

CRAIGS STORE
Albemarle County Country Stores Survey
2732 Craigs Store Road (Route 635)
Afton
Albemarle County
Virginia

HABS No. VA-1382

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
National Park Service
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CRAIGS STORE

HABS No. VA-1382

Location: 2732 Craigs Store Road, ^{Batesville, Virginia} Afton, Albemarle County, Virginia, 22920.

Craigs Store is located along Route 635, a curving narrow road in southwestern Albemarle County, Virginia, four miles south of Batesville and five miles east of Afton. The area is rural in character with rolling farmland extending for several miles (fig. 1).

The wood frame, board and batten paneling, and metal roofing continue the local and regional vernacular tradition in the area. Craigs Store, on the west side of Craigs Store Road, faces east. It is set 15' back from the road while other houses on the same road are positioned much further back from the roadway.

Present Owner: Harriet Hull.

Present Use: Craigs Store, a former country store, has been converted into a well-maintained, single-family residence.

Architectural Description:

Exterior: Craigs Store is a six-bay wood frame house. Rectangular in its massing, it measures approximately 44' x 26'. It was constructed during three periods. Each period contributed two-stories and accounts for approximately one-third of the current footprint. The earliest, Period One, contains the three-bay central block punctuated by a window, door, window series. The next building phase, Period Two, was an addition along the south wall that doubled the building's footprint and added two bays, a window and a door. The final, most modern building phase is represented by Period Three construction along the north wall of the central block that added a window to the front elevation.

The front elevation of Craigs Store has a full basement story built of stone rubble; the basement is used for storage purposes (fig. 2). The basement story and foundation, both of stone rubble, is punctuated on the east facade by a white wood gate door leading under the porch to another wood door which accesses the cellar. A two-story wood porch spans the entire east elevation. The porch has square wood piers, wood railings, and beaded ceiling boards. Two doors and four single sash windows punctuate the six-bay first floor

elevation and are arranged in a sequence of window, door, window, door, window, window. Board and batten paneling covers the front elevation.

The south, west, and north elevations are clad with vinyl siding and modern, double-sash windows. The south elevation illustrates Period Two construction and has four double-sash windows. The north elevation illustrates Period Three construction and has three windows and a door (fig. 3). The west elevation has a door, two windows, and a painted stone rubble chimney in the Period One central block, one second-story window in the Period Two construction, and two windows and a brick chimney flue in the Period Three construction. The west elevation begins to illustrate the three periods of the building through its roof (fig. 4) as well as reveals the modern addition of a second-floor room supported by wood piers.

Interior: The interior of the cellar has a red-dirt floor. The only accessible space of the cellar is that of Period One as this period's foundations create the cellar walls (fig. 5). The first floor interior consists of a large room dominating two-thirds of the space in the north portion of the house. This chamber contains the living, dining and kitchen space, and spans the footprint of Periods One and Three. Thus, all of the walls in this room are load bearing, as are the irregularly spaced wood piers connecting the Period Three addition to the Period One central block (fig. 6). The flooring consists of large, wood planks running east to west. The northwest corner of the great room leads to a modern bathroom. Interior ornamentation and detail within the house is minimal as the moldings and trim are simple wood pieces. Paneling on the south wall of the great room has large weatherboarding below the chair rail and cut nails in a few places. On the west wall of the great room is a brick mantel and hearth. The exterior of the chimney is entirely of stone rubble while the interior hearth is covered in brick. The latter represents a material alteration during Period Three because the brick is similar to the brick of the flue on the exterior of the third period construction. A door immediately south of the hearth leads to the backyard. Along the south wall of the great room, at the rear, is an enclosed staircase leading to the second story. Upon entering the house through the front door, along the south wall of the large, multipurpose chamber, there is a wood door with an original metal lock connecting to the southeast chamber. This chamber is currently used as a study. Inside this chamber are a door and a window leading to the porch on the east elevation and a window on the south elevation. The west wall of this room has a swinging door that connects to the southwest chamber, an unpainted room with one window in its south elevation. It is used for storage and laundry.

The staircase leads to the second floor of Craigs Store and opens into a large hall with wide wood floorboards, located in the Period One section (fig. 7). The west wall of the second story has a large stone hearth, directly above the one on the first floor. The south wall of this floor has one door leading to a bedroom and bathroom, in the Period Two space. The north wall has two doors leading to two bedrooms connected by a bathroom in the Period Three section.

The roof framing system has provided significant insight into the various phases of Craigs Store and suggests possible construction dates. The attic is accessed through a pull-down ladder in the northeast bedroom on the second floor. The roofing system above the north one-third of the house consists of a north-south gable and is part of the Period Three construction. The Period Three roof encloses much of the Period One roof on the exterior, however the interior of the roof framing system reveals the original roof (fig. 8). The Period One roof is a gable roof running east-west and can be seen as the smaller, perpendicular gable on the exterior. The framing system of this roof has common rafters meeting at a center ridge board (fig. 9). The boarding on the roof consists of partially sawn wood boards still containing bark; a tin roof then covers the boards. The Period Two roof is inaccessible, but from the exterior is seen to be a low shed roof connecting to the Period One gable.

It is from a close examination of the foundation and the three roofing systems that the three construction phases of Craigs Store become readily apparent. Period One consisted of a three-bay facade (window, door, window), two-story building with gable roof and thick rubble stone foundations. Evidence in the current foundation and the roