artisans involved in such modest projects. Only occasionally does a planter's diary or account record, or records maintained by an artisan include a reference to a certain craftsmen coming to work, causing trouble, or being paid for tasks on a construction job. Most agreements were verbal, and many artisans and others in the society seldom if ever put pencil or pen to paper. According to the date provided by the dendrochronology, Robert Nottingham owned the property during the period of the house's construction and likely oversaw the process. If his project followed common practice, Nottingham would have worked directly with carpenters (and perhaps a joiner specialist) and one or more bricklayers. Likely he would have employed these separately to accomplish the work of their trades according to ideas worked out among the client and the workmen and grounded in their familiarity with local tradition and customary techniques. Probably Nottingham expressed his desire for a house of a certain size, materials, room arrangements, quality and cost. The artisans would have possessed knowledge of framing, finishing, and bricklaying techniques and applied them to the job.

These men could have included free white artisans, indentured servants, free men of color, or slaves. As for enslaved artisans, Nottingham might have owned them, hired them from his neighbors, or hired them directly if they were allowed to make their own bargains. The workmen might have been local artisans, or some of them, especially the most highly skilled, might have come from a distance, either as part of a mobile life or at Nottingham's invitation. They might have learned their skills locally, or particularly if they were indentured servants, they might have come from Britain, bringing their techniques with them. Skilled building artisans were few enough in the period that those hoping to erect well-finished buildings often had considerable trouble in finding and keeping suitable craftsmen for their projects.

It is possible that at least some of the craftsmen involved in building the house belonged to Nottingham family members. As was common for many farmers and planters, the wills of Addison and William Nottingham, included carpenters' and coopers' tools, while Robert Nottingham's estate incorporated tools for textile production. The possession of these tools suggests that some of the family members, or their slaves or indentured servants had skills to employ such implements in producing the items the family needed.⁴⁸

⁴⁶ Evidence of this is captured in photographs taken in the second quarter of the twentieth century by Ralph Whitelaw and Thomas Tileston Waterman. The negatives are part of the Whitelaw papers at the Virginia Historical Society, Richmond (mssl W5877a, Ralph Whitelaw, N-52, folder 6).

⁴⁷ The author thanks Catherine Bishir wholeheartedly for her editorial assistance (or clairvoyance) and revisions of this section of the report.

⁴⁸ Tithable lists for the years 1745 to 1764 are missing; these are the key years for Pear Valley, corresponding to Joseph and Tabitha Nottingham's tenure. See Bell, *Northampton County, Virginia*,

Studies have shown that most slave artisans were carpenters, a few were joiners, and many were sawyers, a trade that required somewhat less skill. Of the advertisements placed for slave artisans in Virginia only one referenced the Eastern Shore, a notice that two sawyers who lived in Accomack County had run away, accompanied by a shoemaker. Across the bay, in Norfolk, another advertisement announced the sale of slaves with carpentry skills or boys in training with a carpenter.⁴⁹ Because many of the houses on the Eastern Shore, like Pear Valley, were constructed of wood and finely detailed, it is likely that the area employed a number of skilled carpenters as well as sawyers, free or bound, including some such individuals who were hired out as needed.

As for the suppliers and sources of materials, without a record of Nottingham's actions, there is no way to identify these with certainty. However, if he followed normal practices, either he or the artisan he employed might have obtained the timber and bricks needed for the project. Frequently in this period, it was the client, not the artisan, who assigned his own and hired workmen to the job of cutting and sawing and hewing timbers from local woods. Either the owner or the bricklayer might dig the clay and mold and fire the bricks. In some cases, however, the owner might make arrangements with suppliers at a distance and send (probably enslaved) sawyers to cut timber from another woods, or even have bricks floated by water from a kiln to the building site. Likely the same situation prevailed when Joseph W. Nottingham renovated the house 1790-1800.⁵⁰ When his

Tithables, 1720-1769. In 1744, Robert Nottingham was taxed for nine laborers, placing him in top 10 percent of the county that year; the majority of households had one (the head of household) or two tithables. Of the 325 households assessed that year, 197 had one to two laborers, eighty-three (26 percent) had three to five, and only 4 percent had ten or more. One hundred eighty-eight people were identified as "Negroes." In *Virginia in 1760: A Reconstructed Census*, only Addison and Thomas Nottingham are listed. Unfortunately, no information about their households is provided; the enumeration identifies that they were residents of Northampton County at that time using court records to place the inhabitants. *Virginia in 1760* (Miami Beach, FL: TLC Genealogy, 1996), 256. Lorena Walsh in *Motives of Honor, Pleasure and Profit* uses evidence of the Tilghman plantation, more specifically his choices to invest in slaves and his decision on how to use that labor (small groups, up to nine, with an overseer) to illustrate work patterns on the Eastern Shore. 307-18. She also uses Thomas Cabell, who married into the Custis family, as an example of Eastern Shore farmers who diversified their agricultural endeavors. The Nottinghams were never able to amass the land holdings of the Custis family or the Tilghman's of Queen Anne's County, Maryland, but Robert Nottingham's investment in a small group of slaves and an indentured servant is in keeping with those better known estates, and is representative of planters on the Shore. Northampton County Court Records, Wills and Inventories, No. 19, 1740-1750, 177; Northampton County Court Records, Wills and Inventories, No. 27, 1783-1788, 27, 272-73.

⁴⁹ Vanessa E. Patrick, "*As Good a Joiner as Any in Virginia*": *African-Americans in the Eighteenth-Century Building Trades*. Colonial Williamsburg Research Report Series 363 (Williamsburg: Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, 1995), 1-15, appendix. See also, Lathan A. Windley, comp., *Runaway Slave Advertisements-A Documentary History from the 1730s to 1790s* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1982); Billy G. Smith and Richard Wojtowicz, *Blacks Who Stole Themselves- Advertisements for Runaways in the Pennsylvania Gazette, 1728-1790* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1989).

⁵⁰ Joseph Nottingham owned the house, and lived in it, during the second generation of changes (of four) identified by Chappell et al and explained below that included the installation of the trim, for example, and the possession of slaves and building supplies suggests some of those men enumerated in the inventory might have been bricklayers and carpenters and Joseph Nottingham was about to embark on a construction campaign. Northampton County Court Records, Wills &c., No. 35, 1817-1822, 183-84, 186, 190-91. The

estate was inventoried in April 1806, his possessions included not only his eight slaves but also building supplies--bricks, plank, flooring, featheredge, shingles, scantling, and shells (for making mortar or plaster) --which might have been intended for improvements to the house known today as Pear Valley, or another project entirely.

5. Original plans and construction:⁵¹ The archaeological survey conducted in 1987 and 1988 raises questions about the original configuration of a building on the site of the present framed dwelling known as Pear Valley with its brick masonry gable end and exterior end chimney. Blurring the chronology of construction was the discovery of a cellar of an uncertain date to the front of the fireplace.⁵² Did the fireplace predate the end wall?⁵³ Was the cellar part of the nineteenth-century expansion? Or was it no longer needed then? Further archaeological surveys could provide more temporal evidence of the cellar and perhaps further reveal its relationship to the fireplace; archaeological investigations could also place outbuildings, now vanished, in the landscape.

Pear Valley is a frame house with a masonry gable end with bricks laid in Flemish bond with glazed headers. The timbers were hewn, pit sawn, and then planed. The exterior end chimney is made of bricks laid in Flemish bond, except for the upper stack which is in common bond. Glazed headers form a chevron pattern along the 51-degree slope of the roof and two small (1'2" x 1'8") windows pierce the upper gable. These openings are capped by alternating glazed and unglazed rollock (or rowlock) bricks.⁵⁴ The chimney has been described as having a "massive pyramidal shape." The slope of the steeply pitched shoulders differs, which adds to the already off-center position of the chimney relative to the northeast and northwest corners of the building. The weatherings are tiled in sailor and soldier courses. From the shoulders rises a long square stack with a strap

names of the Negroes inventoried were: Lighty, Pegg, Leah and child, Melany, Fran, Crisanne, Bedy, plus those without the racial cue, Pleasant, Hanna, Charlotte, and Sappah [sic]. See 183-84. Those sold were Peg (£104.5.0), Leah (£80.1.0), Lotte (£36.0.0), Crisanne (£16.4.0); Hanna (£66.0.0), Lindy (£61.14), Fanny (£44), Pleasant (£15), and Lighty (£99.1.0). See 190-91. Tax lists indicate that Joseph Nottingham owned six slaves in 1795, and seven in 1800. Northampton County Court Records, Personal Property Tax List, 1795 and 1800.

⁵¹ Field investigations conducted by the architectural research department of Colonial Williamsburg in the mid 1980s and early 1990s, as well as subsequent site visits and research inform this section. See Willie Graham, Orlando Ridout V, and Mark R. Wenger, "Pear Valley, Northampton County, Virginia," report for the files, 21 July 1986, and Edward Chappell to Bruce MacDougal, memo 30 April 1990, copies on file, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation and with the author; site visit, with Willie Graham and Jeffrey Klee, November 2010; site visit, with Willie Graham, July 2011.

⁵² William M. Kelso, "Archaeological Testing at Pear Valley, Virginia, 1987-88," Report for the APVA, September 1988, copy on file, Preservation Virginia and Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, 2.

⁵³ The interior brickwork is lighter (more orange) in color than that on the exterior, a difference in hue suggesting it is softer than the exterior bricks. The variance was typical of brick production in the period and not necessarily indicative of separate building campaigns. Edward A. Chappell to Virginia B. Price, November 2011.

⁵⁴ Rollock or rowlock bricks are those laid horizontally, on the longer edge, with the shorter end of each brick exposed. They differ from headers in that headers are laid horizontally on the broad face with the shorter end of each brick exposed and from soldier courses in that soldier coursing has the bricks laid vertically with the longer face edge exposed. Sailor courses have bricks laid vertically with the broad face exposed, and so can be combined with soldier bricks in a course.

course and corbelling at its top (see fig. 5). At the eaves, the bricks corbel to cover the ends of the joists where the false plate and rafters meet; on the east (front), the brick corbelling was cut back to be flush with the corner. The change seen on the east was part of the re-trimming of the eave and installation of the box cornice in the early decades of the nineteenth century.⁵⁵ Inside, the firebox is large, measuring over 8' wide, with an equally ample, planed lintel (measuring 1' 2 1/2"). The firebox was square and had a shallow smoke channel initially. There is also an arched alcove in the east side (fig. 16). Ralph Whitelaw, in *Virginia's Eastern Shore*, observed that the alcove seen in the east wall of the firebox or inner hearth was a traditionally-found feature, appearing at each side of the firebox for artificial light.⁵⁶ A later survey repeats this assertion, with the disclaimer "it has been said", that there were small warming alcoves at either side of the original fireplace.⁵⁷ While the interior alcove is a feature seen in buildings on the Eastern Shore, it is unclear from the extant examples if it was more common to have one or two of them built into the firebox. At Pear Valley, the reduction of the firebox in the nineteenth century obscures any evidence for an alcove on the west side. It is possible, too, that the alcove was for drying something or for salt rather than providing light.⁵⁸

⁵⁵ Because they were enclosed with the box cornice, the eaves on this side of the building were not painted in the twentieth century while those on the west were. This suggests that, originally, the eaves were not painted and the ornamentation came from the structural details of the false plate and the shaped (lower) ends of the rafters and undersides of the butts of the joists.

⁵⁶ Whitelaw, 330. Eleanor Walton Upshur, "Early Houses of Virginia's Eastern Shore," *Virginia Cavalcade* (Spring 1974): 39-47. She repeats this assertion, writing that the alcoves were built in at each side for torches or candles, 41. Before the 1750s, alcoves like the one at Pear Valley could be used for light, but people used oil lanterns with reflectors in them rather than candles that would melt in the heat. This was a practice in West England and Wales and seen in Pennsylvania when cooking began before daylight and the cook sat in the fireplace to get the food started. William Woys Weaver to Virginia B. Price, electronic communication, 10 October 2011. This practice is likely the source of the tradition that Pear Valley's alcove accommodated candles or torches. Robert Nottingham's inventory does not include an oil lantern, with or without reflectors. Northampton County Court Records, Wills and Inventories, No. 19, 1740-50, 177-78. The physical evidence offers conflicting evidence: remnants of white plaster in the alcove suggest the space was for light, but, if so, there should also be traces of soot. Cary Carson to Virginia B. Price and Claire Dempsey, 12 October 2011. Moreover, Ed Chappell observed that "pairs of such niches are found in other large eighteenth-century fireplaces including that in the Turner kitchen (now destroyed), Isle of Wight County, Virginia." Edward A. Chappell to Virginia B. Price, November 2011.

⁵⁷ Appendices, *HSR*, n.p. A copy of the typescript is also found in the files for Pear Valley in the Office of Architectural Research at the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation.

⁵⁸ Nancy Carter Crump, a noted culinary historian, suggested that the alcoves could have been for keeping foods warm or for baking bread, depending on the heat generated from the fireplace itself and the size and depth of the alcove. Crump's bread theory was endorsed by William Woys Weaver, who suggested it could have been used for keeping yeast (for bread) going; the idea of a yeast crock, rather than an oven, seems entirely plausible since the alcove is small, high up, and angled awkwardly for access. Crump also speculated that perhaps, because Pear Valley's alcove is so shallow, these examples from buildings on the Eastern Shore were made to help control the fire or smoke. Another example of an alcove, not on the Eastern Shore, is at Stratford Hall. See HABS No. VA-307-116. Nancy Carter Crump to Virginia B. Price and Betty Leviner, electronic communication, 7 October 2011; William Woys Weaver to Virginia B. Price, electronic communication, 10 October 2011. For more information on hearth cooking, see Nancy Carter Crump, *Hearthside Cooking* 2nd ed (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008); William Rubel, *The Magic of Fire* (Berkeley, CA: Ten Speed Press, 2002); as well as various books by food historian, William Woys Weaver.

Nonetheless, because of the scale, it seems that the fireplace in Pear Valley was built with the intent of cooking in the main room.⁵⁹

The north ends of the east and west sills are set into a rabbet in the brick masonry gable end wall, while the south ends are mortised (fig. 17). The components of the heavy timber frame are tenoned to the wall plate, but the secondary posts and studs are not pegged into the sill. A roof with common rafters lapped over a tilted false plate and employing purlin-like horizontal bracing covers the building. The hand planed, common rafters measure about 3 ¼" wide and are about 3" tall. They are tenoned and pegged at the apex or ridge. The collars are half dovetail lapped and pegged to the rafters to carry the clasped purlin-like members and the upper loft (cockloft) flooring (fig. 18). The purlins are lapped over the collars and have partially exposed bottom edges. These and similar but lighter purlins in the ca. 1740s roof of the kitchen at Westover in Charles City County seem derived from clasped purlins in earlier English roofs. However, both these and the Westover kitchen roof lack principal rafters, so they represent a simplification of the British form, and provide more lateral stability than vertical support for the rafters. An upper set of collars consist of riven oak boards that were butted and cut nailed to the sides of the rafters; these represent a later addition. The riven oak shingle lath reveals the first generation of shingles was pegged into place rather than nailed and, significantly, that the house was shingled from the beginning, rather than clapboarded. Most likely 4'-to-5' riven clapboards covered the walls.

The first-floor and loft originally had plastered walls.⁶⁰ The woodwork of the first floor was almost entirely whitewashed, including the ceiling joists and undersides of the upper level floor boards, but the woodwork upstairs in the loft was not painted. The fireplace lintel was whitewashed initially and lacks decorative work such as a chamfer. The first-floor joists were positioned at just over 2'5" on center, except for the northern-most joist which was 3' to support either the hearth, the north wall of the cellar, or both. Lap joints for portions of a window frame are evident in the west wall, in an original stud located between the door opening and the northwest corner, but the presence of wrought nails and plaster lath that would cover the opening indicates it was an early addition rather than original fenestration (fig. 19). Evidence of a similar window is in the south gable (fig. 20).⁶¹

The upper level or loft was probably reached by way of a tight winder stair in the southeast corner. Evidence of the first-period or original stair consists of the header in the ceiling framing that identifies its location, a lap joint in the east plate that indicates it was enclosed, and a lap in the corner post when seen in conjunction with an empty first-period

⁵⁹ Chappell and Richter, 5; Edward A. Chappell to Virginia B. Price, November 2011.

⁶⁰ The plasterwork extended all the way to the floor in Pear Valley, rather than stopping at a mopboard. In other houses, such as those comparable to Pear Valley like the Lynnhaven House, Keeling House, and Mason House, the plaster-to-the-floor was a finish confined to the upper levels. Chappell, "Pear Valley Interpreted," *HSR*, 41.

⁶¹ Chappell, "Pear Valley Interpreted," *HSR*, 39-40; site visit, with Willie Graham and Jeffrey Klee, November 2010.

joist pocket that suggests winders were present from the beginning. A reused stringboard shows the ghost of treads and risers and could represent a stair from the third period of construction (fig. 21).⁶² The loft was one undivided space originally. It was unheated, and narrower than presently. The knee walls were moved closer to the eaves in the nineteenth century and the shift in the type of nails attests to this. Exposed rosehead nails secure the attic flooring. The space above the collars and loft ceiling was – and is still – unfinished (fig. 22).

Because of the window opening, and the larger door opening, it is likely the house originally faced west.

6. Alterations and additions: The fireplace lintel suggests several periods of intermediate change, with whitewash visible in places, some wood battens with split lath fastened to them by wrought nails remaining in-situ, and the surviving plaster. The west end of the lintel has shifted south (outward into the room) and it is possible the whitewash was an early attempt to cover the settling and subsequent shift of the lintel, an effort that was unsuccessful so the wood batten and lath was installed to take the plaster coating. The lath would appear to line up with that on the west wall, at the north end. A sample of the plaster from over the fireplace has been sent out for analysis.⁶³ Since the lintel was not chamfered, like the other principal framing members on the first floor, it is likely a mantel or molding covered it in part.

More drastic alterations to the firebox include the reduction in the opening and installation of a mantel as well as the build-out of the interior for angled cheeks and a deep smoke shelf.⁶⁴ The bricks used in this work are more even in color than the bricks of the chimney stack and few are glazed. These brown bricks are laid in oyster-shell mortar.

Similarly the presence of the two floorboards laid closest to the east wall that are pit-sawn on their bottom face and lack whitewash suggests another alteration, or at the very least, a conversation that altered the appearance and finish of the boards as they were installed. The floorboards in the loft are made of pine, measure about 11” wide, and are hand planed on the top and bottom and butt joined. The planing on the bottom face, together with the whitewash, indicates these were meant to be seen. The easternmost floorboards, however, were likely installed concurrently to the plastered ceiling. Encased behind the plaster, these boards would not need the finish the other boards received. It is

⁶² Regarding the stair, Chappell, “Pear Valley Interpreted,” *HSR*, 41; site visit, with Willie Graham and Jeffrey Klee, November 2010. The window in the south gable was enlarged; today, framing for the east-side of the window consists of a re-used stair stringer. The south wall was furred out and re-plastered when the first-floor, south window was installed and the stair rebuilt. Earlier evidence, including the use of widely-spaced boards for the lath, was captured in this renovation. The lath itself also consisted of wide boards. One explanation for the spacing of the lath in this earlier phase is that the wall was filled with clay, but no stains from the clay were visible. Site visit, with Willie Graham, 15 July 2011.

⁶³ Site visit, with Willie Graham and Jeffrey Klee, November 2010.

⁶⁴ The plan of Pear Valley drawn by Jeffrey Bostetter for the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation shows the fill in place. See Chappell and Richter, 5, fig. 1.

possible these boards were replaced in conjunction with the relocation of the knee wall in the nineteenth century.⁶⁵ The boards on the opposite side are planed, however.

In the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century, the interior of Pear Valley received some upgrades, including the plaster on the north wall. The most dramatic alterations date to when Maria (Nottingham) Widgeon and her family occupied the house. Under her supervision, Pear Valley was remodeled and enlarged with the shed-roofed addition to the west. The expansion also possibly included a storage building to the southwest.⁶⁶ The east side of the house became the front at this time. Material evidence of these changes includes attenuated moldings in the neoclassical style, sawn, planed and beaded weatherboards, beaded corner boards and rake boards, beaded board-and-batten doors, cut nails, reused wrought nails, joined framing and hewn and pit sawn timber, riven studs, and wrought H and HL hinges. The foliated H hinges on the east knee wall door likely were reused.⁶⁷

Specific evidence of the changes made in the nineteenth century include the new shingles, which were nailed rather than pegged; the boxed cornice enclosing the ends of the rafters and joists which were cut to fit; the raised doors, sliding sash, and re-trimming of the openings; the mopboards and surbase (chair rail); and the plastered ceiling. The stair was altered, given a lower pitch and hidden behind a door. A balustrade was installed upstairs (fig. 23).⁶⁸ Also in the loft, the space was divided into two rooms and the knee walls were moved back. The mortises from the original knee wall were patched. The loft was unheated until the nineteenth century when a stove was added to the north room. Two-light sash was installed in the gable windows. The frame had tenons and was pegged, but the stiles and rails consisted of rectangular pieces of wood with thin strips tacked on to hold the glazing.

Archaeological surveys in the late 1980s revealed a sequence of construction, though yielded no firm dates. The investigation suggests the cellar discovered in front of the hearth predated the alterations to the building. The masonry work of the fireplace is carried around the walls of the cellar, meaning the cellar had to be accommodated. Yet the underpinnings of the foundations coincided with the construction of the addition. The west addition measured approximately 8'6" x 9' and had a foundation one-brick course in

⁶⁵ Site visit, with Willie Graham and Jeffrey Klee, November 2010. Willie Graham later commented that the two eastern boards appeared to be cut from a different pine than the others, perhaps a long-leaf pine.

⁶⁶ Historic photographs, and the archaeological survey, place an outbuilding, perhaps a dairy, with a gable roof extending from the south. Brick footings were located by archaeology and they could represent paving along what would have been the entrance to this addition (from the east). There was no internal communication between this structure and the house. It has been suggested that it was a subsidiary structure that was moved to the house. Chappell, "Pear Valley Interpreted," *HSR*, 46.

⁶⁷ For a synopsis of the four generations of change to the structure, see Chappell, "Pear Valley Interpreted," *HSR*, 48-49.

⁶⁸ The re-used stringer in the south gable window and the re-used skirt board could have come from this iteration of the stair, installed in the third period of construction.

width. The foundation bricks were laid in a hard mortar that was white in color.⁶⁹ Thinner, new studs were added in-between the existing studs to carry the plaster for the walls. Further investigation of the plaster lath should be done to determine if that wall was sheathed or plastered if the siding is ever taken off.⁷⁰ The west addition was L-shaped, providing two more rooms to the living space of the house.

In the middle decades of the twentieth century, further changes came to Pear Valley. The building was no longer lived in, except intermittently by migrant workers, and vacant for some years. It was used for storage. In 1945, or shortly thereafter, Pear Valley briefly became a chicken house.⁷¹ This prompted the removal of the addition and some of the sash, and the re-siding of the building. Materials used for this work were stock lumber and sash, plus wire nails, clearly distinguishing these changes from the remaining historic fabric. Inside, the first floor and joists were removed and a concrete pad was installed. The stair was taken out. Historic photographs record damage to the chimney, hinting at the undermining of the brickwork. The masonry was patched and, in 1964, underpinned with concrete. "R.H.D." signed and dated his work, visible to the west of the chimney stack. It is likely the metal roof was installed around this time.⁷²

Once acquired by the APVA (now, Preservation Virginia), stabilization efforts began, including the replacement of the metal roof with oak shingles, installation of ventilating glazing in the gable windows, chimney repairs and partial restoration of the early nineteenth-century firebox, stabilizing the sills with joists, and the placement of a

⁶⁹ Kelso, "Archaeological Testing at Pear Valley, Virginia, 1987-88," 2-4; Kelso, "Test Excavations at Pear Valley, Northampton County, Virginia," Report for the APVA, July 1987, copy on file, Preservation Virginia and Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, 4.

⁷⁰ Another question about the plaster arose after our site visit in November 2010. (See note 62). Some time after construction, wood strips were added (presumably with cut nails) to the framing of the south wall to carry the plaster, bringing it out past the framing presumably to accommodate the deeper studs needed for the new window. Why would the builders go to the trouble to re-plaster the wall instead of cutting the posts down? If they re-plastered the wall, why would the plaster need to be redone in the stair, since it was enclosed by then? Is there evidence behind the furring of earlier plaster? Perhaps this indicates when in the series of improvements to the building plaster appeared for the first time on the framed end wall. Willie Graham to Jeffrey Klee and Virginia B. Price, electronic communication, 3 December 2010. More puzzling is the widely-spaced lath – evidence of which is particularly visible on the down brace in the west corner – that carried the plaster before these changes were made. Site visit, with Willie Graham, 15 July 2011.

⁷¹ The use of Pear Valley for poultry is recorded in a field photograph taken by Herman and Orr in the mid 1970s and published in their essay, "Pear Valley et al.," in *Southern Folklore Quarterly* (1975); it also was the result of an unintentional, impromptu word association moment with Carl Lounsbury, whose first, and quite thoughtful, reaction to my mention of "Pear Valley" and this report was "I remember chickens." Carl Lounsbury to Virginia B. Price, personal communication, June 2010.

⁷² The HSR assigns a mid-1960s date to the roof, and this corresponds to the file photographs at the Department of Historic Resources (DHR) in Richmond, Virginia. The metal was corrugated, galvanized steel nailed to the wood lath. *HSR*, 54. However, conversations between Angus Murdock and Charles Max in the early 1970s, plus the recollection that Floyd Nock facilitated a new roof, suggests the metal roof replaced in 2004 was itself a replacement or repair to the 1960s change. See note 13. Also, the annotated drawings completed by Colonial Williamsburg's Department of Architectural Research note the date for the corrugated sheet metal as 1987. What is clear that the metal roof on the building from ca. 1990 to 2004 was the same iteration, and likely repairs to some or all of it were made as late as 1987.

reversible plywood floor covering. These restoration and conservation projects occurred after field investigation and documentation of the house and its historic fabric, and concurrent to on-going studies by members of the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation's Department of Architectural Research.⁷³

In 1986, in the documents conveying the property from Oliver, the real estate assessor described the condition of Pear Valley as poor, noted it was considered historic, and highlighted its corrugated metal roof. Property inspection reports for 1989 and 1991 detail the deteriorating condition of some of the framing as well as the northeast and southeast corners. Particularly harmful to the building was the removal of part of the ground sill at the door in the east wall as well as the installation of the concrete floor. Without the joists to secure the sill, the east sill canted outward and threatened to roll away from the building. No longer lodged in the rabbet of the north gable wall, the movement of ground sill north of the door placed the east wall in jeopardy. The foundation was further compromised by the archaeological excavations, which allowed water to wash under and through; in 1989, the southeast corner was washing out while to the northeast the bricks at grade were crumbling and starting to fall. Other elements encouraged moisture damage in the building, such as the missing bottom 2' or so of the southeast and northeast corner trim boards that allowed water into the corner posts, missing sash in the gable, rotten or missing rake boards, and the loss of bricks covering the tilted false plate. Gaps in the fabric also enabled birds and other animals access to the house's interior. In 1991, termites were discovered, and the building was partially treated. Vegetation, particularly that growing on the chimney, was a perennial concern.

These concerns prompted the conservation efforts in 1992 wherein the original ends of the east sill were repaired and then spliced to a replacement piece of heart pine with an adzed surface. The original foundation and footer were removed, and a new footer of concrete was poured. Reproduction brick was laid below-grade, and the salvaged, original bricks were reset above-grade. Once this was done, the repaired sills were reinstalled and the oak corner posts reattached. Termite damage rendered the northeast corner post little more than a shell, so a replacement of oak was made. In some instances the tenons needed to be rebuilt, but when possible, they were paired with their original, lapped mortises as seen on several of the corner braces. The damaged areas of the framing members were treated with epoxy, and the wall studs were refastened with galvanized cut nails.

Shortly after the east wall was stabilized, conservation efforts shifted to the masonry gable end and the collapsing firebox. In 1997 the restoration efforts were complete, and the interpretative presentation of the firebox finished. This work included repointing the southeast foundation wall, replacing missing brick, repairing the chimney cap and installing a metal cap that would permit ventilation in the flue cavity. Foundation work also was done, focusing on the missing north sill and monitoring the north gable end for movement. Joists made from salvaged timber taken from an eighteenth-century building

⁷³ Property files, Preservation Virginia archives.

in Sussex County were cut to size and tenoned into the original mortises in the ground sills. The newly positioned first-floor joists then received a utilitarian floor made of plywood. The window sashes were replaced on the first floor, while the sash in the gable was repaired.⁷⁴ The replacement sash was made from heart pine. The glazing consisted of lights arranged six-over-six. It was recommended that the plywood coverings over the windows be replaced with louvered blinds that locked on the inside so the building could breathe. It was also suggested that an early or historically sympathetic door be hung, rather than the plywood then used to secure the opening. The present door was installed at this time, but it was several years before the security shutters were put into place.

In 2004, the metal roof was replaced with a historically accurate, shingled roof. The building was painted at least once, most likely during the initial stabilization work in 1992.⁷⁵ Conservation and stabilization of the interior plaster remains a priority.

B. Historical Context

Iconic in stature, Pear Valley is a small, well-crafted, one-room house whose survival provides a record of the evolution of the English system of construction to one developed and refined in the Chesapeake. The adaptation of the English frame within a Virginia context saw a simplification in joinery with the use of false plates and lap joints where the roof met the wall structure at the eave and the modification of the clasped purlin with the use of horizontal members to stabilize the common rafter roof system. The national significance of Pear Valley lies in the encapsulation of carpentry in transition, making the house a key component in the development of early American architecture as well as a rare extant example of the dwellings many early planters built and occupied. Scholars, particularly in the last quarter of the twentieth century, recognized the house's importance to the history of the Colonial Chesapeake and to American architecture, and their studies of the building revealed much about the details of its construction. Their analysis of its social and service space suggested how planters below the gentry lived in the eighteenth century, and this interpretation secured for Pear Valley a place in the social and political narrative of U.S. history.

Architectural Surveys on Virginia's Eastern Shore

Prior its rigorous examination by scholars working in the Chesapeake, Pear Valley was known locally, and to those more intimately involved in historic preservation in

⁷⁴ The present ventilating window sash was installed before the documentary photographs of the chimney repairs were taken (in 1997). Louis Malon, Director of Preservation Services, Preservation Virginia, to Virginia B. Price, electronic communication, 24 May 2011. Mike Adams, of the Restoration Crew, recalls the vented gable windows being installed during the first phase of work, when the east sill was stabilized. Mike Adams, Restoration Crew, Preservation Virginia, to Virginia B. Price and Louis Malon, electronic communication, 25 May 2011.

⁷⁵ Mike Adams, Restoration Crew, Preservation Virginia, to Virginia B. Price and Louis Malon, electronic communication, 25 May 2011.

Northampton County and on the Eastern Shore.⁷⁶ Perhaps its location off of the main road and its use as an outbuilding on a small farm, coupled with the shed addition on the west side, obscured its singular importance to architectural history from the casual tourist. These visitors to the Eastern Shore would see, as described in *Virginia: A Guide to the Old Dominion*, that

Most of Northampton County [...] is absolutely flat. Truck farms dotted with neatly-kept white frame houses stretch away to the dark green walls of pine woods, which form windbreaks against wintery gales. [...] The Eastern Shore can boast an unusual number of small seventeenth and eighteenth-century houses. They are generally story and a half frame structures on brick foundations with dormered gambrel roofs – often with brick end walls – or, somewhat later and more numerous, designed in a style peculiar to this region: the “big house, little house, colonnade, kitchen.” [...] All is prosperous in this world of vast vegetable gardens. The potato has long been the staple crop here. When its price is up, the people live well; when its price is down, sadness prevails. The principal industries are closely related to agriculture: chiefly canning of fruit and vegetables, manufacture of containers, production of fertilizer, and lumbering.⁷⁷

The authors of the Works Projects Administration (WPA) *Virginia Guide* introduced the Eastern Shore, as excerpted above, and then outlined a tour that would take the reader down the Eastern Shore along Route 13. Moving north to south, the tour terminated in Cape Charles. While it stopped in Eastville, it made no reference to Pear Valley.⁷⁸

Although the WPA writers skipped Pear Valley, focusing instead on nearby structures like Hungar’s Church and the Courthouse green in Eastville and larger dwellings such as Winona, Vacluse, and Eyre Hall,⁷⁹ the tour designed to take the reader to the Eastern Shore through the *Buildings of the United States* (BUS) series corrected that oversight. In this recent publication, Pear Valley is noted as “an important survivor” that offers a tangible example of the small dwellings once proliferating the Chesapeake landscape.⁸⁰ At the time of the BUS survey Pear Valley was owned by Preservation Virginia, and so

⁷⁶ Pear Valley’s mid to late twentieth-century champion was Floyd Nock. Nock saved the building by getting the roof replaced, and continued to be involved in its preservation after the APVA (now Preservation Virginia) received title to the property. More recently, Furlong Baldwin sponsored the work of the HSR; in addition to Mr. Baldwin’s advocacy, Jim Sturgis also actively promotes the building’s preservation.

⁷⁷ *Virginia: A Guide to the Old Dominion compiled by the workers of the Writers’ Program of the Work Progress Administration in the State of Virginia* (1940; reprint, Richmond: Virginia State Library, 1992), 374.

⁷⁸ *Virginia: A Guide to the Old Dominion*, 382-83.

⁷⁹ Of these examples, HABS recorded the Eastville Courthouse green (VA-594), Eyre Hall (VA-809), Hungar’s Church (VA-542), and Winona (VA-543); Frances Benjamin Johnston photographed Vacluse.

⁸⁰ Richard Guy Wilson, *Buildings of Virginia: Tidewater and Piedmont* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 482, 487.

in the public eye as a study property, while in the 1930s it was still in use as a supporting structure on a small farm owned by Howard Scott Forrest. Forest was a family friend of the previous owner, Filmore Benson. It was Benson's tenure that was recounted in the oral history interviews conducted in the early 1990s that placed migrant workers on property.⁸¹ Perhaps the omission from the earlier tour was a product of its altered appearance and ancillary role on the Benson, and then Forest farm that briefly disguised its historical importance. Regardless, Pear Valley's public presence changed and its shed addition was removed in the years between the WPA guide and that composed for the BUS series.

During the years when Mary Nottingham and Filmore Benson owned Pear Valley, Griffin Callahan photographed a number of buildings in Accomack and Northampton counties. Unfortunately, no image of Pear Valley taken by Callahan survives; his photographs are now part of the Doran S. Callahan collection (1896-1905) at the Eastern Shore Public Library. Callahan captured examples of civic architecture with his pictures of the courthouse and lighthouse, and of domestic examples with images of Brownsville, Caserta, Franconia, the Folly, Grapeland, and Wallop. A mill, steamboat, and ox cart were also subjects of his lens, as well as houses known by their occupants: Kerr Place, Corbin Place, and Melvin Pace. While in keeping the vernacular traditions of the Eastern Shore, these houses were grander in scale than Pear Valley.⁸²

Moreover, neither Frances Benjamin Johnston nor HABS photographed the property in the 1930s. HABS deferred to the work of Henry Chandlee Forman, who recorded historic structures throughout the Chesapeake region, opting instead to focus on representative buildings not yet documented by measured drawings. It is nonetheless unclear if Pear Valley was considered for study by HABS in 1940.⁸³ At that time, the program's consulting architect Delos Smith observed that "the field of Accomac [sic], Northampton, Worcester, and Somerset Counties, is extremely rich in early structures. There are at least half a dozen of great interest which are either in danger of destruction or are already dilapidated." Smith was accompanied by Ralph Whitelaw and Eleanor Upshur, who were working on what would become the two-volume book, *Virginia's Eastern Shore*, for part of his reconnaissance mission for future HABS projects. Whitelaw's and Upshur's research would soon ensure that Pear Valley was included in studies of architecture in the Chesapeake.⁸⁴

⁸¹ First cited in note 15.

⁸² See <http://espl.org/exhibits>, last accessed 4 October 2011. Of these, HABS recorded Brownsville (VA-810), Caserta (VA-591), Folly (VA-626), Wallop (also known as Poplar Grove, VA-932), and Kerr Place (VA-494). Frances Benjamin Johnston photographed Corbin Place, also known as Chincoteague Farm.

⁸³ Forman's papers are housed the Archives and Manuscripts Department, University of Maryland Libraries, Hornbake Library, College Park.

⁸⁴ Delos H. Smith, Consulting Architect, National Park Service, "Duties performed [...] while in travel status July 26-August 6, 1940," Memorandum 8 August 1940, RG 515 Records of the Historic American Buildings Survey, State Organization Files, 1933-1950, Virginia, box 25, National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, Maryland (NACP). Smith consulted Johnston before leaving for the Eastern Shore and he noted that she lent him "her marked maps for Northampton and Accomac [sic] Counties, which greatly facilitated locating many of the old buildings."

Thus, for much of the twentieth century, and into the present, architectural historians have valued the house as an example of early Chesapeake material culture, including contemporaries, such as Ralph Whitelaw and Thomas Tileston Waterman, of the designers of the WPA tour that omitted Pear Valley from the “must-see” list.⁸⁵ Whitelaw, as well as Eleanor Upshur and Susie Ames, defined the history, and architectural presentation, of the Eastern Shore in the early twentieth century. They interpreted Pear Valley as an example of seventeenth-century building practices, mistaking its small scale footprint and one-room plan, its large firebox and exterior end chimney, and exposed or articulated wood frame with chamfered stops as belonging to an earlier age, and so tied the building to seventeenth-century familial history extracted from the court records. There also was a “1672” date stone purported to be in the chimney, and that – regardless of when it was placed there – would have confirmed interpretations of the building form as belonging to the seventeenth century. Historians of that generation also interpreted Colonial-period architecture as an evolutionary (or devolving) process based on English precedent and pattern book models without fully integrating the context of place even as they worked to record examples of historic architecture.⁸⁶

In its plan, Pear Valley employed a form frequently seen in the early Chesapeake. The one-room or hall plan of Pear Valley meant that the exterior door opened directly into the heated, living space; such hall plan houses generally had a window, usually in the gable, and a loft accessed by a ladder stair, as seen in Pear Valley today (fig. 24). One-room dwellings remained common, perhaps the most common, domestic building form throughout the eighteenth century.⁸⁷ The form persisted into the nineteenth century as well.⁸⁸ Despite their former prevalence on the landscape, only a few of the one-room dwellings are extant today.⁸⁹ Other examples of the hall plan house on Virginia’s Eastern

⁸⁵ Snapshots by Waterman are in the Whitelaw papers at the Virginia Historical Society, so while not a contributing feature to the *Mansions of Virginia* (first cited in note 7), Waterman knew of the house and its history.

⁸⁶ See, for example, Waterman, *The Mansions of Virginia, 1706-1776*. Rather it is the place, the circumstances and conditions of living in the Chesapeake that gave rise to vernacular expressions of the Renaissance Classical building tradition as seen in the craftsmanship and care taken in the construction of Pear Valley. For more on the emergence of Virginia’s vernacular architecture, see Dell Upton, “New Views of the Virginia Landscape,” *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 96, no. 4 (October 1988): 403-70; Camille Wells, “The Multi-Storied House: Twentieth-Century Encounters with the Domestic Architecture of Colonial Virginia,” *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 106 (Autumn 1998): 353-418.

⁸⁷ Gabrielle M. Lanier and Bernard L. Herman, *Everyday Architecture of the Mid-Atlantic: Looking at Buildings and Landscapes* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), 12, and note 2. To emphasize this point about house size, Doug Swaim, the editor of *Carolina Dwellings*, famously quipped, “most people lived in houses of one room or less.” Thank you to Catherine Bishir for reminding me of Swaim’s light-hearted, seemingly irreverent but no less academically-oriented, discussion of the limited space most people occupied, or even conceived they would need their houses to have, in the eighteenth century.

⁸⁸ There is a one-room, hall plan house in King and Queen County, Virginia; Betty Leviner and Carl Lounsbury of Colonial Williamsburg discovered it, and the author thanks them for providing this example.

⁸⁹ The Downing “hut” is one example of this once prolific type; photographed in December 1896 by Griffin Callahan, with its owner/occupants in front of it, the open plan house was in poor condition. It was wood, with holes in the roof. Callahan observed there was no floor inside, no loft above, no window, and the door

Shore were recorded by Whitelaw, revisited by Bernard L. Herman and David G. Orr in the mid 1970s, and studied again by Edward Barnes in 2010-11.⁹⁰ At least two of the one-room dwellings referenced by Whitelaw had collapsed by the time of Herman's and Orr's field survey: Chestnut Vale and Glenn Farm in Accomack County.⁹¹ For Herman and Orr, Pear Valley was a seminal building because it embodied the regional character of the lower Eastern Shore through its mode of construction, providing a visual expression of cultural values held dear,⁹² at once a solution to housing in the Chesapeake and a source for others to emulate and expand as house plans became larger. Built of wood, with a brick end wall, Pear Valley was made of local materials and in a scale in keeping with neighboring houses more impermanent in nature.⁹³ It was distinguished from these lesser quality dwellings by the details of its frame and the glazed headers of the chimney. The structural ornament and finish of Pear Valley signaled its builder's social status, while the one-room plan became a nexus for later builders' use as Herman and Orr argue through their analysis of several other houses on the Eastern Shore.⁹⁴

In Edward Barnes's research into the regional character of the architecture found on the Eastern Shore, he focused on links between house plans, rather than house size, and the number of acres owned to elucidate the decisions made by those middling and elite planters or, rather, by those who could afford to choose. In the process, he identified

was off its hinges. Nor were there any furnishings or linens of note. The family slept in front of the fireplace and in corners of the house. This house was located in Accomack County, so not in the vicinity of Pear Valley, but it was inland as Pear Valley is sited, and shares a scale and building footprint with Pear Valley although Pear Valley was better crafted, finished, and furnished. The author thanks Camille Wells for providing this example.

⁹⁰ Bernard L. Herman and David G. Orr, "Pear Valley et al: An Excursion in the Analysis of Southern Vernacular Architecture," *Southern Folklore Quarterly* 39, no. 4 (December 1975): 307-28.

⁹¹ Whitelaw, 767, 860-61.

⁹² The housing forms, like that of Pear Valley, provide evidence of architectural decisions made in an earlier context (i.e., by people, in a place, at certain time). As material evidence, the buildings allow insights into the culture they represent. And it is this aspect of the built environment that became an approach to the study of the past, a vernacular method derived from folklore, empirical analysis, and the grammatical theories of structuralism that explain both variety and similarity within an architectural language such as the Renaissance Classicism found throughout British Colonial America. This material culture method began with Fred Kniffen, a cultural geographer, and continued to evolve through the work of his student Henry Glassie, that of archaeologist James Deetz, as well as VAF stalwarts, Abbott Lowell Cummings, Dell Upton, Cary Carson, and Fraser Neiman, among others. For a summary of the investigative method that is the study of vernacular architecture, see Camille Wells, "Old Claims and New Demands: Vernacular Architecture Studies Today," in *Perspectives In Vernacular Architecture II*, edited by Camille Wells, 1-10 (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1986).

⁹³ A contemporary- to-construction description of housing stock in the Chesapeake likens the dwellings to booths. The author viewed the towns as little different from fairs, an analogy he also used to describe church days as those in the Chesapeake appeared to "value the saddle" so much that they'd go eight miles to catch a horse rather walk the five to church, and so many horses outside the building resembled a country horse fair. See Edward Kimber, *William and Mary Quarterly* 1st series 15, no. 1 (January 1907): 153. Similar to Kimber's 1746 snapshot of the houses built in Virginia is Thomas Anburey's observation in 1779 that most were constructed of wood, and "not always lathed or plastered within." Those of "better sort" had glazed windows, rather than wood shutters, and were painted on the outside. *Travels through the Interior Parts of America*, 2 vols (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1923), 2:187.

⁹⁴ Herman and Orr, 307-28. These include Winona, Westover, and Locust Grove.

several one-room, brick end wall houses.⁹⁵ Like Herman and Orr, Barnes began with Whitelaw when he conducted his field survey in 2010-11. Although he found the buildings to be altered, expanded, or demolished, Barnes noted several houses similar to Pear Valley in materials and scale. These included in Accomack and Northampton counties a kitchen building at the Barrier Island Museum in Machipongo that began as a one-room structure, the Mears Place (Bayly Hinman),⁹⁶ Chestnut Vale,⁹⁷ Glenn Farm,⁹⁸ Broadwater Place,⁹⁹ the Leatherbury house near Onancock,¹⁰⁰ and the Fisher House (figs. 25-26).¹⁰¹

Comparisons with Early Houses in Virginia's Tidewater Region

The survival of one-room houses as part of larger buildings, like the Fisher House, or in collapsed form such as Chestnut Vale underscores the significance of Pear Valley's presence on the landscape. The house was indeed altered and expanded, but those changes left the hall-plan essentially intact. With the removal of the shed addition, the integrity of Pear Valley's form is more easily discerned. Similar to Pear Valley in evolution is the Rochester House in Westmoreland County, on Virginia's Northern Neck. It, too, was substantially built and finely finished with a brick foundation, oak frame, chamfered joists, plastered loft space, and large exterior end chimney with paved shoulders. The construction technologies used in the Rochester House and in Pear Valley also distinguish these buildings from the more impermanent, earthfast (or posts in the ground) dwellings erected throughout the Chesapeake in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

While the Rochester House post-dates Pear Valley by almost a decade, it reflects a similar investment in land and slave labor by the family.¹⁰² In the early nineteenth century, new owners John Graham and his wife remodeled the one-room Rochester

⁹⁵ Edward Barnes to Virginia B. Price, personal communication, August 2011. The author thanks Barnes for sharing his findings and anticipates the completion of his M.A. thesis wherein his analysis and fieldwork will be available to other interested parties and will contribute much to our understanding of the architectural choices made by those living on the Shore in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

⁹⁶ Whitelaw, 1194.

⁹⁷ Whitelaw, 860-61. Also known as the Hutchinson Place, Chestnut Vale was a frame building with a brick end. The chimney was the only extant feature by the time Whitelaw's book was published, but the alcove on each side of the firebox was evident. Pear Valley has an alcove on the east side. Also, the openings of the firebox at Chestnut Vale and at Pear Valley were made smaller as the occupants of both houses adapted the openings to satisfy their changed expectations of social space and how it was to look and function.

⁹⁸ Whitelaw, 767. Like Chestnut Vale there were two alcoves in the firebox. Like Pear Valley the chimney was made of bricks laid in Flemish bond.

⁹⁹ Whitelaw, 1325-26.

¹⁰⁰ Whitelaw, 822, 834.

¹⁰¹ Whitelaw, 1008. This building was surveyed for HABS in 1960 and 1962, and entered into the collection as the Fisher-Seymour House (HABS No. VA-624).

¹⁰² The building was the subject of dendrochronological analysis in 2002, providing a cutting date of 1745 which corresponds to oral history accounts of a dated brick "WR 1746" present on the building in the 1880s. Camille Wells to Virginia B. Price, personal communication, var. dates, 2010-11; Rochester House file, Department of Architectural Research, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation.

House, adding a room to the east and dressing up the interior with Federal-period moldings. The plaster ceiling was added at this time as well, obscuring the structural detail of the exposed joists. These improvements echo those made to Pear Valley by Joseph Nottingham (before 1806) and correspond to those made by his daughter Maria Nottingham Widgeon in the 1830s.¹⁰³ Also reminiscent of Pear Valley's architectural experience, the addition off the east elevation was taken down in the twentieth century as repairs to the Rochester House were made thereby reducing it to its one-room form. While not all of the original period, the materials used in the Rochester House and Pear Valley, coupled with the return to the initial hall plan, have remarkable integrity.

While the Rochester House is the closest parallel to Pear Valley, other structures share building characteristics and construction techniques that mark them as significant remnants of the Chesapeake's architectural past. The roofing system utilizes clapped purlin-like framing members, a rare feature seen only in one other building, the kitchen at Westover. The only other dwelling with such a large amount of intentionally exposed posts is Belle Air in Charles City County. At Belle Air the posts were placed to accent or highlight the fenestration of the original two-room, hall-chamber house. The clipped gable suggests the original chimneys were exterior, and the clapboard sheathing further emphasizes the persistence of the Virginia house framing system. Yet the building most comparable to Pear Valley for its overall framing is the ca. 1800 tobacco barn at Burrages End in Anne Arundel County, Maryland.¹⁰⁴ The Virginia house, in terms of its frame, emerged in the third quarter of the seventeenth century as the dominant way to construct all types of buildings and the system continued to inform framing systems in the Chesapeake for another two hundred years. The efficient use of labor, particularly in joinery, defined this system of construction that was adapted from the craft-intensive English tradition. In the Chesapeake, wood was plentiful and labor was costly. One example of conserving labor and time was the simplification of the mortise, tenon, and peg to variations of the lap joint.

Comparisons with Maryland's Eastern Shore Architecture

The early architecture of Maryland's Eastern Shore provides important parallels and comparisons for understanding that of Virginia's. A key study, Richard Rivoire's *Homeplaces* (1990), depicts more than one hundred buildings, the houses and barns that gave the landscape of Charles County its form, shape and distinctive character. These, like those on Virginia's Eastern Shore, were erected first with earthfast posts (or posts in the ground) rather than on interrupted or continuous foundations. In time builders replaced earthfast posts for framed houses set into continuous foundations. With this improvement, the buildings became more permanent. Sometimes fashioned entirely of wood frame on brick foundations or interrupted sills, the Maryland examples included, as at Pear Valley, a brick end wall and a distinctive exterior chimney. The bonding pattern of the end walls, and chimneys, could contain more than one way of laying up the bricks,

¹⁰³ Camille Wells, "Social and Economic Aspects of Eighteenth-Century Housing on the Northern Neck of Virginia," Ph.D. diss., College of William and Mary, 1994, 276-83.

¹⁰⁴ Willie Graham to Virginia B. Price, personal communication, November 2010.

as Pear Valley's chimney does, such as the Flemish and common bond combination Rivoire noted at Clifton. The change from Flemish bond to common bond at Pear Valley, however, represents an alteration or repair whereas that at Clifton was understood to be of the same construction campaign.

Paralleling the finds of Whitelaw, Herman and Orr, and Barnes in Virginia, Rivoire noted the loss of the county's early, one- and two-room, frame buildings to neglect, like the fate of Clifton's kitchen structure, or their survival as the core of a larger complex, as found at Prior's Cleve.¹⁰⁵ Similar in evolution to Pear Valley's expansion in the nineteenth century (but not its contraction in the twentieth) is the Robey-Boswell House. The first period one-room hall plan was enlarged by a shed addition, opening off the rear.¹⁰⁶ The addition gave the house what Rivoire calls a room-behind-a-room plan. Other additions further extended the footprint of the Robey-Boswell House, but this initial effort illustrates how Pear Valley, and the Rochester House, would have functioned with the appended spaces. The earthfast houses, with riven clapboards, hewn, exposed joists, and rafters seated on tilted false plates, of the seventeenth century are gone, but the framing system developed in that era endured both in dwellings, such as in Sarum (1717), and in the barns that accompanied the houses, such as at Johnstontown (ca. 1800) and at the Exchange.¹⁰⁷

Comparable Construction: Tobacco Barns and Brick Houses in the Chesapeake

The distinctive framing system that developed in the Chesapeake, and as preserved in Pear Valley, also appeared in tobacco barns. Studies conducted by Rivoire in Maryland, and those undertaken by Willie Graham throughout Virginia and Maryland, included the entire architectural ensemble of a plantation, the house and its outbuildings. Rivoire selected the barns at Johnstontown and the Exchange as illustrations *Homeplaces*, and Graham has shown that the framing system was developed for both dwellings and barns concurrently. Similarly, Garry Wheeler Stone, in his dissertation, explored the nuances of tobacco barn construction. He found that the wall framing of a tobacco barn was essentially that of a Virginia or clapboard house with earthfast posts, generally spaced at 8' to 10' intervals or bays, and interrupted sills to carry the feet of the studs.¹⁰⁸ As in

¹⁰⁵ J. Richard Rivoire, *Homeplaces: Traditional Domestic Architecture of Charles County, Maryland* (La Plata, MD: Southern Maryland Studies Center Charles County Community College, 1990), 12-13, 30, 42-45, 72-73. Two other examples of one-room houses later expanded include Phoenix Hall (p. 13, fig. 11) and the Robey-Boswell House (p. 30, fig. 40). Rivoire notes 30 percent of the buildings he recorded between 1969 and 1990 have been destroyed or are in ruins. See author's note, xii.

¹⁰⁶ Rivoire, 30, fig. 40.

¹⁰⁷ Rivoire, 12, 97. The Johnstontown tobacco barn is shown in fig. 10 and the barn at the Exchange is in fig. 116.

¹⁰⁸ Stone, 230-36, although he differs from Graham by positing that the framing of the Virginia or clapboard house came from that developed for tobacco barns. Stone looked at three early Maryland examples of English frame houses: Holly Hill in Anne Arundel County, Cedar Park, and Third Haven Friends Meeting House, as counterpoints to what the Virginia house was (or would become). These three buildings were substantially framed, with principal rafter roofs. Cedar Park, however, had earthfast posts and interrupted sills. 237-40. He then referenced Maryland's three oldest "Virginia" framed houses: an addition to Holly Hill, Sarum, and Sotterley. 243-47. Sotterley's framing is further described, 265-71. Cary

houses, the side wall units (bays) and joists were lapped over the plates and minimal bracing was used at the corners. A common rafter roof typically covered the tobacco barn, with rafters lapped to a tilted false plate that was in turn lapped over the joist ends. As at Pear Valley, collars kept the rafters from spreading.¹⁰⁹

In addition to the framing method for the bays¹¹⁰ and roofing for the tobacco barns, Stone noted that the expedient preparation of building materials also shaped the Virginia or clapboard house. The framing timbers were hewn or riven, rather than sawn, and all joinery was an iteration of the lap joint rather than the mortise and tenon, even at the apex of the rafters. Thus, the hewn frame, false plates, common rafters, lap joints, and earthfast posts defined both the large tobacco barn and the Virginia house. Particularly important to the tobacco barn was the use of the collars as scaffolding for the tobacco to cure. It is this feature, as Stone interpreted it, that perpetuated the distinctive roof frame of Chesapeake tobacco barns.¹¹¹

In addition to the substantial tobacco barns studied by Stone, the roof system of the Virginia house, with its use of false plates and common rafters coupled with collars rather than principal rafters and king or queen post trusses, also appeared in houses made of brick masonry (fig. 27). One distinctive example, the Mason House in Accomack County,¹¹² has a tilted false plate to carry the kick rafters, but the plate is aligned with the top of the masonry wall, rather than carried outside of it as seen at Pear Valley (figs. 28-

Carson et al also looked at Cedar Park in their earlier study, "Impermanent Architecture in the Southern Colonies."

¹⁰⁹ The tilted false plate was substituted for a complex joint (mortise, tenon, and peg) connecting the rafters and joists or tie beams at the wall plate. Because the false plate rested on the ends of the joists and rafters rested on the false plate, the roof and wall structures were independent of each other. Sometimes the false plate was notched into the joists at a 45 degree angle; false plates installed in this way were called tilted false plates. The development of the false plate was encouraged by circumstances of the Chesapeake wherein wood was a plentiful resource and labor was not. The use of the false plate took advantage of a readily available resource (wood) to compensate for the rarer (carpenters and time) in order to complete construction of a dwelling or a large tobacco barn and hasten workers return to economically productive work in the fields. For more on the framing of the Virginia house (or clapboard house), see Upton, "Early Vernacular Architecture in Southeastern Virginia," 65-113; as well as Carl R. Lounsbury, ed., with Vanessa E. Patrick, *An Illustrated Glossary of Early Southern Architecture and Landscape* (NY: Oxford University Press, 1993), 136. See also "architectural character" section below.

¹¹⁰ Bays in timber framing refer to the division of space between principal framing timbers, such as posts; in barns or outbuildings, bay refers to storage compartments, spaces often defined by the framing members. Lounsbury, *An Illustrated Glossary of Early Southern Architecture and Landscape*, 27.

¹¹¹ Willie Graham, "Burrage's End Tobacco House," in *Vernacular Architecture Group Field Guide*, edited by Carl Lounsbury (Williamsburg: Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, 2004), 57-58. Also, Stone, 234-35, and the importance of the roof frame (influenced by clapboarding, riven scantlings, and tobacco curing, Stone argues), 274-79. Riven scantlings were lighter and smaller and so could be nailed and lapped rather than the careful joinery of mortise and tenons needed for heavier, sawn framing members. Holly Hill, Saraum and Sotterley each have scantlings.

¹¹² The Mason House was recorded by HABS in 1960, 1962. See HABS No. VA-630. The house also was surveyed by Whitelaw, 1113. At the time of the HABS visit, the house was used for storage much like Pear Valley was concurrently.

29). This alters the silhouette of the gable roof slightly.¹¹³ Also significant in the roofing of the Mason House are the early, pegged shingles and exposed collars.¹¹⁴ Inside, the finishes are comparable to those of Pear Valley with a similar use of hand planed floor boards, with T-head nails on the first floor and rosehead nails for the loft or second floor space. Both houses have riven, feather-lapped lath fastened with only one rosehead nail, a practice crafted to save on material costs. The frame construction and interior finishes of the Mason House are comparable to that of Pear Valley, although the Mason House was built earlier, with oak timbers felled after the 1728 growing season.¹¹⁵

Other masonry houses, including the Adam Thoroughgood House, the Lynnhaven House, and the Keeling House in Princess Anne County and the Matthew Jones House, also on the western shore, exhibit many of the same building techniques and details as found in Pear Valley (fig. 30). Like the Mason House, these buildings are made of brick, are larger in scale, and altered. The Matthew Jones House, constructed around 1720 as an earthfast, wood frame hall-chamber dwelling was bricked-in about 1727 when the porch tower and separate kitchen were erected. Later, at the end of the nineteenth century, it was raised to two stories; however, evidence of the Virginia clapboard work remained (fig. 31). The detailing of the principal framing members, like the chamfers in Pear Valley, reinforce the significance of this building.¹¹⁶ The Lynnhaven House in Princess Anne County also dates to the 1720s and shares with Pear Valley a structural embellishment seen in the exposed eaves with a tilted false plate, joists with rounded ends, and massive chimneys on the exterior (fig. 32). This carries inside where the floor boards are hand planed on both sides, the exposed ceiling joists have ogee moldings (rather than chamfers), and there is an enclosed stair. Like the Mason House, the balusters are symmetrical.¹¹⁷ Nearby, the Keeling House (1735)¹¹⁸ was covered by a common rafter roof steadied by

¹¹³ See HABS No. VA-630-6 and VA-630-7, plus sheets 2-3. Also, Mark R. Wenger to Calder Loth, 31 October 1989, copy in file, Department of Architectural Research, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation.

¹¹⁴ The Mason House roof was shingled, with the shingles pegged to weatherboards. The weatherboards with the pegs sticking through resemble those at Pear Valley. If the pegs were driven up through the sheathing from inside it would suggest a tile covering; no archaeological evidence of tiling was found at the Mason House. Willie Graham to Virginia B. Price, electronic communication, 27 September 2011.

¹¹⁵ The house was dated by dendrochronology; the oak dates to the 1728 season, with some cut after growth in 1729.

¹¹⁶ Willie Graham, "Matthew Jones House," in *The Early Architecture of Tidewater Virginia*, 39-40; file, Department of Architectural Research, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation. Note: the 1727 date is based on Heikkenen's tree ring patterns and samples. HABS recorded the building in the 1940, see HABS No. VA-163.

¹¹⁷ Mark R. Wenger, "Lynnhaven House," in *The Early Architecture of Tidewater Virginia*, 41-42; file, Department of Architectural Research, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation; file, Archives, Preservation Virginia. Heikkenen's dendrochronology provided a 1724-25 date; another analysis was done in 2005 of the oak used in the cellar and the pine in the attic. This yielded a similar date. The Lynnhaven House is a masonry building with English common bond brickwork; it is one and one-half stories and two rooms in plan. Evidence for an ell exists. HABS recorded the building in the 1930s, see HABS No. VA-11-16.

¹¹⁸ The house was dated by dendrochronology, using tree ring patterns from oak and tulip-poplar. Of the samples, the felling dates were predominantly 1734-1735. Willie Graham to Mark Reed, memorandum 22 May 2007, copy in file, Department of Architectural Research, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation. The samples were also in alignment with the materials from the Adam Thoroughgood House (see HABS No. VA-209).

half-dovetail lapped collars. Otherwise its scale, a hall and chamber separated by a central passage, and refined interior finishes such as the paneling and stair, position this dwelling a precursor of the grander, two-story, two rooms deep polite houses of the mid eighteenth century and less a hold-over of the Virginia house framing system (figs. 33-34).¹¹⁹

In King William County is the dwelling known as Sweet Hall. This house dates to the 1720s – or thereabouts – and is a brick building with some original woodwork surviving and one bent principal rafter truss, in addition to the conventional trusses or straight principals, in the roof.¹²⁰ Unusually for this early of a building is the use of bricks laid in Flemish bond on the front façade and English bond elsewhere, rather than using one pattern for all four sides. While the varying bond pattern anticipates later eighteenth century preferences, and emphasis on the front façade, the exuberance of the exterior chimneys relate to those of the period seen on the Eastern Shore. The use of conventional trusses, with common rafters, false plates, and collars, as well as the presence of riven clapboards make Sweet Hall an important counterpart to Pear Valley despite its more elaborate and expensive materials and scale.¹²¹

Reinforcing the rarity of Pear Valley is the Tilghman House, built in Somerset County, Maryland, in the first quarter of the eighteenth century and demolished in 1960s, albeit it with pieces salvaged and installed at the Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts (MESDA).¹²² Like the more elaborate houses in Virginia that retained the riven clapboarding and common rafter roofing systems, and similar to those houses in Charles County that Rivoire recorded, the Tilghman House was expanded with a two-room addition and appeared to also eclipse Pear Valley in scale and materials. However, the Tilghman House began as a one-room, hall plan house made of frame with a brick end wall. The end wall was made of bricks laid in Flemish bond with glazed headers; the gable end windows had rollock brick arches. Inside other similarities to Pear Valley were found; the framing members were exposed with decorated corners and there was a wide, open hearth. The firebox opening had bolection molding and raised panel doors secured closets and the corner stair. The loss of this building makes Pear Valley's survival resonate all the more.¹²³

¹¹⁹ Willie Graham, notes for file, Department of Architectural Research, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation. HABS recorded the Keeling House in the 1930s, see HABS No. VA-11-17.

¹²⁰ The one bent principal roof truss is located at the east partition, possibly installed to ease the connection to the rear wing. See "Sweet Hall," report June 2009, rev. 24 July 2009, file, Department of Architectural Research, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, 13-14. Thomas Waterman wrote a brief summary of Sweet Hall in 1941 for HABS, noting little of interest except for the paneled doors and commenting on the chimneys. Waterman also discussed the roof and the dormers, but did not record his observations about the structural system. See HABS No. VA-385. Frances Benjamin Johnston also photographed the building in 1935.

¹²¹ "Sweet Hall," report June 2009, rev. 24 July 2009, file, Department of Architectural Research, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation. See also, HABS No. VA-385.

¹²² A photograph of the building and a summary of its architectural importance are on the MESDA website, see http://mesda.org/collections/mesda_architecture_sprite.html, last accessed 27 September 2011.

¹²³ The Tilghman House was known colloquially as that since it was purchased by James Tilghman in 1883 and passed down through his descendents. In the 1960s, MESDA acquired parts of the building and

Outbuildings at Pear Valley

Like all farmhouses, Pear Valley stood among a series of outbuildings essential to the operation of the homestead and the farm. None of these survives on this site, nor have the location of these utilitarian structures been pinpointed. Today the landscape of which the dwelling was but one part remains open and uncluttered as it would not have been in its earlier years (fig. 35). Even the poorer planters, or the overseers' of plantation quarters, who lacked subsidiary buildings for cooking, washing, and storage used the yards outside their dwellings and erected temporary shelters to cover foodstuffs. Pear Valley's large fireplace, not reduced until the nineteenth century when Maria Widgeon renovated the house, suggests that cooking took place inside the building at least during part of the year throughout the eighteenth century. Likely cooking was moved outside earlier than the renovations imply, but the kitchen might have been less substantial in construction. The earlier kitchen outbuilding surely was replaced during the house's expansion. William Nottingham, and his son Joseph, were successful middling planters – owning more than one hundred acres and ten slaves¹²⁴ – meaning that they would have moved to segregate their social space from that of food processing and storage as they embraced gentility and increased their standards of living with creature comforts afforded through the Atlantic trade.¹²⁵

installed them in the museum. Although not surveyed by HABS, the Tilghman House was recorded for Maryland Historical Trust, and is known as the Powell-Benston House after the family that constructed it. (S-98). Thank you to Peter Kurtze for making this information available.

¹²⁴ In 1782, William is taxed for ten slaves, six horses, and thirty-two heads of cattle. He owns the 188 ½ acre- Pear Valley tract and another 100 acres. He dies the following year, his widow Leah in 1786; their son, Joseph, holds the 188 ½ acres from 1788 to his death in 1806. His estate is taxed for the same acreage until his children, William and Maria, reach a settlement in 1819, at which time the survey reduces the parcel from 188 ½ acres to 175 acres. See Northampton County Court Records, Land Tax List, 1788-1819. Joseph's personal property taxes indicate he was among the more affluent (14 percent in 1795, 10 percent in 1800), including six slaves and seven horses in 1795, and seven slaves, six horses and two-wheeled riding carriage in 1800. See Northampton County Court Records, Personal Property Tax List, 1795, 1800; the author thanks Julie Richter for sharing her statistical analysis of the tax rolls, charting Nottingham's wealth in relation to others in the county. Richter, "Pear Valley, Northampton County," (cited in note 5).

¹²⁵ Fraser Neiman in *The Manner House Before Stratford (Discovering The Clifts Plantation)* (Stratford, VA: Robert E. Lee Memorial Association, 1980), uses the spatial distribution of pottery shards and clay pipestems to identify how architectural space was constructed and used, with the early manner house as the center of social and work activities and the quarter a poorly lit, inadequately heated storage and sleeping space. Social segregation inside the manner house occurred via the cross passage; the addition of porches (like that at Bacon's Castle) provided a measure of privacy with a lobby entry as did the enlargement of the chamber. The dwelling shifted from the nexus of domestic and agricultural life to that of a polite house, a residence, increasingly filled with objects of refinement needed for display and participation in the genteel rituals of eighteenth-century society. The food processing and storage needs of a farm – or plantation in the Chesapeake – moved elsewhere. Since so few rural buildings dating from before the second quarter of the eighteenth century survive, archaeological excavations such as Neiman's at Stratford are key to our understanding not only of architectural space but also the wider, cultural landscape in which those buildings were placed.

The likely character of the outbuildings at Pear Valley may be derived from information about other contemporary sites. In her analysis of the advertisements of property offered for sale in the *Virginia Gazette*, Camille Wells found that eighteenth-century Virginians emphasized certain details, such as size and building material, when it was to their advantage and omitted others, such as the wood frame that linked the brick foundations and chimneys and completed the architectural space or the tobacco and corn houses implicit in the well-tended, cultivated fields. Sixty-three percent of the tracts listed amounted to 200 acres or less, much like the Nottingham family's Pear Valley parcel. That the Nottingham holdings were in accordance with the majority of plantations advertised helps to contextualize the dwelling and its outbuildings in their rural setting, the landscape the family created beginning in the 1740s.¹²⁶ Wells found references to 1019 land holdings, of those, 919 mentioned houses and 77 percent were made of wood. Of the 919 dwellings, only 273 highlighted interior partitions, meaning most families occupied small houses of one or two rooms on the main floor. In comparison to the square footage afforded by the one and two room houses Wells traced in the *Gazette*, Pear Valley's living space is more accommodating than the smallest examples listed in the newspaper; those were only 120 square feet.¹²⁷

Completing the domestic social and work space were the outbuildings where tasks were done, tools were stored, and laborers slept. Sixty percent of the houses advertised in the *Virginia Gazette* had an auxiliary structure, most often a kitchen. Diaries and smokehouses followed; accommodating agricultural production were barns. In the Chesapeake these were primarily for storing grains and fodder. Tobacco houses and grain storage facilities, such as granaries and corn cribs, were highlighted in many of the advertisements but likely were more prolific.¹²⁸ Similar to the percentages Wells gleaned from the eighteenth-century newspapers were the proportions of extant agricultural structures on the Eastern Shore that Gabrielle Lanier and Bernard Herman documented, although the surviving building stock predominantly postdates the Colonial period.¹²⁹ Lanier and Herman found the gable-fronted barn to be the most common, and that often, these barns were small, measuring 16 x 20, and thus, no bigger than the dwellings they served. At 16 x 20, these agricultural buildings shared the same footprint as Pear Valley. The gable-fronted barns were similar to those built for grain storage, such as the granaries and corn cribs, and in the Chesapeake, made of the same post construction used in domestic architecture. Inside the farm buildings there was typically a wide work area,

¹²⁶ Wells, "The Planter's Prospect: Houses, Outbuildings, and Rural Landscapes in Eighteenth-Century Virginia," *Winterthur Portfolio* 28 (Spring 1993): 1-9. None of the advertisements referenced land holdings in Accomack County, only one in Northampton. Ten were in Princess Anne County, however. Edward Kimber described an Eastern Shore community, its church and surrounding dwellings as mostly constructed of wood, though some of the houses had brick chimneys, further placing Pear Valley in its context. Kimber, 153.

¹²⁷ The square footage of these houses ranged from 120 to 576; Pear Valley falls in the middle with over 300.

¹²⁸ Wells, 12-18.

¹²⁹ Lanier and Herman state that most agricultural architecture from the Colonial period is known through archaeological and documentary evidence, thus underscoring the importance of Neiman's work at Clifts Plantation and Wells's mining of the *Gazette*. 177.

with an earthen floor, and overhead lofts.¹³⁰ Lanier's and Herman's work reinforces the importance of material evidence to uncovering how the various buildings of a farm landscape relate to one another, specifically how each was used. The interior space of these barns could accommodate any number of functions, from storage to housing workers, leaving their architectural signals somewhat ambiguous.¹³¹ As Pear Valley did in the first half of the twentieth century, these barns sheltered lumber, laborers, poultry or other animals and served as cart sheds.¹³² Yet in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the ambiguities receded as the agricultural buildings were made more substantial in accordance with increased prosperity and ambitions. Maria Widgeon, for example, built a granary around the same time she expanded the house at Pear Valley, thereby exercising her authority over both the domestic and production side of the plantation.¹³³ Likely Maria Widgeon could afford to add onto Pear Valley after her husband died because her son Thomas remained in the house and she continued to own laborers whose farm work was essential to her livelihood.¹³⁴

Archaeological evidence, plus that offered in historic photographs, suggests the Pear Valley complex had a linear plan with the outbuildings adjacent to the dwelling; in relation to the farmhouse to the north, as an agricultural building Pear Valley could have functioned as the terminus to a courtyard wherein domestic work occurred between the two buildings.¹³⁵ However, oral history accounts placed a fence between the farmhouse to the north and Pear Valley, likely on the modern property line. They also located a corn house (tin silo), stables, and a fence between the yard and the outhouse nearby.¹³⁶ Documentary evidence offers few details as legal language was standardized to inclusive statements like "improvements thereon," although occasionally, records mentioned specific buildings as in the property division between Thomas Widgeon and his sister Henrietta in the 1860s which cited a framed house, a kitchen standing one and one-half story in height, a store room, a log corn stack, and two stables, each with two stalls on the property being divided.¹³⁷ The kitchen building was identified as the "north kitchen,"

¹³⁰ Lanier and Herman, 188-91, 195-97. The similarities in construction that Lanier and Herman observed, to inform their readers who were new to studies of the Chesapeake of the connection, were documented earlier by Garry Stone and Willie Graham. See notes 2, 4, and 108.

¹³¹ Lanier and Herman, 207-11.

¹³² Historic photographs record these activities taking place at Pear Valley; oral histories place the laborers there. See note 15.

¹³³ Wells, 31; Richter and Chappell, 13.

¹³⁴ Richter and Chappell, 8.

¹³⁵ Lanier and Herman discuss the two farm plans identified by Henry Glassie, the linear and the courtyard, and offer one of their own, the range wherein the house faces the main road, as the farmhouse north of Pear Valley does, and the outbuildings faced a side lane, which taken in today's context wherein there are no other outbuildings, Pear Valley and other subsidiary structures could have done. Aerial photographs from the late 1940s offer little additional insight. Lanier and Herman, 223-25. See Figures Nos. 36-38.

¹³⁶ Mrs. Thelma Barnes and Mrs. Hales, to Julie Richter and Gina Haney, 28 October 1993.

¹³⁷ Northampton County Court Records, Deed Book No. 37, 1867-1871, 83. "...day of Dec'r 1866 divide the same as follows, to wit: Land contains 318 acres, Beginning at the west end and going east we laid off 188 acres, the line running from the neck road [Rt 628?] directly across to Mrs. Margt. L. Read's land, together with a framed house standing on that part of the land, and the north kitchen, one and half story, store room, log corn stack and two stables of two stalls each, (sawed log), standing on the other part land

implying another kitchen was on the property, perhaps falling on the eastern end that devolved to Henrietta and John Scott and so not listed.¹³⁸

The plantation Maria Widgeon managed included outbuildings such as the kitchen and grain storage buildings typically found, whose presence is suggested by the contextual evidence provided by Wells's study and the documentary evidence of the court records. County tax rates and assessments also elucidate when building campaigns occur or when a structure was lost due to fire or other causes. For Pear Valley, the tax records indicate that the improvements Maria Widgeon made were undertaken shortly after her husband John died in 1837. By 1840, the value of buildings "added to" the land was increased to \$300; in that year, the county's median appraisal was \$250. The architectural improvements to Pear Valley held in value throughout the decade, and in 1850, Widgeon's assessment was equal to the county median. She also added laborers to the work force, maintaining about fourteen slaves who worked the Pear Valley tract and Baker's Field, which she bought in 1840. With both parcels, she owned just over 325 acres and was among the county's top landholders in the 1840s. She had made quite an advance over her husband's ownership of 175 acres and five or six slaves.¹³⁹

Maria Widgeon's investment not only in her social space but also in the plantation structure, its labor and its buildings, even as she expanded the acreage under cultivation reflects a prosperity supported by grain agriculture that was indicative of the Eastern Shore as a whole.¹⁴⁰ Diversification occurred early on the Eastern Shore, and many of the

leaving to the other lot of land, being the east, 130 acres, together with all the remaining buildings and improvements thereon, upon which Thomas E. Widgeon drew the west end, containing 188 acres, with the buildings added thereto, and Jno T. Scott in right of Henney his wife, drew the east end, containing 130 acres, with all the remaining buildings and improvements thereon."

¹³⁸ The tin silo of the early twentieth century would have replaced the more ephemeral corn stack fashioned of logs.

¹³⁹ Richter, "Pear Valley, Northampton County," (cited in note 5). Richter's work highlights the architectural improvements undertaken by women, such as Maria Widgeon, as opposed to those initiated by men, so Widgeon's changes to Pear Valley are merely summarized for the HABS report to address building chronology and existing conditions. However, I can speculate that Maria Widgeon had aspirations greater than her husband did. She elected to invest funds after his death in not only improving her dwelling but also in adding to her landholdings. Her actions in the late 1830s to 1840 also strongly suggest that she was impetus behind the property division in 1819 that finally settled her father's estate and that allowed her to ultimately acquire title to Pear Valley.

¹⁴⁰ In the 1850 agricultural census Maria Widgeon was recorded as having 200 improved acres, and 126 unimproved acres of land; her livestock – hogs mostly – was valued at \$650 and included three horses, two asses/mules, nine milch cows, three working oxen, and some sheep and swine. Homemade manufactures were assessed at \$30 and animals slaughtered at \$146; crops were primarily Indian corn and oats, plus some peas, beans, potatoes, and sweet potatoes. Seventh Census of the United States, Non-Population Schedules for Virginia, 1850-80, 1850, NAB. The emphasis on corn and oats, with some potatoes, persisted; Thomas Widgeon was recorded as having producing the same crops on his land in 1870. At that time, 150 acres of the Pear Valley tract was improved or under cultivation and thirty-eight acres were not. He, too, had horses, mules, milch cows, cattle (no working oxen), sheep and swine. The census scribe also wrote that Widgeon paid laborers to work the land. These proportions were true of the Eastville District, Indian corn and oats dominate the produce, with potatoes following, then butter, orchard products, winter wheat, wool, rye, peas and beans, buckwheat. Also counted were gallons of molasses and pounds of

parcels were smaller, meaning families worked alongside their laborers and with about 100 acres a planter managed middling status, escaping poverty and serving in government and ecclesiastical positions of authority. In the seventeenth century this avenue to freedom, to the liberties of free men, was also open to those of African descent, as the success of men such as Anthony Johnson attests. By the mid-eighteenth century when Pear Valley was constructed, market upheavals and racially discriminating policies restricted economic opportunities and the socio-political mobility it brought to impoverished whites and blacks.¹⁴¹

From Architectural Evidence to Agricultural Practices: Laborers and Pear Valley

Because of the agricultural based economy, work in the fields translated into income and so the labors of servants and slaves and family members harvesting grains indirectly paid for the construction of houses such as Pear Valley.¹⁴² The industry of these men and

beeswax and honey. Ninth Census of the United States, Non-Population Schedules for Virginia, 1850-80, 1870, NAB.

¹⁴¹ For example, see Thomas E. Davidson, *Free Blacks on the Lower Eastern Shore of Maryland: The Colonial Period, 1662-1775* (Crownsville: Maryland Historical Trust, 1983), 4-20, 57-76. Also, Thomas E. Davidson, *A Cultural Resource Management Plan for the Lower Delmarva Region of Maryland*, Maryland Historical Trust Series Monograph No. 2 (Crownsville: Maryland Historical Trust, 1981), 33-36, 82-87. In Appendix 1 Davidson quantifies the number of the persons per household (averages seven, including slaves) and number of houses for Dorchester, Somerset and Worchester counties. The majority of houses belonged to a single family, with its white and black, free and enslaved members, as anticipated in a rural, agricultural society. On the lower Eastern Shore, where Pear Valley is located, these patterns should also prove true. It remains unclear where the slaves Maria Widgeon owned lived or slept. The partition deed failed to mention a quarter or, since it was the post-bellum period by little more than a year, a secondary house.

¹⁴² Studies of slavery in the Chesapeake include: Lorena S. Walsh, *From Calabar to Carter's Grove: The History of a Virginia Slave Community* (1997; paperback ed., Charlottesville, VA: University Press of Virginia, 2001); Lorena S. Walsh, *Motives of Honor, Pleasure and Profit: Plantation Management in the Colonial Chesapeake, 1607-1763* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press for the Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture, 2010); Philip D. Morgan, *Slave Counterpoint: Black Culture in the Eighteenth-Century Chesapeake and Lowcountry* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press for the Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture, 1998); David Brion Davis, *Slavery in the Colonial Chesapeake* (Williamsburg: Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, 1986); Ira Berlin and Ronald Hoffman, eds., *Slavery and Freedom in the Age of the American Revolution* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia for the United States Capitol Historical Society, 1983); Sylvia Frey, *Water from the Rock: Black Resistance in a Revolutionary Age* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991); Joan Rezner Gundersen, "The Double Bonds of Race and Sex: Black and White Women in a Colonial Virginia Parish," *Journal of Southern History* 52 (1986): 35-72; Sarah S. Hughes, "Slaves for Hire: The Allocation of Black Labor in Elizabeth City County, Virginia, 1782 to 1810," *William and Mary Quarterly* 3rd series 35 (1978): 260-86; Winthrop D. Jordan, *White over Black: American Attitudes toward the Negro, 1550-1812* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1968); Jean Lee Bottonhoff, "The Problem of Slave Culture in the Eighteenth-Century Chesapeake," *William and Mary Quarterly* 3rd series 43 (1986): 333-61; Allan Kulikoff, *Tobacco and Slaves: The Development of Southern Cultures in the Chesapeake 1680-1800* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1986); Russell R. Menard, "From Servants to Slaves: The Transformation of the Chesapeake Labor System," *Southern Studies* 16 (1977): 355-90; Russell R. Menard, "The Maryland Slave Population, 1658 to 1730," *William and Mary Quarterly* 3rd series 32 (1975): 29-54; Edmund S. Morgan, *American Slavery, American Freedom: The Ordeal of Colonial Virginia* (NY: Norton, 1975); Philip Schwarz, *Twice Condemned: Slaves and the Criminal Laws*

women supported the family and paid for improvements to the land, including buildings, and any agricultural investments the Nottinghams made. It is, therefore, important to populate the Nottingham household in order to ascertain who might have been living and working in the small, wood house with its articulated framing. Sources for the mid-eighteenth century that account for household numbers, and family members, include the extant tithable lists and probate inventories.

Surviving tithable lists for Northampton County provide an accounting of taxable laborers in each household beginning in the mid-seventeenth century. The definition of a tithable was expanded, and refined, as attitudes toward African American and Native American servants, as well as toward black free and enslaved laborers, hardened. Tithables came to include all persons over the age of sixteen, except for free white women unless those women were acting as the head of a household, such as during widowhood. In 1782, taxable labor was subsumed in the personal property tax code.¹⁴³ The Nottinghams, who built the house known as Pear Valley today, were included in this list, and they were taxed for both white indentured servants and enslaved laborers either from Africa or of African descent. From 1720 through 1769, the number of tithables for the Nottingham family that occupied Pear Valley ranged from one, such as Robert Nottingham Jr., who in the late 1730s and 1740s was taxed for only himself to upwards of the nine agricultural laborers held by Captain Robert Nottingham from 1735 to 1744. The elder Nottingham maintained at least one indentured servant, and the number of slaves he paid taxes on ranged from two (1724-35) to six (1740) to nine (1744).¹⁴⁴

In the 1760s the Nottinghams continued to invest in bound labor, as well as the occasional white servant¹⁴⁵; the small number of slaves, usually two to five, owned

of Virginia, 1705-1865 (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1988); Carole Shamas, "Black Women's Work and the Evolution of Plantation Society in Virginia," *Labor History* 26 (1985): 5-28; Thad W. Tate, *The Negro in Eighteenth-Century Williamsburg* (Williamsburg: Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, 1965); Ira Berlin and Philip D. Morgan, eds., *Cultivation and Culture: Labor and the Shaping of Slave Life in the Americas* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1993); Jillian E. Galle and Amy L. Young, eds. *Engendering African American Archaeology: A Southern Perspective* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2004); Eugene Genovese, *Roll Jordan Roll: The World the Slaves Made* (NY: Pantheon Books, 1974); Eugene Genovese and Elizabeth Fox-Genovese, *Slavery in White and Black* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008); Ira Berlin, *Many Thousands Gone* (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1998); Anthony S. Parent, Jr., *Foul Means: The Formation of a Slave Society in Virginia, 1660-1740* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press for the Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture, 2003), "Forum :Transformations of Virginia: Tobacco, Slavery, and Empire," *William and Mary Quarterly* 3rd series 68 (July 2011), 327-426. See also, the Digital Archeology Archive of Chesapeake Slavery (DAACS) at www.daacs.org and the NEH study, Virginia Slave Housing, at www.slavehousing.org.

¹⁴³ William W. Hening, ed., *The Statutes at Large Being a Collection of All the Laws of Virginia, from the First Session of the Legislature, in the Year 1619...*[1809-1823], 1:361-362; 1:454-455; 4:133. See www.lva.virginia.gov, accessed 10 September 2011, for more detailed information about extant tax rolls and legislative details.

¹⁴⁴ John B. Bell, *Northampton County, Virginia, Tithables, 1720-1769* (Bowie, MD: Heritage Books, 1994), 54, 79, 105, 128, 165, 192, 226, 247, 249, 259, 281, 302, 303-14, 323, 367.

¹⁴⁵ Although inconsistently recorded, after the name of a person of African descent was the word "Negro"; what is consistent was the general use of only first names, but not surnames, for these individuals, likely

makes it likely that either Nottingham or the white servant supervised the other workers. It is also possible that the servant practiced a trade. As agricultural practice expanded, and became more complex, with the shift into grain, corn, and livestock, plus the production of manufactures for trade, skilled labor and artisans were increasingly needed. The wills of Addison and William Nottingham, for example, included carpenters' and coopers' tools, while Robert Nottingham's estate incorporated tools for textile production. The possession of these tools suggests the indentured servant had skills the family determined would make a good investment alongside the slaves they already owned, hired, or merely borrowed.¹⁴⁶

The slaves named in the 1760s belonged to Addison Nottingham (five), Thomas Nottingham (eight), and Richard Nottingham (four). In 1769, William Nottingham was taxed for himself plus three of the slaves he inherited, Appey, Watt, and Peg, from his father.¹⁴⁷ It is very likely, therefore, that the enslaved laborers worked with the Nottinghams, alongside servants and some family members, throughout this period.

By the 1780s enslaved people had been associated with Pear Valley through the Nottingham family for more than fifty years; expanding on the numerical tabulation of the tithable lists Addison Nottingham's will and estate appraisal identified seven "Negroes" by name: App, Jerom, Watt, Peg, App (a boy), Grace, and Judah. Addison Nottingham's will stipulated that William could hire out the slaves bequeathed to his younger siblings, Addison, Mary, and Esther, either publicly or privately, but not to "tavern keepers or other bad masters."¹⁴⁸ These undesirable leasers presumably were known by reputation along the Eastern Shore.¹⁴⁹ Because these men and women were

enslaved laborers, and so in districts without the racial distinction overtly noted, the listing of people by only their first names suggests that they were enslaved. Family members and overseers are enumerated with first and last names; it is possible to extrapolate from these differences that the people with surnames were white, though on rare occasions such as estate inventories and in runaway slave advertisements whites sometimes acknowledged that some slaves had surnames. It is possible, too, that some of those with first and last names given were free blacks. Otherwise, there are no distinctions made between servants and slaves. See, for example, Bell, 359-68, for the 1744 tithable list.

¹⁴⁶ See note 48.

¹⁴⁷ Bell, 367, 380-81, 386, 391, and 405. William's estate inventory includes only one slave he inherited (App valued at £25), but also Moses (£90), Betty (£65), Mary (£65), Jean (£40), and three children, [illegible] (£22), Elsey (£20), and Cate (£15). These men and women represented the most valuable assets of the estate, although the pork, oats, and riding chair were also assessed highly. Northampton County Court Records, Wills and Inventories, No. 27, 1783-1788, 274.

¹⁴⁸ This phrase is Addison Nottingham's and not standard language in legal documents, like phrases referencing other forms of property had become such as "appurtenances and other improvements" used to describe buildings, fences, etc., on a land parcel.

¹⁴⁹ Northampton County Court Records, Wills and Inventories, No. 25, 1772-1777, 179-80; and the appraisal, Northampton County Court Records, Wills and Inventories, No. 27, 1783-1788, 30. The injustice of the transfer of enslaved persons from one generation to the next remains a great travesty; any anxiety surrounding the ownership of other people was filtered out of the inventory wherein slaves were assessed as property, alongside horses and bushels of corn. Possession, and the implicit recognition of the advantages slave-holding offered to small and middling farmers like the Nottinghams, is unemotionally recorded here. In Nottingham's will, his son William was bequeathed App, who was valued at £15; his son

owned by Addison Nottingham, and his son William owned Pear Valley, they may have worked there, either inside the house or on the land. Regardless of where they worked, their labor directly or indirectly supported and maintained Pear Valley because their work benefited the Nottingham family. This was true for the slaves owned by William Nottingham at his death: adults App and Moses, Betty, Mary, and Jean, and three children. That Moses was valued at £90, more than the others by at least £25, indicates he possessed valuable skills, though the inventory did not identify his occupation.¹⁵⁰ What is clear is that the Nottingham family perpetuated the slave system, through the distribution of enslaved persons from generation to generation, such as from Addison to William, and from William to his son Joseph.

The estate of Joseph W. Nottingham was inventoried and appraised in April 1806, and much of his property went up for sale. The inventory and appraisal were filed in court some ten years later, a procedural necessity arising from his children's division of their inheritance. Joseph Nottingham's estate included eight people identified by race (i.e., as "Negroes"), gender and name, plus another four by gender and name only; of these, nine were sold. Also in the inventory, and subsequent sale, were building supplies: bricks, plank, flooring, featheredge, shingles, scantling, and shells.¹⁵¹

Agricultural Practices: Labor in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries

While the name of the builder of Pear Valley, and those of the bricklayer and carpenter who assisted him, go unrecorded, it is possible to reconstruct at least a broad understanding of the context in which Pear Valley was built. The importation of the first African slaves in August 1619 is a seminal point in the history of British Colonial America, and that of Virginia in particular. From 1619 through the 1670s, enslaved persons were but one facet of the labor force that included the white settlers, indentured servants, and Native Americans; those who could afford to do so purchased slaves, however. In the fourth quarter of the seventeenth century, tax records and population statistics document the continued, and pervasive, use of slave labor and, also, a decrease in indentured servitude.¹⁵² Recent studies add detail to this understanding by looking at

Addison was bequeathed Watt (£75) and Peg (£12); his daughter Mary was bequeathed Grace (£60) and App (£35); and Esther received Jerom (£85) and Judah (£18).

¹⁵⁰ Northampton County Court Records, Wills and Inventories, No. 27, 1783-1788, 274.

¹⁵¹ Joseph Nottingham owned the house, and lived in it, during the second generation of changes – the installation of the trim, for example – and the possession of slaves and building supplies suggests some of those men enumerated in the inventory were bricklayers and carpenters and Joseph Nottingham was about to embark on a construction campaign. Northampton County Court Records, Wills &c., No. 35, 1817-1822, 183-84, 186, 190-91. The names of the Negroes inventoried were: Lighty, Pegg, Leah and child, Melany [sic], Fran, Crisanne [sic], Bedy [sic], plus those without the racial cue, Pleasant, Hanna, Charlotte, and Sappah [sic]. See 183-84. Those sold were Peg (£104.5.0), Leah (£80.1.0), Lotte (£36.0.0), Crisanne (£16.4.0); Hanna (£66.0.0), Lindy (£61.14), Fanny (£44), Pleasant (£15), and Lighty (£99.1.0). See 190-91. Tax lists indicate that Joseph Nottingham owned six slaves in 1795, and seven in 1800. Northampton County Court Records, Personal Property Tax List, 1795 and 1800.

¹⁵² In *American Slavery, American Freedom* Morgan argues that the adoption of a slave-based labor system was one strategy those with land and property pursued in order to mitigate the political and social unrest that resulted in Bacon's Rebellion (1676-77). Disenfranchised poor whites and indentured servants with

the impact of settlement patterns, agricultural diversification, and socioeconomic differences on labor and slavery.¹⁵³ On the Eastern Shore, Pear Valley falls into an economic region that abandoned tobacco for mixed farming and for what historian Lorena Walsh describes as “provisioning.” The Eastern Shore, along with counties on the lower, south side of the James River, produced goods for export, i.e., provisions and naval stores.¹⁵⁴ Moreover the Nottingham family, while members of the office-holding gentry, were middling planters with acres in the low hundreds, not thousands, and less than ten tithables. Their landholdings were not dramatically different from the non-elite leaseholders on the Shore; and like their less affluent neighbors, they, too, acquired slave labor as the access to enslaved persons expanded in the seventeenth century and into the eighteenth century. However, the very wealthy, large plantation holders adopted slavery as a labor system far earlier and more comprehensively than previous studies of the Colony’s shift from servants to slaves have suggested.¹⁵⁵

By the time Pear Valley was constructed the shift from a predominantly white indentured servant labor force to a naturally increasing enslaved black labor force had already

little chance establishing their own farms posed a threat to the hierarchical social structure; importing less of them, and more of the African slaves who lawmakers defined as chattel not as people was a societal choice. A choice that, as Lorena Walsh aptly stated, “compromised the honor of everyone involved.”

Walsh, *Motives of Honor, Pleasure, and Profit*, 632.

¹⁵³ These studies are highlighted in the most recent volume of the *William and Mary Quarterly* 3rd series, 68 (July 2011), particularly, John C. Coombs, “The Phases of Conversion: A New Chronology for the Rise of Slavery in Early Virginia,” 332-60. Coombs challenges Morgan’s emphasis on Bacon’s Rebellion as a catalyst for the wholesale shift from indentured servitude to enslaved labor in the last decades of the seventeenth century by using probate inventories, shipping and population data, commodity pricing to demonstrate slave ownership occurred early and often, first with the best-connected, most influential gentry who had access to markets and capital and who had large landholdings to work but also with the gentry’s less well-off neighbors. Yet Morgan’s argument on class and race stands, and Russell Menard’s hypothesis that supply altered demand – that is a labor shortage in the 1660s and 1670s made indentured servants scarce (and so driving up the price) and that shortage prompted a shift to the use of slaves – is queried by Coombs. For a summary of these points, see Paul G.E. Clemens, “Reimagining the Political Economy of Early Virginia,” *William and Mary Quarterly* 3rd series 68 (July 2011): 393-97. Menard, as Walsh notes, did propose a dual market for servants and slaves, but this was an alternative theory to his main argument. Walsh, *Motives of Honor, Pleasure, and Profit*, 379-81, and note 91.

¹⁵⁴ Walsh, *Motives of Honor, Pleasure, and Profit*, 210-17; Lorena S. Walsh, “Summing the Parts: Implications for Estimating Chesapeake Output and Income Subregionally,” *William and Mary Quarterly* 3rd series 56 (January 1999): 53-94.

¹⁵⁵ Coombs, 344-51, 358-59. Coombs argues that the economic diversification of the Shore and the lower James River counties shaped the shift to slavery in that region as well. Exposure to the Caribbean, and the access to slaves that market provided, enabled gentry and non-elites to hold slaves, with 46 percent of black headrights attributed to ordinary planters in lower Norfolk and Princess Anne counties. The Eastern Shore planters participated in the slave trade, buying and selling slaves, but it was characterized by smaller scale landholdings and a correspondingly smaller proportion of slaves per household (albeit most households included slaves by the 1720s), and by a community of free blacks. Together these factors distinguish its labor history from that of other provisioning counties. Regarding slave ownership in the 1720s, wherein ownership of most of the slaves by just a few families had given way to ownership of slaves by more families, see Joseph Douglas Deal, “Race and Class in Colonial Virginia: Indians, Englishman, and Africans on the Eastern Shore during the Seventeenth Century,” Ph.D. diss, University of Rochester, 1981, 207.

occurred.¹⁵⁶ Yet, the Pear Valley acreage was worked by its white owners alongside their servants and slaves. Because of the size of the workforce, the landowners and their laborers toiled together and the diversification from tobacco into grains that occurred early on the Eastern Shore meant they all learned different skills and adapted to the seasonal rhythms imposed by the new crops. On larger plantations, agricultural diversification altered how labor was organized, allowing individuals or groups to perform different or specialized tasks, and enabling some to escape the tedium of the harvest cycle. Increasingly women replaced men in the fields, serving as unskilled manual laborers with tools no more sophisticated than a hoe. Simultaneously, or perhaps a causal effect for the gender shift in fieldwork, opportunities for apprenticeships and artisan training opened up for the males in trades from woodworking to ironworking.¹⁵⁷ Acquired skills and knowledge made the slave more valuable, and if leveraged successfully, gave the slave a better material life and an ease of movement than otherwise was possible under a sun-up to sun-down work schedule.

Slaves, their names and valuations, and sometimes their trades, were recorded as decedents' estates went into probate; tithable lists provide another form of accounting. Yet the inventories and tithable lists merely capture a household at a given point in time, and as time passed in the eighteenth century, the practice of hiring out slaves – formally or informally lending them to neighbors and kin – became more commonplace. The hiring out of slaves included those trained in carpentry, smithing, and bricklaying, but also included field hands needed for assistance with agricultural chores. In the Chesapeake, however, small plantations were the norm and these farmsteads, as the land holdings came to be viewed, were worked by whites and blacks together. Typically, small farms were home to fewer than five enslaved persons and in these settings few were artisans. More likely, the enslaved performed a variety of tasks in and out of the house, just as their owners did. Even the possession of one slave enriched his or her owner, and that person's service made his or her owner's life easier.¹⁵⁸ Undeniably the labor of enslaved persons paid for the building of houses indirectly through the profits their agricultural work generated. In some instances, however, slaves affected the built environment, the man-made landscape, directly through their labors as craftsmen or assistants to tradesmen.

The acquisition of a marketable skill or craft, plus the use of a form of gang labor wherein several people worked together and the loss of one altered the productivity of the

¹⁵⁶ Kulikoff, in *Tobacco and Slaves*, and Menard, in "From Servants to Slaves," present similar assessments of the servants-to-slaves paradigm, placing the shift in the second quarter of the seventeenth century. Menard, however, ascribes this to a question of demographics wherein a lack of available white workers fed the endorsement of black slavery. The supply-side economic theory has been revised by the research of John Coombs, and others, who demonstrate that enslaved labor was used, preferred even, before the numbers of white indentured servants dropped. It is important to note that the two systems of bound labor co-existed throughout the seventeenth century.

¹⁵⁷ Kulikoff, 396-408; Morgan, *Slave Counterpoint*, 146-254; Walsh, *Motives of Honor, Pleasure and Profit*, 576-86, 622; Susan Kern, *The Jeffersons at Shadwell* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), 99-109.

¹⁵⁸ Kulikoff, 387-423; Walsh, *From Calabar to Carter's Grove*, 1; Morgan, *Slave Counterpoint*, 204-54.

team, offered enslaved laborers an opportunity to create space for themselves within a system that denied them the benefits of their labor, controlled their time and their bodies, and cast a shadow over their familial life. Those fortunate to obtain their freedom faced an increasingly prejudiced society in the eighteenth century, and often found themselves without access to land and so livelihood. They were reduced to subsistence farming and lease holding or to living in the household of their white employers. The relatively vibrant free black society on the Eastern Shore in the seventeenth century was therefore circumscribed and marginalized in the eighteenth century; slavery, it has been said, institutionalized poverty, and free blacks – free but with limited liberties – lived on the edge of re-enslavement as wage laborers or tenant farmers.¹⁵⁹ With a freedom likened to servitude, free blacks needed property just as their poor white peers did in order to be recognized legally and socially. Slavery, and freedom, was defined under law as well as through social interactions and it has been posited that property helped make the distinction. Access to cultivatable land on the Eastern Shore, with its many creeks and limited land mass, was problematic and essentially limited social mobility as economic independence at home and interdependence in trade networks stemmed from land ownership and the production of grain and other provisioning goods.¹⁶⁰

The Nottingham family had both land and labor, and translated it into a modicum of social and political authority by becoming office holders and vestry men as well as witnesses to neighbors' wills and legal documents or cases and serving as guardians to their children.¹⁶¹ The slave-based labor system in the Chesapeake paid for the

¹⁵⁹ See, for example, Douglas Deal, "A Constricted World: Free Blacks on Virginia's Eastern Shore, 1680-1750," in *Colonial Chesapeake Society*, edited by Lois Green Carr, Philip D. Morgan, and Jean B. Russo (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press for the Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture, 1988), 275-305; Thomas E. Davidson, "Free Black Landowners on the Lower Eastern Shore of Maryland, 1783-1861," Paper 1982, on file, Maryland Historical Trust Library, Crownsville, Maryland; Thomas E. Davidson, *Free Blacks on the Lower Eastern Shore of Maryland: The Colonial Period, 1662-1775* (Crownsville: Maryland Historical Trust, 1983); Thomas E. Davidson, *Free Blacks on the Lower Eastern Shore of Maryland: The Demographics of Freedom* (Crownsville: Maryland Historical Trust, 1986).

¹⁶⁰ T.H. Breen and Stephen Innes, "Myne Own Ground": *Race and Freedom on Virginia's Eastern Shore, 1640-1676* (NY: Oxford University Press, 1980); Deal, "Race and Class in Colonial Virginia," 207-25. Another form of diversification away from tobacco was the Eastern Shore's adoption of livestock/animal husbandry as an alternative source of income. Walsh, *Motives of Honor, Pleasure and Profit*, 576-86.

¹⁶¹ James R. Perry, *The Formation of Virginia's Eastern Shore, 1615-1655* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press for the Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture, 1990), 70-115; John Ruston Pagan, *Anne Orthwood's Bastard: Sex and Law in Early Virginia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003). Robert Nottingham, Jr., (d. 1744), had 150 acres, which he inherited through his mother Mary (his father Joseph remarried), and he served as the county's tobacco inspector in the 1730s. His grandfather, Richard, held 350 acres at the time of the 1704 rent roll. In 1704 the median plantation size was 200 acres, and twenty-one (8 percent) men held 39 percent of the property. These elite had 1000 acres or more. "A Rent Roll for the Year 1704," British Public Record Office, London, Colonial Office Papers (CO 5/1314: 395-435); H.R. McIlwaine, et al., eds., *Executive Journals of the Council of Colonial Virginia* 6 vols. (Richmond: Virginia State Library, 1927-66), IV: 238, 286, 355; Julie Richter, "Pear Valley, Northampton County, Virginia," 3-4. Richter also calculated that in 1782, when land and personal property tax records begin, that the then owner of the Pear Valley William Nottingham, who was the cousin of Joseph Nottingham (d. 1765), owned 288.50 acres, among the top third of the county. His personal property (ten

construction and maintenance of Pear Valley because of the wealth the agricultural economy brought. Artisans were hired or shared, if not owned outright, and Pear Valley was built by them according to Nottingham's specifications. Nottingham would have known of the Renaissance Classical building tradition, but his choice to not to invoke its full range of characteristics speaks both to his confidence in his position and to his understanding of where he lived, the resources at his disposal, and the language of architecture both to convey belonging and to confer distinction. Pear Valley is a well-made, second-generation Virginia house with architectural nuances inherent to its vernacular context as well as a product of Virginia's slave-based labor system.¹⁶²

Farming the Eastern Shore in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries

The slave-based labor system and the agriculture-based economy it made possible produced an architectural landscape like that at Pear Valley that consisted of dwellings, barns, and other ancillary structures. This interdependency of agricultural decisions and the architectural landscape it dictated is discussed in a case study of Queen Anne's County, Maryland, by Orlando Ridout V. Ridout observed that the shift into grain production, and away from tobacco cultivation, in the middle decade of the eighteenth century left few structures related to the tobacco industry standing today. Even so, all available tenable land was settled and the soil exhausted; planters began to experiment with crop rotation and to combat erosion. By the 1820s, when John and Maria Widgeon owned and farmed the land at Pear Valley, agriculture on the Eastern Shore changed dramatically with successes in soil reclamation, the application of fertilizer (i.e., manure which then brought increased livestock to the area), and crop diversification as well as improved access to markets. Further technological advances in machinery and transportation networks opened Queen Anne's County to garden produce and dairy farming and away from grains. Architectural improvements were made to accommodate new industries and to better house the planters and their laborers. In the 1850s, fruit production became increasingly popular, continuing into the 1870s and 1880s when the canneries ushered in a return to monoculture.¹⁶³

enslaved laborers, six horses, thirty-two cattle) placed among the top fourth. William's tithables are first accounted for in 1769 record. Bell, 391.

¹⁶² Nottingham's decision to build a one-room, or hall plan, house speaks to his economic wherewithal and aspirations, as well as the persistence of the hall in social use, even after an enthusiastic embrace of the dining room, is not unique to the Eastern Shore. Probate inventories of larger houses include a catch-all "back room" named for location not use, or catalogue a room with a hodgepodge of belongings, suggesting its occupants either used it for everything or did not know what to do with the extra space inside their dwellings. In his study of houses in Bermuda, Edward Chappell noticed a similar phenomenon with the inventoried contents of the low status dining room in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Betty Leviner to Virginia B. Price, personal communication, 6 October 2011; Edward Chappell to Virginia B. Price, personal communication, var. dates, 2010; on house plans and room use in Bermuda housing, Edward A. Chappell, "The Bermuda House," *Post-Medieval Archaeology* 45, no. 1 (2011): 96-107, 113-19.

¹⁶³ Orlando Ridout V, "Agricultural Change and the Architectural Landscape," in *Three Centuries of Maryland Architecture* (Annapolis: Maryland Historical Trust, 1982), 3-7.

While some parallels between the Widgeons of Pear Valley and the planters of Queen Anne's County, Maryland, can be drawn and perhaps even suggest when the name Pear Valley came into parlance, the experience of the Virginia's Eastern Shore differed in that grain agriculture retained a more dominant role, as the mid nineteenth-century census records demonstrate.¹⁶⁴ Other nineteenth-century industries on Maryland's lower Eastern Shore included shipbuilding, which lasted as long as the forests, oystering and fisheries, and water-powered mills. These pursuits gave way to modern food production and processing with the poultry farms and canneries that eclipsed even the vegetable farms and orchards made possible by the truck and railroad transport. Agricultural crops tended to be soybeans and corn.¹⁶⁵ As documented for the lower Eastern Shore in twentieth-century Maryland, oral history accounts tell of the expansion from grain into potato and fruit crops like strawberries and tomatoes and of family orchards on the farms near Pear Valley. Adjacent to Pear Valley, the family raised chickens, ducks "roamed around and sheep cut the grass."¹⁶⁶ Grains remained under cultivation, however.¹⁶⁷

The oral histories also paint a picture of who worked in the fields. They remind us of the laborers to whom collectively Thomas Widgeon paid over \$800 a year in 1870; they attest to the continued presence of African Americans, perhaps related to those referenced in Widgeon's will, on Wilsonia Neck as the area where Pear Valley was located was then known.¹⁶⁸ Mrs. Thelma Barnes, who as a child lived in the house north of Pear Valley during the 1910s and early 1920s, remembered migrant workers coming from Norfolk to pick potatoes. Seven or eight migrant workers stayed in Pear Valley, occupying the first

¹⁶⁴[Seventh–Tenth] Census of the United States, Non-population Census Schedules for Virginia, 1850-80, NAB. The potato took hold as a crop in the post-bellum period; before the war, peaches were grown in the area. Dr. Miles Barnes to Virginia B. Price, personal communication, April 2011. Also, social statistics for the county in 1860 tallied 628 farms in Accomack County, and another 401 in Northampton. In Northampton there were 754 dwellings, 3960 free inhabitants and 3872 enslaved persons, making the white/black demographic evenly split. Forty-four people were adjudged paupers and received some relief from the county, although there were just ten on June 1st. Fourteen teachers taught 650 students. There were Methodist, Baptist, Presbyterian, and Episcopalian churches. Eighth Census of the United States, Non-population Census Schedules for Virginia, 1850-80, 1860 Social Statistics, NAB.

¹⁶⁵ Davidson, *A Cultural Resource Management Plan for the Lower Delmarva Region of Maryland*, 26-27. On the railroad, William G. Thomas, III, and Brooks Miles Barnes, "The Countryside Transformed: The Eastern Shore of Virginia, the Pennsylvania Railroad, and the Creation of a Modern Landscape," *Southern Spaces* (July 2007): 1-34 (on-line, accessed 25 April 2011, www.southernspaces.org/2007).

¹⁶⁶ Mrs. Thelma Barnes, Mrs. Jean Mihalyka, and Mrs. Hales to Julie Richter and Gina Haney, 28 October 1993.

¹⁶⁷ Mrs. Jean Mihalyka to Julie Richter and Gina Haney, 28 October 1993. Mihalyka remembered how the potatoes were shipped out on the railroad, in barrels; she also stated that grains regained popularity.

¹⁶⁸ Ninth Census of the United States, Non-Population Schedules for Virginia, 1850-80, 1870, NAB; Northampton County Court Records, Wills and Inventories, No. 39, 1854-97, 252-53. Also, in 1870, the social statistics for the county accounted for fifty-one paupers, fifty of whom were native and one foreign-born, in the year; a different count for June 1st indicated eleven native whites and fifteen native blacks were in straightened circumstances. There were twenty day schools but no newspapers. Instead, twelve church school libraries, and fifteen private libraries, offered reading materials to county residents. Wages paid, per month to the average field hand employed year-round and boarding came to \$10; day laborers made slightly more, \$11.75, with boarding compensation dropped slightly to \$11.50. Female domestics fared worse, making \$1.50, in 1870.

floor and loft and cooking in the fireplace. They lived there for about six weeks and then moved north, following the crops. The families, the potato pickers, were African-American; the children – the host family’s and the migrant’s – did not play together. There was a privy, a two-seat outhouse for the farmhouse, and probably another for Pear Valley that the migrants used. Once the migrants stopped coming, perhaps traveling by train, Mrs. Hales thought her father recruited workers from Norfolk himself. Barnes also recalled butchering taking place in Pear Valley, while Mrs. Hales recollected it was used for storage in the winter months.¹⁶⁹ Barnes’s and Hales’s memories of Pear Valley effectively illustrate how the building came to serve multiple needs on the larger farm property in the early twentieth century.

Also on the Benson farm, where Pear Valley was home to migrant workers and various animals with uncertain fates was another house occupied by an African-American family. The child (a boy) played with Thelma Barnes; the boy’s mother helped with the washing. They all planted sweet potatoes. Mrs. Hales said that Wilsonia Neck was home to a number of black families, who worked for the white families, making the unidentified tenants of the Benson farm and Mrs. Barnes’s family representative of larger economic and demographic patterns.¹⁷⁰

Black families came to the Eastern Shore for work; many were agricultural day laborers, not tenant farmers, though almost half the farms in Northampton County in 1925 were tenant-run, as the Benson farm appears to have been. Outside of agriculture, other employment opportunities were in the fishing and lumber industries. These vocations were fueled by the mapping of the coast and subsequently improved steamboat lines such as the Northampton to Norfolk route, as well as by the railroad. After the New York, Pennsylvania, and Norfolk Railroad line barreled down the peninsula in 1884, its harbor town at Cape Charles thrived and the markets it represented elicited the shift in agricultural produce from corn and oats to potatoes. With the Eastern Shore Produce Exchange (1900) crops were collected, quality standards enforced, and prices negotiated. The Exchange held 75 percent of the potato crop at one time, but eventually folded due to the Great Depression, over-production, and trucking. The trucks enabled farmers direct access to merchants and city markets thereby bypassing the Exchange’s monopoly over those connections.¹⁷¹

The 1920s represent the highpoint of agricultural production on the Eastern Shore, if measured by the number of farms and the profits garnered through the Exchanges. In this decade, farmers on the Eastern Shore grew potatoes, onions, cabbage, cucumbers, strawberries, and corn for the livestock. They also engaged in oystering, fishing, clamming, and (on the upper Shore particularly) poultry. The railroad, and the connector

¹⁶⁹ Mrs. Thelma Barnes and Mrs. Hales to Julie Richter and Gina Haney, 28 October 1993.

¹⁷⁰ Mrs. Thelma Barnes and Mrs. Hales to Julie Richter and Gina Haney, 28 October 1993.

¹⁷¹ Thomas and Barnes, 1-34. Competition for the Exchange came in 1927 with the Eastern Shore Farmers’ Association and another, private marketing association, the Peninsula Produce Exchange. RG 83 Records of the Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Agricultural Economics, 1876-1959, “Eastern Shore Confidential Report,” copy on file, Eastern Shore Public Library, Accomac, Virginia.

roads it spawned, improved transportation and brought the packing industry to the area.¹⁷² The roads also opened the Shore to recreational tourism and hunt clubs, later to the migrant camps of the 1950s and beyond.¹⁷³ The pressed farmers hired male and female, black and white people to help with the harvests. As it had been traditionally, picking potatoes or harvesting grains was monotonous, back breaking work and one that was gender neutral, unlike some of the jobs in the fisheries or in oystering. Once the United States entered World War I, farmers on the Shore had to recruit labor; this corresponds to what Barnes and Hales remembered, of having to go to Norfolk to seek temporary help.

In the 1940s, migrant laborers began to come from further away, up from Florida, and became a real presence in the 1950s. Jean Mihalyka recalled pickers from nearby Tangier Island working in the strawberry fields at this time, but increasingly the migrants were from out of state. They were brought not by individual farmers or to stay in buildings like Pear Valley, but were managed by crew leaders and housed in camps. The poor living conditions, lack of privacy, particularly in converted farmhouses, long work days in the heat without bathrooms, and low wages led one migrant to say, "... people don't seem to know we ain't supposed to be slaves no more. I may be down here on my knees [picking produce] but I don't want my children doing this here kind of work." By 1980, the number of African Americans working on the Eastern Shore as migrant laborers had declined; others took their places even as the overall number of migrants dropped as mechanization, and the shift away from the labor intensive fruit and vegetable crops, such as strawberries, cucumbers and tomatoes, that needed hand picking, occurred.¹⁷⁴

Thus Pear Valley continued to serve a purpose in the agricultural landscape of Virginia's Eastern Shore, at least through the first half of the twentieth century. It survived on a small family farm that was by-passed by these migrant labor camps and big-business agricultural endeavors such as the poultry industry further up the Shore. In the early twentieth century it was preserved well-enough for Whitelaw and Upshur to comment on its architectural history, and periodic use of the building as a home to migrant labor and later for farm animals and storage enabled those that followed in Whitelaw's and Upshur's footsteps to add to the narrative. It is through scholarly recognition of its architectural significance, and the interpretation of what that could tell us about the agricultural landscape and sociopolitical world created in the Chesapeake in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, that Pear Valley's legacy far outweighs its small footprint.

Part II. Architectural Information

A. General Statement

¹⁷² *Eastern Shore Almanac* 1922; *Eastern Shore Almanac* 1924; also, Tom Badger and Curtis Badger, *Northampton County Images of America* series (Charleston: Arcadia Press, 2011).

¹⁷³ Mrs. Jean Mihalyka to Julie Richter and Gina Haney, 28 October 1993.

¹⁷⁴ Monica Lucille Heppel, "Harvesting the Crops of Others: Migrant Farm Labor on the Eastern Shore of Virginia," Ph.D. diss., American University, 1982, 22-25, 152, 171-72, 224-28. Quotation, 171. Also Mrs. Jean Mihalyka to Julie Richter and Gina Haney, 28 October 1993; and Thomas and Barnes, 1-34.

1. Architectural character: Although said to have been constructed in the 1670s due to a dated brick, now gone,¹⁷⁵ and while the early building technologies are evident in its articulated frame, Pear Valley should not be mistaken for a seventeenth-century house. By the middle of the seventeenth century, conditions on the ground in the Chesapeake produced a simplification in the English structural system of framed buildings that accommodated a wealth of material (wood) and a dearth of labor to prepare or finish it for use. The resulting earthfast, or post in the ground, Virginia, or clapboard, house was erected on a bay module system consisting of posts (principal framing members) set at 8'-to-10' intervals, aligned in the front and back walls for ease of assembly and to transfer load, and lighter structural infill such as common joists, common rafters, and studs. Tenons fastened the joints under compression while laps sufficed for those under tension. False plates were introduced to carry the rafters and effectively isolated the roof structure from the frame below.¹⁷⁶ The separation of the roof with its common rafters and collars from the lower frame was reinforced through the use of riven clapboards, rather than shingles, to cover the roof and provide the necessary rigidity. While the clapboard work was expedient, and meant for one lifetime, this impermanent architectural model remained a key component of the Chesapeake landscape for more than 200 years. The dwellings of the settlers, the poor, and the enslaved were impermanent in character. The study of, and analysis of what was learned of the development of the clapboard house, was detailed by Cary Carson, et al., in their seminal essay entitled "Impermanent Architecture in the Southern Colonies."¹⁷⁷

Recognition of the Virginia or clapboard house apart from an English-framed dwelling signaled the coalescence of the vernacular form, as buildings could be described as either in the latter part of the seventeenth century.¹⁷⁸ The English framed house had foundations rather than posts set in the ground, sawn timbers, substantial braces and often summers and girders, mortise and tenons rather than

¹⁷⁵ Whitelaw, 329-30; Forman, 50; Susie M. Ames, *Studies of the Virginia Eastern Shore in the Seventeenth Century* (Richmond: Dietz Press, 1940). Early attributions of a construction date relied on a brick with "1672" inscribed on it. This dated brick was said to be in the chimney, but is no longer extant.

¹⁷⁶ False plates are especially important, and appear as early as 1665 in Bacon's Castle; documentary sources also record the early use of false plates, such as that referenced in 1673. False plates simplified the joinery between the rafters and the joists, and soon were tilted to better shed water and resist torque. As a counter to the thrust of the rafters, tilted false plates functioned in much the same way as purlins. The false plate, also, served as structural ornamentation when builder/occupants thought exposed framework was fashionable. Graham, 185-86; Lounsbury, *An Illustrated Glossary of Early Southern Architecture and Landscape*, 136. Another example, one of the oldest extant, is Sotterley; dendrochronology dated the tilted false plate to 1715. Willie Graham to Virginia B. Price, personal communication, November 2010. Sotterley (or Sotterly), which is in St. Mary's County, Maryland, was recorded by HABS, see HABS No. MD-181.

¹⁷⁷ Cary Carson et al., "Impermanent Architecture in the Southern Colonies," 113-58; Graham, note 2, who cites Dell Upton, *Holy Things and Profane: Anglican Parish Churches in Colonial Virginia* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1986), and Stone, "Society, Housing, and Architecture in Early Maryland."

¹⁷⁸ Graham, 179, 184-85.

laps, masonry rather than wood chimneys, and modern finishes. The one or two room Virginia house was distinguished by its riven clapboards, though closer inspection also would have revealed little sawn timber and simplified joinery.

The hierarchy of joints allowed builders to focus on the structural components and ultimately create the distinctive Chesapeake framing system which retained the seventeenth-century innovations such as the bay system with large posts or principals and smaller infill studs, the simplified joinery that favored lap joints over mortise and tenons, and the use of false plates and common rafters but combined these with full sills. Willie Graham, from whom much of this summary is drawn, calls attention to the Third Haven Friends Meeting House (HABS No. MD-703) as an example of this.¹⁷⁹ By the end of the seventeenth century, the conscious expression of the frame, with decorative components, was echoed throughout the building, in its masonry with glazed headers and in its ornate hinges and locks such as the foliated hinge seen on the knee wall door in Pear Valley (fig. 39).

The two-tiered articulated frame elucidated by Carson and his co-authors continued to evolve in the eighteenth century, ultimately becoming one structural system with a concealed frame with refined Georgian-period, or Renaissance Classical, finishes such as beaded weatherboarding, boxed cornices, and shingles on the exterior and wainscoting and plaster walls and ceilings on the interior. This period also saw the increased use of raised-panel doors, sash windows with wood muntins, and less ornate hardware (fig. 40).¹⁸⁰

Rural areas, such as Virginia's Eastern Shore, were slower to adopt the concealed frame and Georgian-period refinements.¹⁸¹ Rather, as in Pear Valley, they blended stylistic elements, like the plastered walls, with exposed, elaborated framing. While the builders of Pear Valley, and its contemporary, Belle Air in Charles City County, chose to use an articulated frame, they also employed sills and masonry foundations. The principal structural members were not inserted at 8'-to-10' intervals, rather were used at the corners in Pear Valley and to add emphasis to openings at Belle Air. Pear Valley's tilted false plate further suggests the expression of structural elements was still desirable in the second quarter of the

¹⁷⁹ Graham, 187.

¹⁸⁰ Graham, 189-92. The social, cultural, and economic impetus to the shift in how buildings in the Chesapeake were framed came from more stable demographic circumstances, improved living conditions and increased participation in the consumer revolution, and growing architectural acumen. Richard L. Bushman, *The Refinement of America: Persons, Houses, Cities* (NY: Vintage Books, 1993); Cary Carson, "The Consumer Revolution in Colonial British America: Why Demand?" in *Consuming Interests The Styles of Life in the Eighteenth Century*, edited by Cary Carson, Ronald Hoffman, and Peter J. Albert (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1994), 483-697.

¹⁸¹ Architecturally, it is more accurate to use Renaissance Classicism than the familiar Georgian; Georgian is an indicator of time, meaning broadly the reigns of the British Kings named George in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

eighteenth century;¹⁸² this would change when Pear Valley received its box cornice. Despite later renovations that changed the cornice on the east, introduced plaster to the north interior (fireplace) wall and reduced the size of the fireplace, the structural embellishments like the chamfers on the frame, the tiling on the chimney shoulders, glazed headers following the line of the roof, and the corbelling, place Pear Valley in the second phase of the development of the Chesapeake framing system. Pear Valley remains an important example of a once-common method of building, with features rarely seen today such as the clasped purlin-like timbers and tilted false plates used in the common rafter roof, the working fireplace in a well-finished room, the planed board ceilings on finished joists, and the articulated frame.

2. Condition of fabric: Although unoccupied for many years, the structure is in fairly good condition, albeit with fragile components such as the plaster, original floorboards, and brick. Moreover, the recommendations outlined in the 1992 Historic Structure Report (HSR) have been carefully implemented over the intervening years. The most recent change to the building was the removal of the metal roof and the installation of a wood shingled roofing system. This was completed in 2004. It was based on evidence of the original coverings. Prior to that effort was the work on the firebox that saved it from collapse. Behind the new work, however, loose bricks and soft mortar joints make the chimney susceptible to (further) damage. The repairs to the foundation that anchored the tilting sill under the east wall, the replacement of the northeast corner post, the epoxy patching to the southeast corner posts and posts framing the east door, the covering of the first-floor window openings with wood shutters, and the installation of ventilated windows in the gable end have done much to stabilize the structure. Little of the original plaster remains in-situ (two samples have been sent out for testing) and the large lintel over the firebox is monitored with a plumb bob for any shifting.¹⁸³ Interior damage was sustained by the occupancy of the loft by feathered creature(s) in early 2011, and several of the clapboards on the south gable end have fallen out of place. The rollock bricks over the gable window to east of the chimney are loose.

B. Description of Exterior

1. Overall dimensions: Pear Valley has a small, rectangular footprint measuring approximately 20' x 16', dimensions in keeping with the development and scale of the Chesapeake framing system as it emerged in the seventeenth century and continued to be erected throughout the eighteenth century. The north gable end is constructed of bricks laid in Flemish bond and the masonry work is done to accommodate the large, exterior end chimney (almost 10 ½' across) that is slightly offset from center.

¹⁸² Graham, 189.

¹⁸³ Monitoring was recommended after the work on the north gable wall, and since a plumb bob is in-situ, presumably this is what it was to do.

2. Foundations: A continuous brick foundation runs beneath the sills of the framed walls; the north gable end is made of brick masonry laid in Flemish bond with glazed headers and grapevine joints. Extensive repairs were made at the corners of the chimney, corresponding to the damage recorded in early to mid twentieth-century photographs. The archaeological survey in 1987 revealed the underpinning of the brick foundations, and raised questions about its chronology once the modern concrete floor was partially removed. The brickwork that the present underpinning of the foundation was done at the time of the building's expansion in the early decades of the nineteenth century.¹⁸⁴ The sill at the north end was mortised and tenoned into the east and west sills, while the east and west sills fit into sockets (rabbets) in the brick-end wall of the north elevation. At the south corners, the sills are mortised together.¹⁸⁵ At the time of the archaeological survey, the north sill was missing. It has since been replaced with period-appropriate white oak. Cutting out the north sill and the removal of the joists for a concrete slab jeopardized the rigidity of the frame and likely caused the settling southward of the north gable wall.¹⁸⁶

3. Walls: At the top of the south (end) and east walls, the early nineteenth-century clapboard siding remains. The clapboards are beaded on the east, about 5" exposed, and square-edged on the south and west walls.

4. Structural system, framing: The first-floor framing consists of large, exposed corner posts tenoned into the plate and sill. Down bracing, at shallow angles, is half lapped and pegged into the posts.¹⁸⁷ Light studs are set approximately 2' on center. The studs and down braces were meant to be hidden with a plaster finish, but most of the plaster is now missing exposing the feather-lapped, riven lath secured with rosehead nails. Exposed framing members also include the posts to either side of the doors, the plate, and floor joists. The door posts, each smaller than the corner posts and not of equal size, are tenoned into the plate. Only the larger of the door posts is pegged as well. With the exception of the lightest door post, the exposed framing is chamfered with lamb's tongue stops. The stops mark the various joints of the framing and are employed above all of the door posts.¹⁸⁸

5. Porches, stoops, balconies, porticoes, bulkheads: There are none present, however, the archaeological survey located the fragment of a foundation east of the southeast corner of the building.¹⁸⁹ It has been suggested that this could be the base of a porch, and the post

¹⁸⁴ Kelso, "Archaeological Testing at Pear Valley, Virginia, 1987-88."

¹⁸⁵ Kelso, "Archaeological Testing at Pear Valley, Virginia, 1987-88."

¹⁸⁶ Kelso, "Archaeological Testing at Pear Valley, Virginia, 1987-88," 2; also, observations in the field substantiate the archaeological seriation. See Graham, Ridout, and Wenger, "Pear Valley, Northampton County, Virginia," wherein they suggest the fireplace lintel was extended 2'4" to either side of the firebox in an effort to tie the chimney and wall together.

¹⁸⁷ The down brace in the southeast corner of the building is obscured by the clapboards, but a judicious use of a crowbar and subsequent look up through said boards indicates that this brace was tenoned and pinned, rather than bevel lapped.

¹⁸⁸ See Appendix A for the framing schedule.

¹⁸⁹ Kelso, "Archaeological Testing at Pear Valley, Virginia, 1987-88."

supports for that accretion would explain why the early nineteenth-century weatherboards were cut back at that corner.¹⁹⁰

6. Chimneys: The large, exterior end chimney accommodates only one firebox and that opening was altered in the nineteenth century. The exterior of the chimney has bricks laid in Flemish bond with glazed headers, except the upper portion of the stack, and tiled weathering consisting of alternating rows of sailor and soldier bricks. The shoulders are steeply sloped, and not quite symmetrical. Beneath the three-course corbelling at the cap and the strapcourse, there was a stucco band; remnants of this are visible on the south face though the whole was repointed in the 1990s. The large lintel extends just over 2' to either side of the fireplace, perhaps to tie the chimney and brick end wall together.

7. Openings

a. Doorways and doors: There is one doorway, in the east front elevation, opening into the building. A wood, single door hung from butt hinges swings into the main living space. A key lock secures the entry. This door was installed in the 1990s.

b. Windows and shutters: There are two first-floor window openings visible from the exterior, on the east front north of the door and centrally-located on the south end, and two gable end windows illuminating the loft from the north. The sash of the gable windows has been replaced, and a wood, security shutter made of boards with a beaded edge covers each of the window openings on the first floor. The shutters are hung with contemporary cross-garnet hinges (also called t-hinges). The replacement sill for the south elevation window has a drip mold; unfortunately, the window head has a metal strip running along its top edge.

The wood sash is glazed with six-over-six lights and was installed in the 1990s by the restoration team at the APVA.¹⁹¹ The sills are made of wood. The architrave for the south elevation window resembles that for the door, a plain post-and-lintel type assembly while that on the east front retains its mitered backband.¹⁹²

8. Roof

a. Shape, covering: Pear Valley has a side-gable roof that is sheathed in white oak shingles each with rounded butt end. Early riven oak nailers survive with

¹⁹⁰ Chappell, "Pear Valley Interpreted," *HSR*, 47.

¹⁹¹ The *HSR* notes the sash for the south window was salvaged from another building and installed ca. 1945; the east window met with a similar fate, except the salvaged sash was missing. The frames required minor repairs. *HSR*, 53.

¹⁹² See photograph HABS No. VA-960-12 for the south elevation window frame and missing architrave trim, and HABS No. VA-960-4 for the east elevation fenestration.

contemporary round-butt shingles pegged into place. These provided the model for the recent restoration of the roofing.¹⁹³

b. Cornice, eaves: Along the east front elevation, the feet of the rafters have been cut off to accommodate the box cornice whereas on the west elevation the common rafters lap over the tilted false plate. The ends of the rafters and undersides of the butts of the joists are decorative, having been roughly shaped and rounded on their bottom edges (figs. 3, 28).

C. Description of Interior

1. Floor plans: Pear Valley is a one-room house with a loft above. The second-floor has been subdivided into two rooms, separated by a door opening in the east-west partition wall.¹⁹⁴

2. Stairways: In the southwest corner of the building there is a ladder propped against the framing that provides access to the second floor. However, the framing suggests that at least two iterations of a stair were located here. In the nineteenth century, and through Ralph Whitelaw's site visit ca. 1940-45, the stair was enclosed.

3. Flooring: The first-floor has a modern (reversible) plywood floor, while the second retains its pine, hand planed floor boards that are face nailed and butt joined together. The plywood replaces the ca. 1945 concrete, which in turn succeeded a wood floor with half-lapped joists. The flooring above the collars – or the boards for the loft ceiling – are made from pine, and measure about 1” in thickness and 11” across.¹⁹⁵

4. Wall and ceiling finish: Perhaps the most precarious features of Pear Valley are the remaining 15 percent or so of its historic plaster and the 70 percent or so of its lath that are extant. Partial demolition of the framing has left the plaster exposed and often with unsupported edges which causes it to fall. Where the plaster and lath are missing, such as in the ceiling, the lath nails are in-situ, attesting to the layer of finish now gone. Many of lath strips are damaged or broken. Yet this reveals the layer of whitewash on the hand-planed floor boards, evidence of an earlier finish. When the walls were plastered, the plaster extended to the bottom of the plates on the first floor, and in the loft, carried up to the bottom of the attic flooring. There was no ornamental woodwork in the loft, with the exception of the knee walls that were relocated and secured with cut nails in the

¹⁹³ The shingles were split from white oak in Germany and shipped to Virginia; the restoration team rounded the exposed edge of each shingle before putting the shingles in place in the spring and summer months of 2004. See <http://preservationvirginia.org/PearValley> for more information. Web-site last accessed 20 May 2011.

¹⁹⁴ The partitioning of the loft into two rooms occurred in the nineteenth century; the partition door is not on center and so could have been moved as the loft space was adapted further to accommodate the family's needs. The plugged mortises that indicate the original location of the knee walls also indicate the partition itself came after they were moved back toward the eaves.

¹⁹⁵ Floor boards that are hand planed on both faces and face nailed, such as at Pear Valley, are also seen in the Lynnhaven House in Virginia Beach and in the Mason House in Accomack County.

nineteenth century, but the first floor walls were dressed with a 3” flat, double-beaded surbase (chair rail) and mopboard, only 35 percent of which is extant today.¹⁹⁶ The windows and doors were re-trimmed in the nineteenth century as well, although the neoclassical woodwork exhibits characteristics of the earlier, Federal period. The partition wall in the loft is also plaster on lath (fig. 41).¹⁹⁷

5. Openings

a. Doorways and doors: Evidence for the door, likely the original front door, is in the west wall. The chamfered posts remain in-situ, and a section of plaster above the door-head is also fairly intact.¹⁹⁸ Similarly, in the framing there is evidence of a door in the southeast corner; this door would have separated the stair from the social space of the first floor in an effort to segregate circulation, to establish spatial distance, and reinforce social hierarchies. A door was cut in the partition wall in the loft, and a square opening in the loft ceiling provides access to the roof framing or attic above. There is also a small door in the east knee wall, in the south room of the loft.

b. Windows: The two sash windows on the first floor have their historic frames with neoclassical trim, and there is evidence for two other window openings: one in the west wall, between the door and the northwest corner; and the other in the south gable. These windows were approximately 2’5” high x 2’3” wide with head and sill each measuring 2 ¾” high and lapped into the outer face of the studs.¹⁹⁹ The south window was enlarged in the nineteenth century, when the addition was constructed (see fig. 20).²⁰⁰

6. Decorative features and trim: The posts and joists are chamfered and stopped. The underside of the loft’s floor boards, excepting the eastern most two, have been planed suggesting they were intended to be seen. The first floor also had a neoclassically-styled surbase and mopboard.

¹⁹⁶ Percentages of extant fabric are taken from the condition assessment completed for the *HSR*. See *HSR*, 55.

¹⁹⁷ It is possible the door in the partition wall was moved or re-positioned; Ridout, Graham, and Wenger suggested that the partition wall itself is a replacement, reframed in conjunction with the movement of the knee walls in the third phase of renovations (Maria Widgeon’s occupancy). Site visit, with Willie Graham and Jeffrey Klee, November 2010. See fig. 42.

¹⁹⁸ A sample – that has fallen – was collected from here in November 2010 for analysis and comparison to that over the fireplace on the north wall with the hope that the material composition may reveal if the two were from the same remodeling effort or if one predates the other.

¹⁹⁹ Chappell, “Pear Valley Interpreted,” *HSR*, 39.

²⁰⁰ The lap joints in the surviving (original) stud attest to the south and west window openings’ first period dimensions. The window in the south gable was blocked in the mid twentieth century; on the first floor, the south window received fixed sash. This is what the restoration team replaced in the 1990s. The nineteenth-century (third period) window in the east elevation also had fixed sash, installed at the same time as that in the south window.

7. Hardware: Of note in the house is the foliated H hinge found on the east knee wall door as well as the wrought nails for the plaster lath found throughout the building.

8. Mechanical equipment: The building has no electricity, plumbing, or HVAC systems, thereby retaining its eighteenth-century character. Special window glazing was developed and installed in the gable windows to help with ventilation. Evidence for a stove pipe is present in the north room of the loft.

9. Original furnishings: There are no original furnishings associated with the property today. For an overview of how buildings of the time period were furnished, see Jan Kirsten Gilliam and Betty Crowe Leviner, *Furnishing Williamsburg's Historic Buildings* (Williamsburg: Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, 1991) as well as the work of Lois Green Carr and Lorena Walsh that examines the evolving standards of living in the eighteenth century. Carr and Walsh, for example, found that it was comfort more than distinction (or even necessities like food, shelter, clothing) that shaped patterns of consumption, allowing poorer and middling income Virginians the ability to eat with forks and drink from individual vessels. They exchanged the merely utilitarian for the commonplace by acquiring earthenware and plate; these purchases also enabled them to accommodate a measure of social ceremony practiced by the more affluent. Carr and Walsh, moreover, determined wealthy estates were those valued at £225 and the poorest at £50 or less.²⁰¹

Planters, such as Robert Nottingham (d. 1744), had furnished beds, and bedsteads such as those were generally the most expensive items inventoried in any decedent's estate, excepting slaves and livestock. Nottingham's inventory was presented in court in April 1745 by his widow and executrix Elizabeth; it began with a "new bed and bolster." The inventory enumerated two other beds and bolsters, plus older beds with "matt and cords." Items of value also included a rug, various linens, pewter dishes and plate, a pine chest, tables, chairs, earthenware, glass cups, gun and sword. The inventory of Robert's estate shifts between domestic items and his investments in production, with agricultural equipment (cart wheels) and woolen wheels interspersed with clothing, cooking pots, and a common prayer book. The horses, cows, lambs, sows, turkeys were followed by a cordel [sic] cup.²⁰² The division of Joseph Nottingham's estate in the 1760s, with his widow Tabitha's portion including a bed, bolster, pillows and linens, followed the trend identified by Carr and Walsh. Joseph Nottingham likely had experienced a reversal of fortune. He sold the Pear Valley tract, and the inventory and appraisal of his estate in taken in June and recorded in August 1765 came to £50.11.9.²⁰³ The most valuable items recorded were two beds, bolsters and associated furniture (linens), a rug, and the swine. Joseph's estate was settled in the fall, and devised among his heirs as indicated in his will. The division of his estate presented in court in October 1765 represented only £41.2.4;

²⁰¹ Lois Green Carr and Lorena S. Walsh, "Changing Lifestyles and Consumer Behavior in the Colonial Chesapeake," in *Of Consuming Interests*, 59-166. Also, Gloria L. Main, *Tobacco Colony: Life in Early Maryland, 1650-1720* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982), 167-239.

²⁰² Northampton County Court Records, Wills and Inventories, No. 19, 1740-1756, 177-78.

²⁰³ Northampton County Court Records, Wills and Inventories, No. 23, 1763-1765, 498-500.

however, in addition to each child's portion of £10.5.7, his widow Tabitha received £10.2.4.²⁰⁴ These figures place Joseph among the poorest of households in the Chesapeake at the time of his death.

The material life of those occupying Pear Valley in the middle decades of the eighteenth century shifts to Addison and William Nottingham, to whom Joseph ceded possession before he died.²⁰⁵

D. Site

In the twentieth century, Pear Valley itself became a subsidiary structure in the farming landscape, used for storage and for a time in the late 1940s, as a chicken house. Most likely the missing section of the east wall ground sill was a casualty of this conversion. The cut under the doorway probably was done to ease the egress for the animals. When the APVA acquired the property in 1986, the appraiser noted the presence of a wood frame barn clad in weatherboards and covered with an asphalt-shingle roof as well as a cylindrical corn crib of metal construction.²⁰⁶ Both of these buildings are present in contemporary photographs. The APVA had the barn and corn crib taken down in 2003 or 2004.²⁰⁷

Oral history interviews paint a picture of a working farm, with a tin silo in the yard and white-washed supporting structures. These outbuildings included stables and a privy. It is possible that Pear Valley itself was also white-washed during this interval, meaning the years when the Bensons owned the property and the Barnes family lived in the adjacent farmhouse. Likely the tin silo referenced during the interview was the cylindrical corn crib. There was a diary/cellar near the farmhouse where Barnes family lived, but none extant that were associated with Pear Valley proper.

²⁰⁴ Northampton County Court Records, Wills and Inventories, No. 23, 1763-1765, 519. Joseph and Tabitha's daughter Joanna died in 1784, after an illness, and her will reveals that her mother married a man named John Roberts. Her brothers John and Robert Nottingham were still living, as was her aunt Elizabeth Savage. John was not mentioned in her father's will. Northampton County Court Records, Wills and Inventories, No. 27, 1783-1788, 126.

²⁰⁵ Northampton County Court Records, Deed Book No. 19, 1750-1763, 510-11; Northampton County Court Records, Deed Book, No. 20, 1763-1771, 65-67, 304-06

²⁰⁶ Joseph H. Adams, Realtor-Broker, to Robert C. Oliver, Jr., Esq., 17 December 1986, copy of letter, Preservation Virginia, archives.

²⁰⁷ Louis Malon, Director of Preservation Services, to Virginia B. Price, electronic communication, 29 May 2011. There was also a gable-roofed, wood frame small building just to the south of Pear Valley, between it and the barn and corn crib. This is recorded in the field photograph, a copy of which is in the site file, Department of Architectural Research, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation. Whitelaw's and Waterman's photographs also record these outbuildings, though Pear Valley itself was one at that time as well.

Part III. Sources of Information²⁰⁸

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While much has been written on the history of the early Chesapeake, two events some thirty years apart were conceived to capture and present the scholarly direction of contemporary investigations of the world of the early Virginia and research examining the Chesapeake in particular. The first was a conference held in November 1974 with its findings now immortalized in Thad Tate's and David Ammerman's volume, *The Chesapeake in the Seventeenth-Century*. This conference, and the essays it prompted, announced the arrival of new social history with its inquiries into the past that tried to bring into focus a broader picture, one colored by inequalities and injustice, disease and death, but one brightened by emigrants' survival and their establishment of socio-political stability within the British Empire. The second, a conference held in 2009 in St. Mary's City, Maryland, was entitled "The Early Chesapeake: Reflections and Projections." True to its intent, the conference allowed participants to revisit the work of the scholars who launched the modern studies of the region, discuss on-going research, and debate (or speculate) where close readings of the Chesapeake will lead. The following bibliographic suggestions are just that, a place to begin to get acquainted with the place in which Pear Valley was built, was used, and represents still.

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²⁰⁸ Although no photographs of Pear Valley were in this collection, it is worth noting the existence, and value, of the historic images in the Callahan Photograph Collection held in the Eastern Shore Public Library, in Accomac, Virginia. [Also note that the town is spelled Accomac and the county Accomack, with the "k"].

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²⁰⁹ The Henry Chandlee Forman papers in the Archives and Manuscripts Department, University of Maryland Libraries, Hornbake Library, College Park, cover the years 1919 to 1989 and consist of correspondence, photographs/negatives, field notes, and drawings. Only one image of Pear Valley is included in the collection, and likely it is a copy of one of Ralph Whitelaw's photographs. The view is similar, and inscribed on the reverse is a note about the date (1672 brick), the shed ("plainly an addition"), dimensions (20'8"x16'5") and the initials and date "RTW 1948". RTW is Whitelaw. Likely Whitelaw sent it to Forman for inclusion in his book. The image shows the house in perspective, with the north side opening to the addition. The house is mislabeled as "Pear Neck" in Accomack County. Forman's books suggest there is more material, but it has not been located despite heroic efforts on the part of the archivist and Forman's descendents. The author thanks the staff at the University of Maryland for their assistance.

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Appendices and Illustrations

Figure 1. Quad Map for Pear Valley. Courtesy of Deidre McCarthy, CRGIS, National Park Service, 2011, for the author.

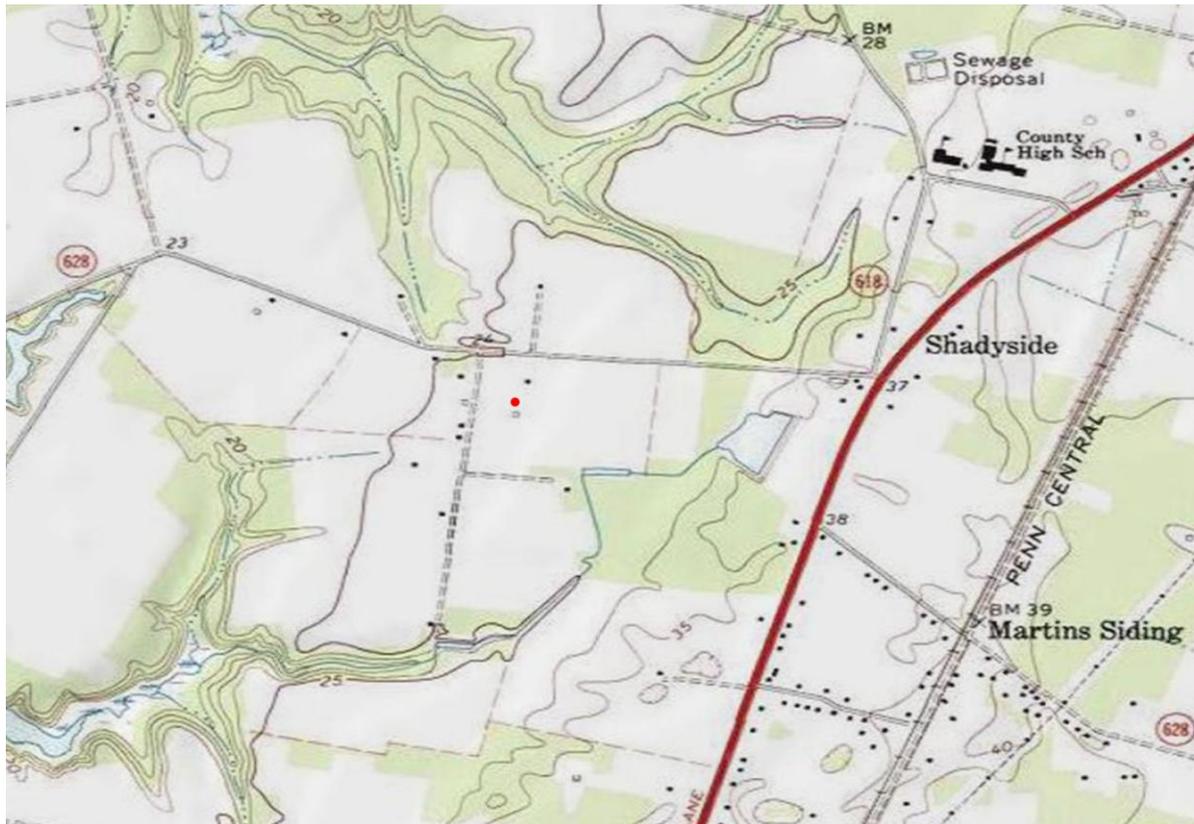


Figure 2. Interior view, loft, looking to the southwest corner where the lath for the knee wall has come loose, thus allowing for a look at the rafters lapped over the false plate from above. Photograph by author, July 2011.



Figure 3. View looking up to the northwest corner where the brick end wall joins the frame, showing the curved ends of the joists, shaped feet of the rafter, tilted false plate, and the peg. Photograph by author, November 2010.



Figure 4. Interior elevation, looking to west, to show door posts and plates left exposed, that is, not covered in the plaster, and finished with chamfers. Photograph by author, July 2011.



Figure 5. Close view of the north end and chimney stack to show the decorative glazed headers and Flemish bond of the end wall, the soldier and sailor coursed weatherings of the chimney, and the common bond brickwork of the upper stack. Above the strapcourse, and below the corbelling, are remnants of stucco or applied plaster. Photograph by author, November 2010.



Figure 6. Detail views in the north room of the loft to show the clasped purlin-like timber, collar beam and rafter joint. The first is looking north along the east side, showing the framing as well as the floor boards for the attic, lath and plaster indicating this was a finished space, and the underside of the roofing. The second is on the west side, looking north, to show the clasped purlin-like framing member and collar more closely.

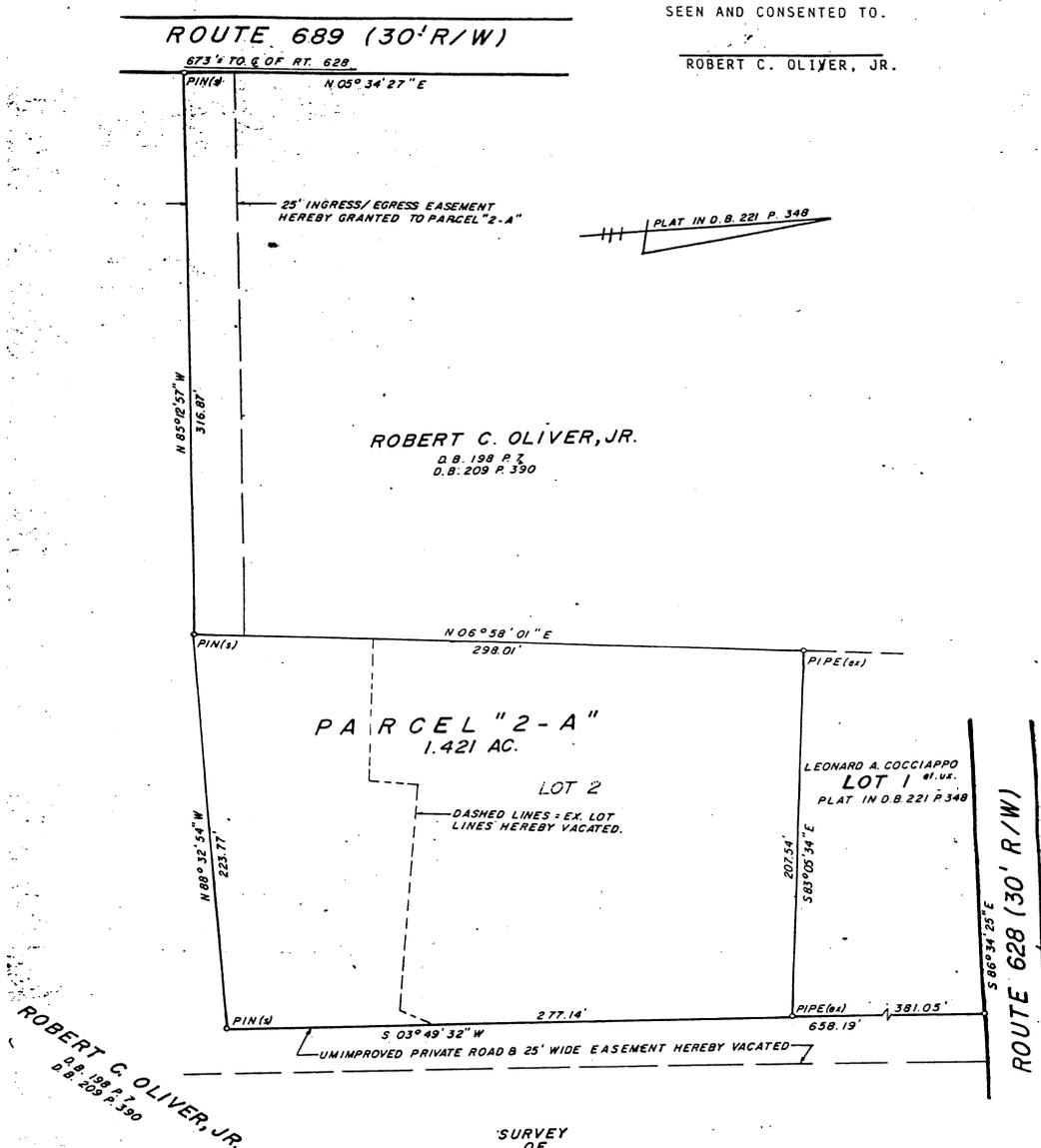
Photographs by author, October 2011.



Figure 7. Interior view, looking southwest at the south door post, west wall plate, plaster and exposed lath. Photograph by author, November 2010.



Figure 8. Plat, 1986, recorded in Northampton County Court Records, Deed Book 221, 348.



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SURVEY
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PARCEL "2-A"
BEING LOT 2
PLAT IN D.B. 221 P. 348
AND
PART OF PROPERTY
OF
ROBERT C. OLIVER, JR.
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Figure 9. Plat for the APVA as recorded in Northampton County Court Records, Deed Book 221, 348 and shown in Figure 8 overlaid on, and geo-referenced to, current aerial. Map and GIS-data courtesy of Deidre McCarthy, CRGIS, National Park Service, September 2011, for the author.



Figure 10. Plat, 1986, recorded in Northampton County Court Records, Plat Book 14, 52.

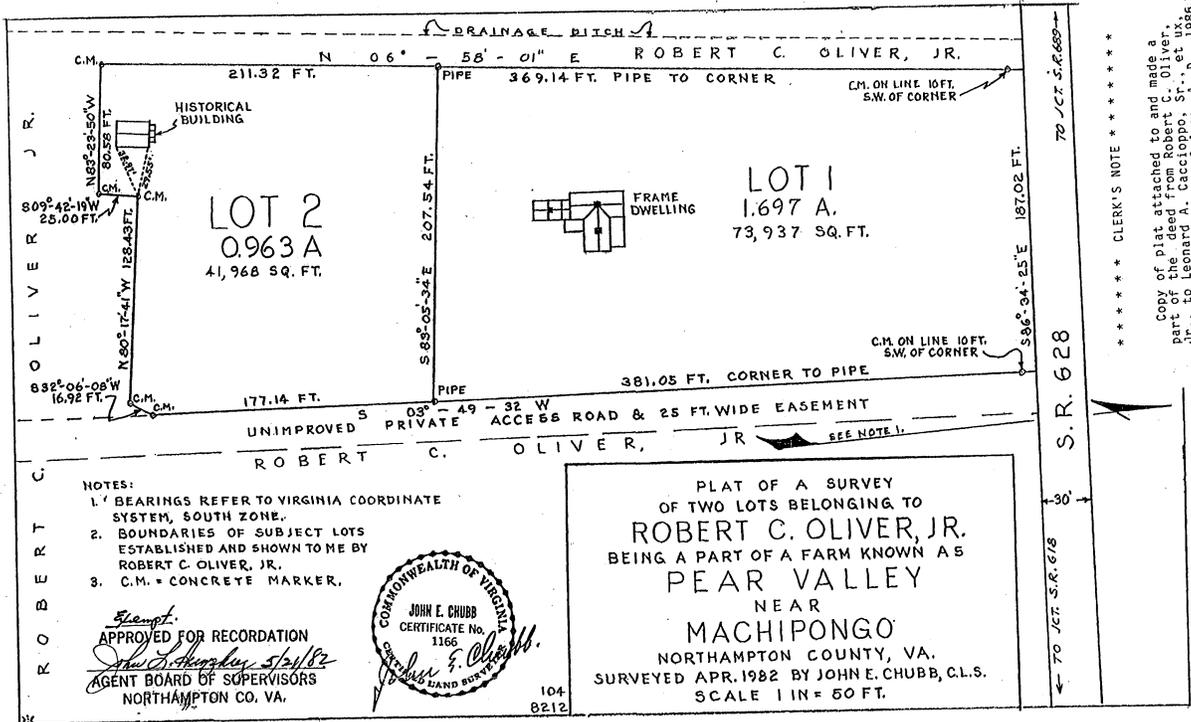


Figure 11. Plat, recorded in Northampton County Court Records, Plat Book 14, 52, and shown in Figure 10, overlaid on, and geo-referenced to, current aerial. Map and GIS-data courtesy of Deidre McCarthy, CRGIS, National Park Service, September 2011, for the author.

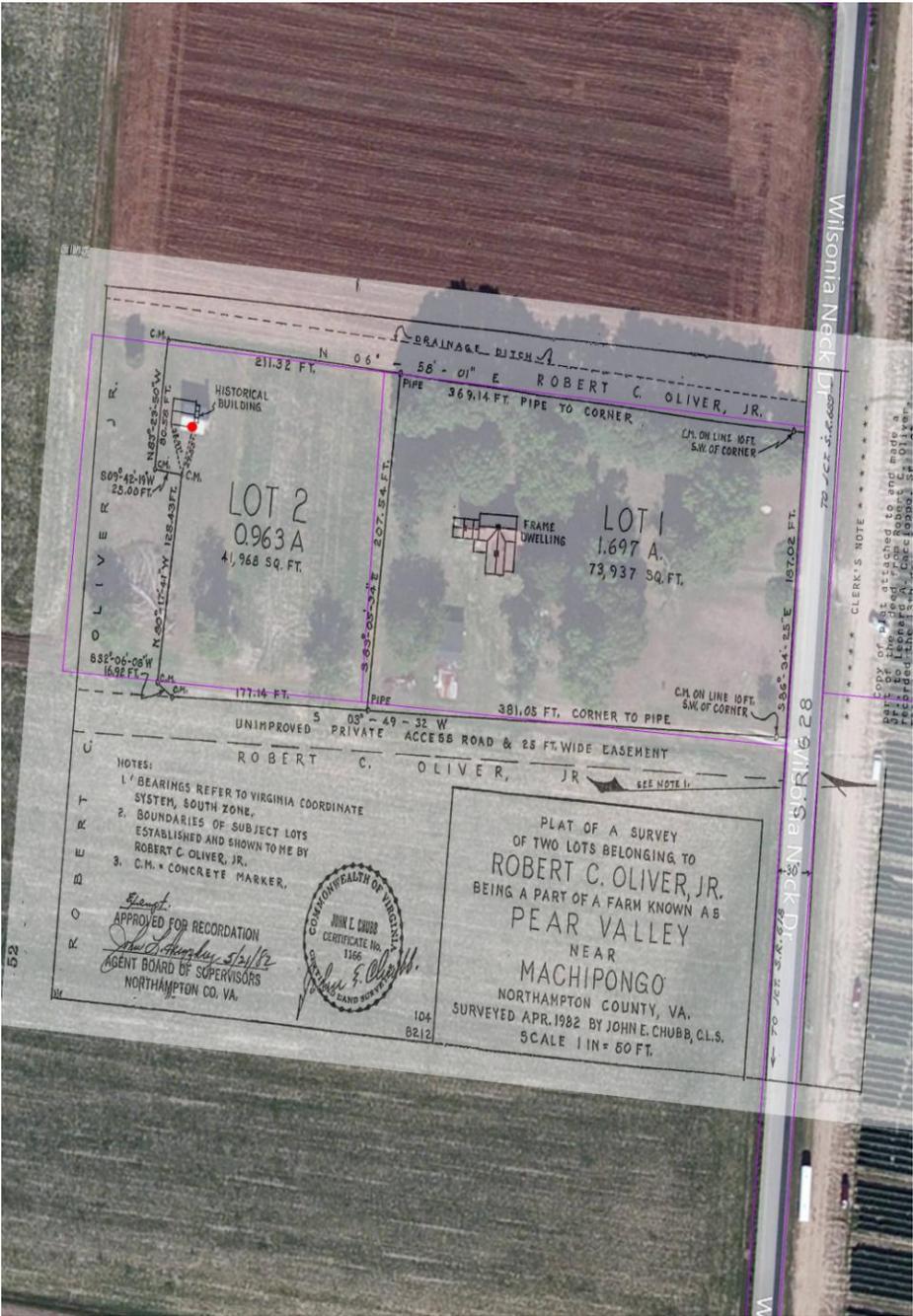


Figure 13. Plat, 1887, recorded in Northampton County Court Records, Deed Book 43, 277, and shown in Figure 12, overlaid on, and geo-referenced to, current aerial. Map and GIS-data courtesy of Deidre McCarthy, CRGIS, National Park Service, September 2011, for the author.



Figure 14. Plat, 1819, recorded in Northampton County Court Records, Plat Book, No. 2, plate 58.

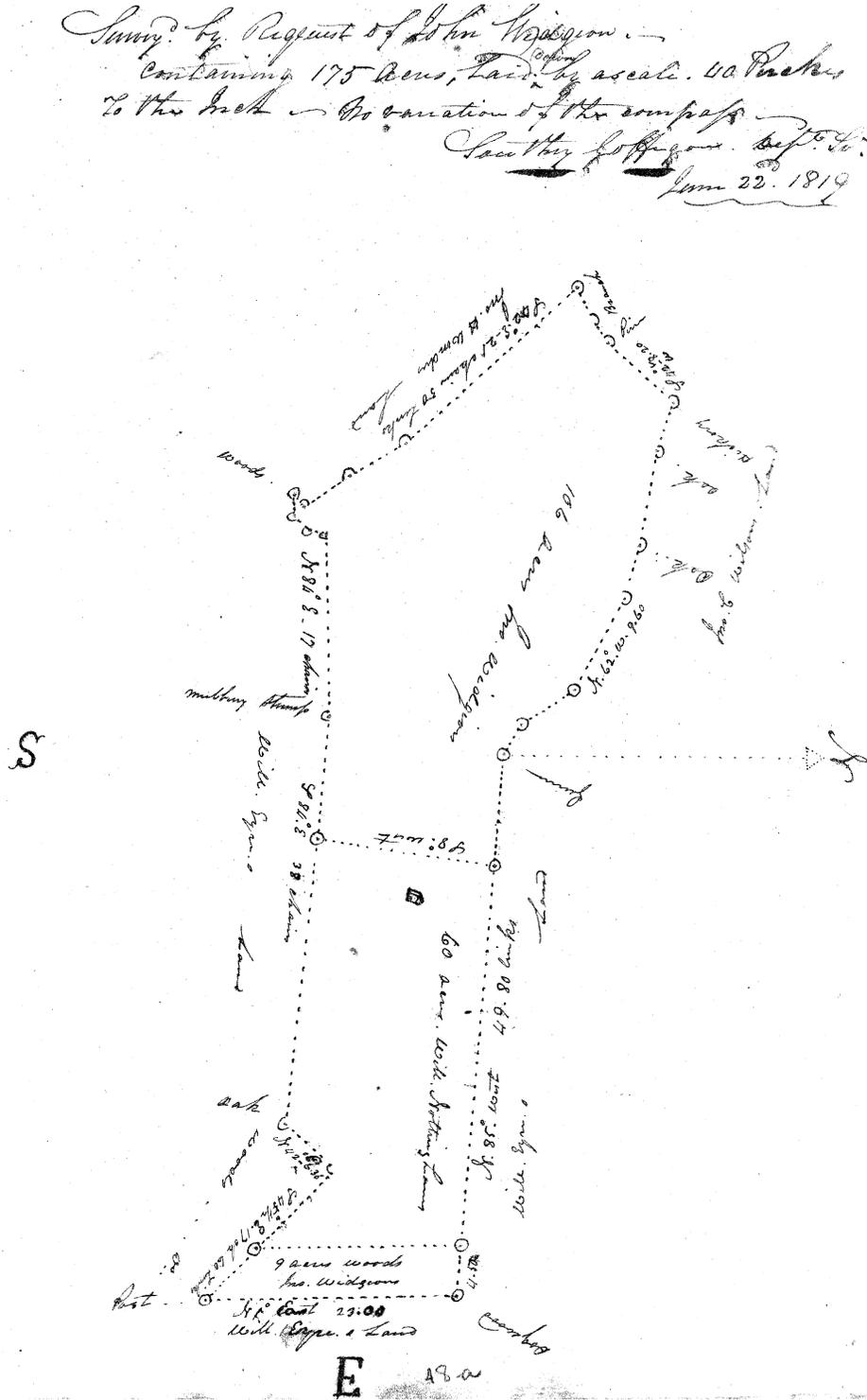


Figure 16. Perspective view looking to east wall of the firebox to show the alcove.
Photograph by author, March 2011.



Figure 17. View looking to northeast corner to show the north end of the west sill in the pocket (rabbet) made for it in the north, brick end wall. Photograph by author, November 2010.



Figure 18. View in loft of the whitewashed, underside of the attic floor boards/loft ceiling, and juncture of the common rafter, clasped purlin like member, and collar. Photograph by author, July 2011.



Figure 19. (left) Detail view to show south window stud, and empty lap pocket, for the early window in the west elevation; view looking to the south. (right) Similar evidence exists for the south gable window, with the original stud located on the west side. Photographs by author, October 2011.



Figure 20. Interior view, looking to south gable and surviving window surround. Behind the fashionable trim is a re-used stringer (east) and an original framing member with a tell-tale empty lap pocket (west).



Figure 21. Interior view to show the re-used stringboard with the ghosts of the treads and risers from an earlier stair. Photograph by author, July 2011.



Figure 22. View looking to the north to show the unfinished attic space above the collars and loft ceiling. Photograph by author, July 2011.



Figure 23. Evidence of the balustrade added in the nineteenth-century renovations.



Figure 24. First-floor plan of Pear Valley. Field sketch by author, October 2011.

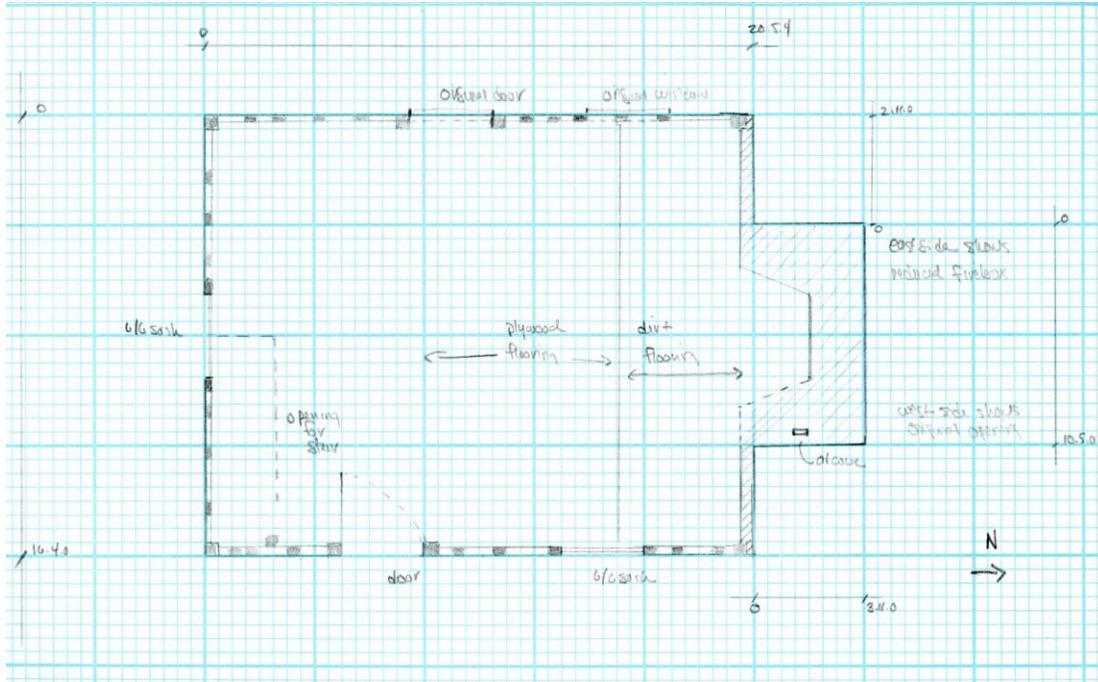


Figure 25. General view looking to kitchen outbuilding at the present-day Barrier Island Museum in Machipongo, Virginia. This structure began as a one-room, hall plan dwelling heated by a large, exterior end chimney.



Figure 26. Perspective view looking to the Fisher-Seymour House, in Accomac, Virginia.
Photograph courtesy of HABS, Library of Congress. (HABS No. VA-624).



Figure 27. Interior view of the roof framing at the Mason House. Courtesy of the Historic American Buildings Survey, Library of Congress (HABS No. VA-630-23).



Figure 28. View looking up to the northwest corner to show the corbelling covering the end of the eave as well as the tilted false plate, shaped ends of the rafters and joists, and peg securing the whole into place. Photograph by author, July 2011.



Figure 29. Side elevation of the Mason House, used here to show the effect of positioning the false plate over the masonry wall. Drawing courtesy of the Historic American Buildings Survey, Library of Congress (HABS No. VA-630).

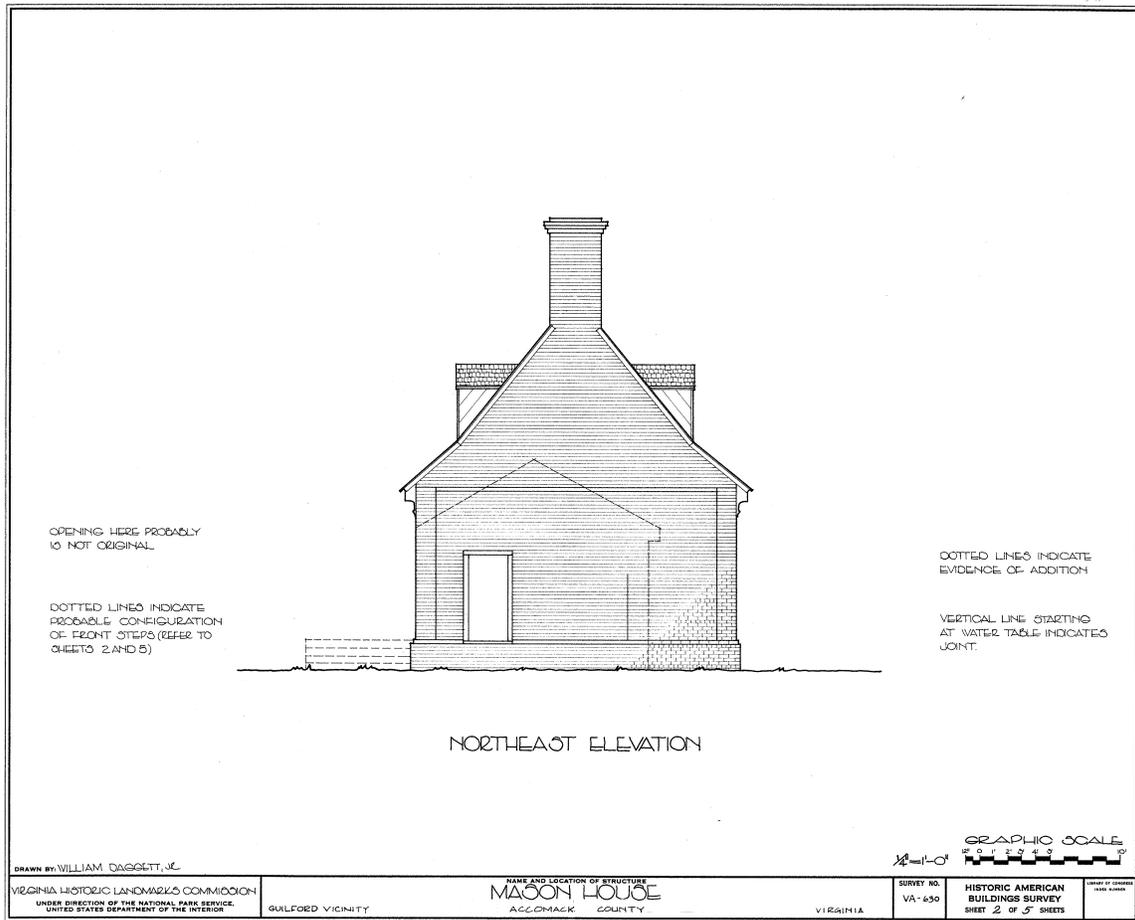


Figure 30. Map highlighting the spatial relationship of Pear Valley and the other dwellings constructed with the Virginia or clapboard framing system. Courtesy of Deidre McCarthy, CRGIS, National Park Service, 2011, for the author.

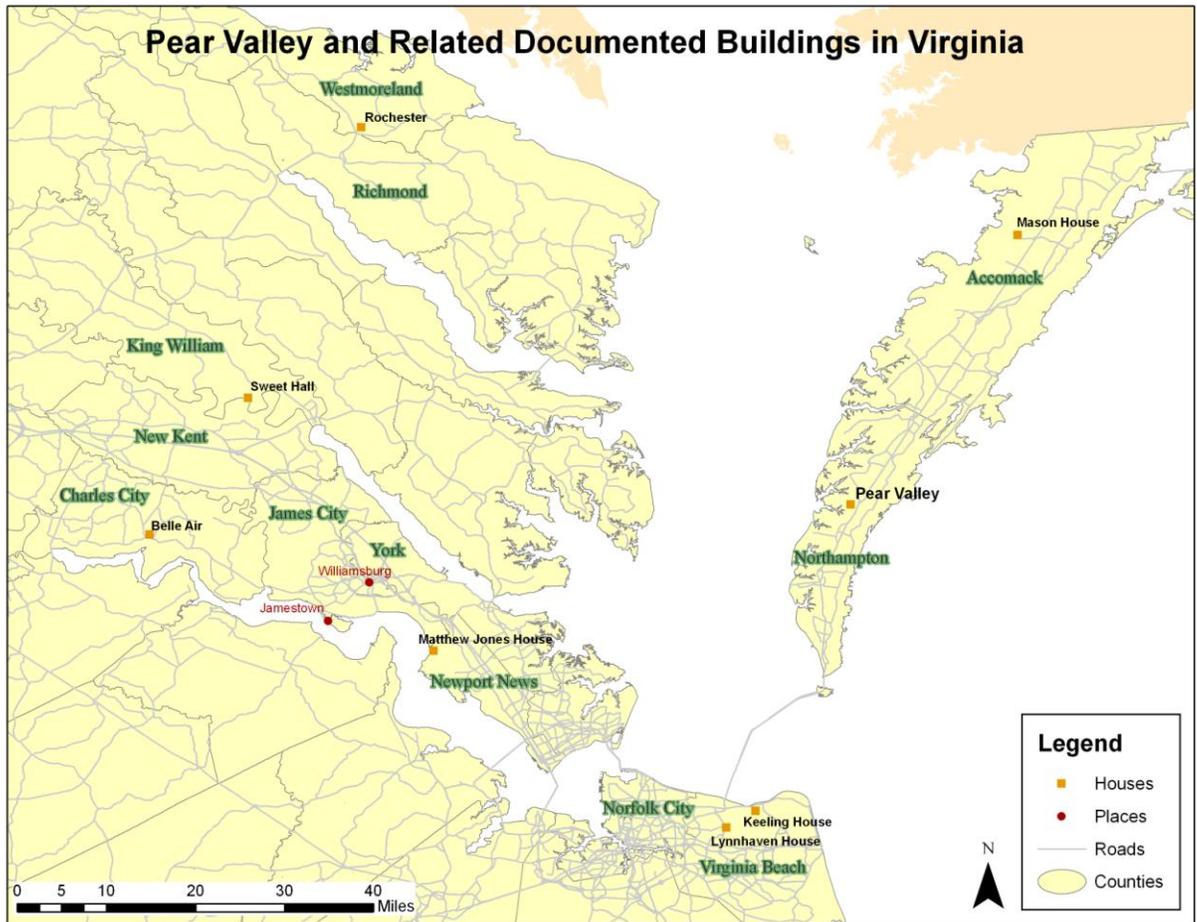
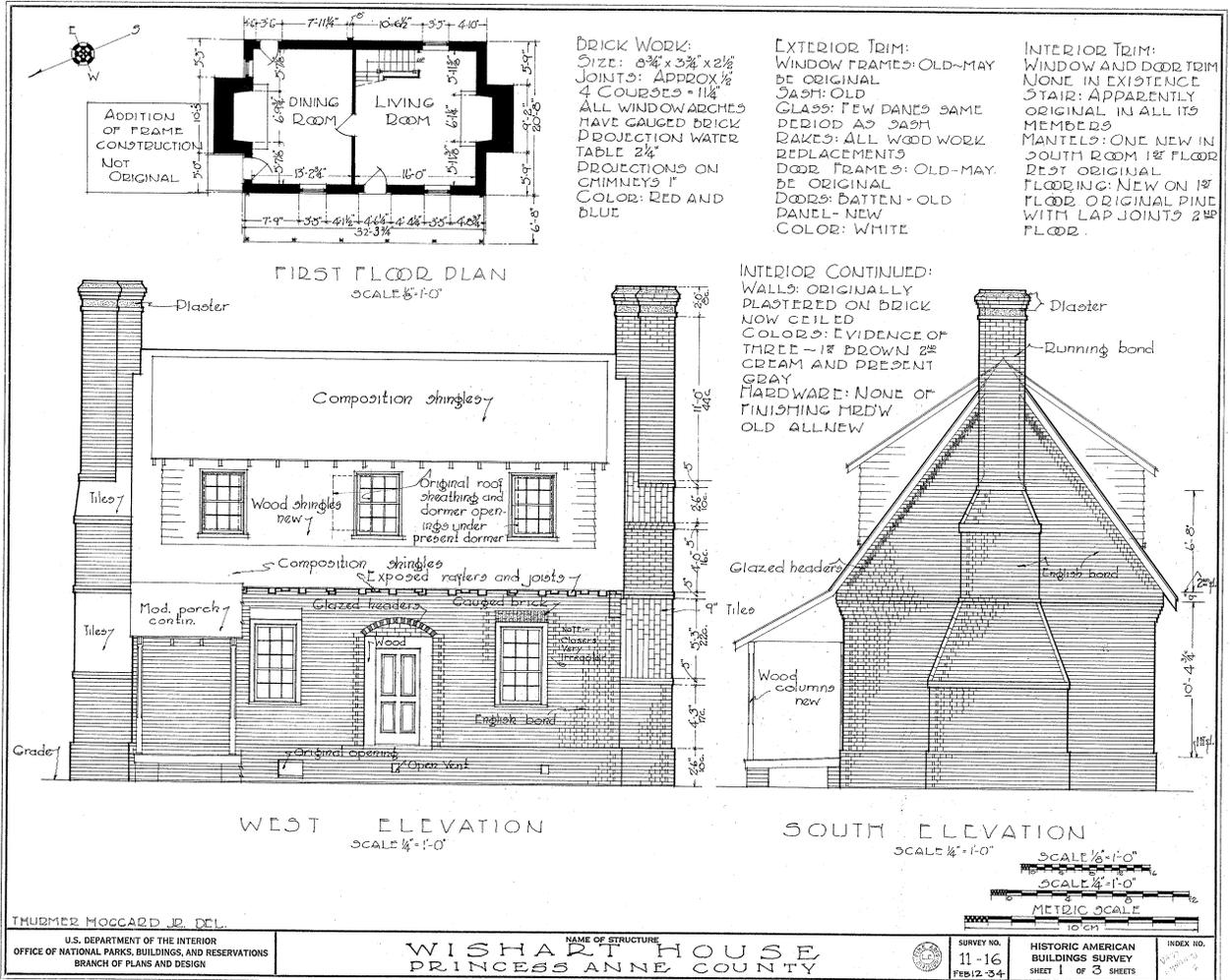


Figure 31. Perspective view looking to the Matthew Jones House, note the distinctive chimney and porch tower as well as the evidence in the gable of original roofline. Courtesy of the Historic American Buildings Survey, Library of Congress (HABS No. VA-163-2).



Figure 32. Lynnhaven House floor plan and elevations. Courtesy of the Historic American Buildings Survey, Library of Congress (HABS No. VA-11-16).



Figures 33-34. Perspective view of the Keeling House, note the brickwork of the gable, and interior view looking to the fireplace and showing the wall paneling. Courtesy of the Historic American Buildings Survey, Library of Congress (HABS No. VA-11-17-4 and VA-11-17-6, both by Bagby, 1934)



Figure 35. General view looking to Pear Valley from the southeast. Photograph by author, October 2011.



Figure 36. Current aerial view of Pear Valley and its environs. Photograph and geo-referencing provided by Deidre McCarthy, CRGIS, National Park Service, for the author, September 2011.



Figure 37. Aerial view of Pear Valley, 1949, in RG 145 Department of Agriculture, Agriculture Stabilization and Conservation Service (ASCS), National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, Maryland (NACP). Geo-referencing provided by Deidre McCarthy, CRGIS, National Park Service, for the author, September 2011.

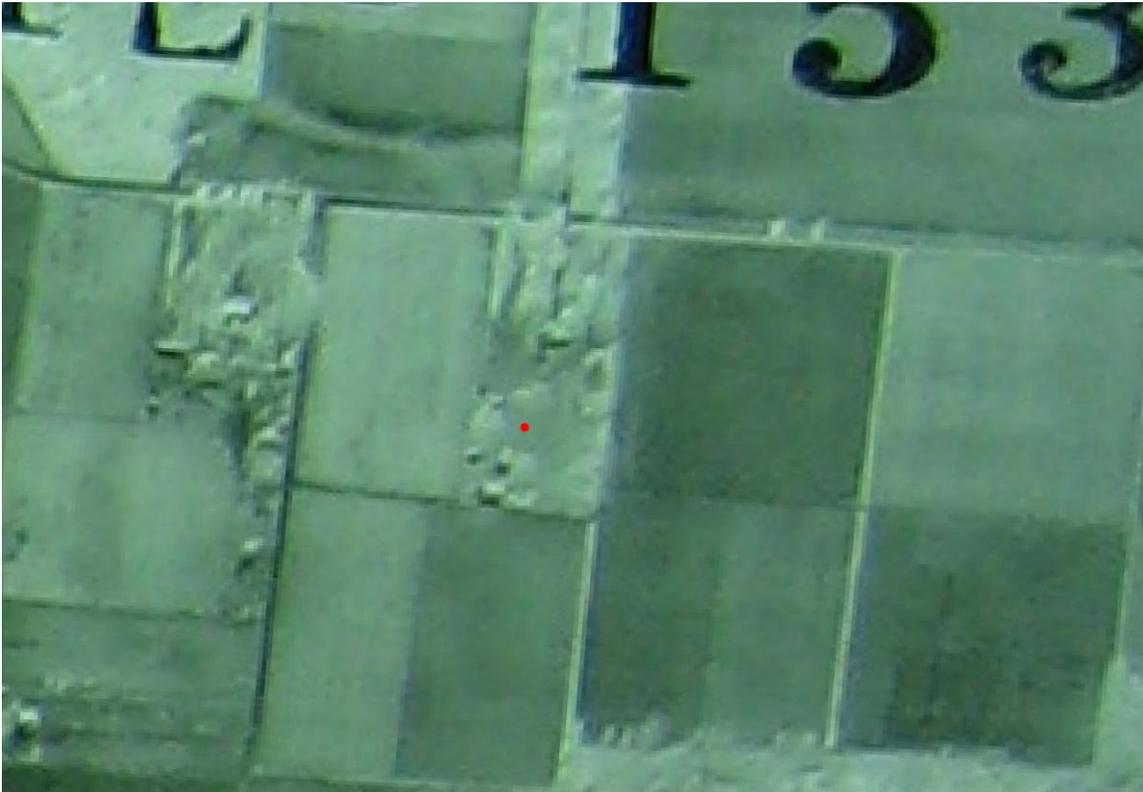


Figure 38. Comparative maps with the 1949 aerial overlaying the current aerial to illustrate change (or continuity) of land use over time. Maps geo-referenced and produced by Deidre McCarthy, CRGIS, National Park Service, for the author, September 2011.



Figure 39. View looking northeast to the knee wall door hung with the foliated hinges.
Photograph by author, 2011; detail photograph by author, October 2011.



Figure 40. Perspective view looking to the northeast corner to show sash window, plaster on lath wall finish, surbase, and fireplace details.



Figure 41. Interior, perspective view looking to the southeast corner of the loft from the north room to show the plaster on lath partition and knee walls. Photograph by author, July 2011.



Figure 42. Detail view, north room of the loft looking south to the partition wall to show (possible) earlier door location. Photograph by author, October 2011.



Appendix A. Framing Schedule, Willie Graham and Edward Chappell, 1992 (HSR, 33-36).

Pear Valley, Northampton Co., VA
Framing Schedule
Willie Graham and Edward Chappell

	Period	Dimension	Prep.	Joint	Wood
Sill, E/W	I	8" x 12"	Hewn & pit-sawn	Mortised	Syp
Sill, S	I	7-1/2" x 9-1/2"	Hewn	Tenoned and double pegged to E/W sills	Syp
Sill, N	I	8" x 8-3/4"	Unknown	Tenoned and double pegged to E/W sills	Unknown
First-floor joists	I	4-1/4" - 5-3/4" x 8" (?) based on lap joints in sills	Unknown	Half lapped	Unknown
Corner posts NE/NW	I	6-1/4" x 7-1/2"	Hewn	Tenoned and pegged top & bottom	Oak
Corner posts SE/SW	I	6" x 7-1/4"	Hewn; chamfered on inside corner with lamb's-tongue stops top & bottom	Tenoned and pegged top & bottom	Oak
Door posts, E wall	I	5-3/4" x 8-3/8" cut down to 3-1/8" x 8-3/8" in Period II	Hand planed, face hewn in Period II	Tenoned and double pegged top & bottom	Syp
	I	4-1/4" x 5" cut down to 4-1/4" x 3-1/8" in Period II	Hand planed, face hewn in Period II	Tenoned top & bottom	Syp
Door header, E wall	I	3-1/8" (?) x 4-1/8"	Unknown	Bevel lapped to door posts	Unknown
	III	3-1/8" x 2-1/4"	Sawn	Lapped to door posts	Syp
Door posts, W wall	I	6-1/4" x 8-1/2"	Hewn, hand planed; chamfered on inside corner with lamb's- tongue stops top & bottom	Tenoned and double pegged top & bottom	Syp
	I	3-3/4" x 5"	Hewn & sawn, hand planed	Tenoned top & bottom	Syp

Pear Valley
Northampton Co., VA
Framing Schedule

July 28, 1992

	Period	Dimension	Prep.	Joint	Wood
Door header,	I	4-1/4" x ?	Unknown	Bevel lapped to door posts	Unknown
W wall	III	1-1/4" x 3-3/4"	?	Set into a dado in in door posts	Syp
Down braces	I	2-1/4" x 5-1/2"	Hewn & pit-sawn	Half-dovetail lapped and nailed top & bottom	Oak
Fireplace lintel	I	1'-1" x 2-3/4"	Hewn	Set into masonry	Syp
Window posts E, S walls	III	3" x 4-1/4" to 6-1/4"	Hewn & pit-sawn	Bevel lapped top & bottom	Syp
Studs	I	2-1/4" x 3"	Hewn & pit-sawn	Bevel lapped top & bottom	Syp
Studs, added when shed built	III	1-1/4" x 5"	Hewn & pit-sawn (reused)	Bevel lapped top, probably bevel lapped bottom	Syp
	III	approx. 2" x 3-1/2"	Hewn & pit-sawn with some riven faces	Bevel lapped top, probably bevel lapped bottom	Syp
Door post to stair	I	2-1/3"	Unknown	Bevel lapped & nailed	Unknown
Door post to stair	III	2-1/2" x 3-3/4"	Hand planed	Tenoned bottom, bevel lapped top	Syp
Header to stair door	III	2-1/4" x 2-1/2"	Unknown	Bevellapped	Unknown
Studs to stair enclosure	III	1-3/4" x ?	Unknown	Bevel lapped	Unknown
Plate	I	6" x 11-1/4"	Hewn & sawn (?), hand planed. Chamfered on inside corner w/lamb's tongue stops		Syp

Pear Valley
Northampton Co., VA
Framing Schedule

July 28, 1992

	Period	Dimension	Prep.	Joint	Wood
Attic joists	I	4" x 7"	Hand planed. Chamfered on bottom corners w/lamb's tongue stops	Half lapped	Syp
Stair header	I	1-3/4" x 7" (?)	Unknown	Half lapped	Unknown
Stair header	III	2" x 7"	Hand planed, reused (?)	Half lapped into joists	Tulip poplar
Attic floorboards	I	11/16" x 10"- 11"	Hand planed top & bottom	Butted, face nailed w/rose head nails	Syp
Tilted false plates	I	3-3/4" x 5"	Hewn & pit-sawn	Lapped over joists; (lap cut out of false plate and not joists); pegged	Syp
Attic gable studs	I	3" x 3-3/4"	Hewn & pit-sawn	Bevel lapped top & bottom	Syp
Attic partition door posts	III	2-1/2" x 4"	Hewn & pit-sawn	Bevel lapped top, tenoned bottom	Syp
Attic partition studs	III	2-1/2" x 3"	Hewn & pit-sawn	Bevel lapped top, tenoned bottom	Syp
Knee walls studs	I	3" x 4" 2" x ?	Hewn & pit-sawn	Butted to rafters at top; tenoned bottom butted at top	Syp
Knee wall wall studs	III	1-1/4" x 2-1/2"	Hewn & pit-sawn	Butted to rafters at top; tenoned bottom	Syp
Door posts in knee wall	III	2-3/4" x 3-1/4"	Hewn & pit-sawn, jamb face hand planed	Lapped to rafters, tenoned bottom	Syp
Rafters	I	3" x 3-1/4"	Hewn & pit-sawn	Bird mouthed over tilted false plate, open mortise & tenon joint at ridge	Syp
Collars	I	3-1/8" x 4-1/2"	Hand planed. Bottom corners slightly eased	Half-dovetail lapped & pegged	Syp

Pear Valley
Northampton Co., VA
Framing Schedule

July 28, 1992

	Period	Dimension	Prep.	Joint	Wood
Clasped purlins	I	3" x 3-3/4"	Hewn; hand planed on exposed surfaces. Bottom corners slightly eased.	Set into "V" notch in collars	Syp
Sheathing over collars	I	7/8" x 11"	Hand planed bottom, pit-sawn top	Butted. Face-nailed with rose head nails.	Syp
Collars above main collars	III	1-1/2" x 2-3/4"	Riven	Butt and nailed to sides of rafters	Oak
Plaster lath	I	Average 3/8" x 1-1/2"	Riven	Some feather lapped, some butted.	Oak
Plaster lath	II	Average 3/8" x 1-1/2"	Riven	Butted at ends	Oak
Plaster lath	III	Average 3/8" x 1-1/2"	Riven	Butted at ends	Oak
Shingle lath	I	1/2" x 3-1/4"; approx. five-foot lengths	Riven, slightly drawn	Feather lapped	Oak
Shingle lath	III	7/8" x 2-5/8"	Hewn & pit-sawn		Tulip poplar
Shingles	I	Unknown	Unknown	Pegged	Unknown
Shingles	III	1/2" butt, length 21-1/2", width 3-5/8" (for one that survives)	Riven, hand drawn, round butts	Nailed	Cypress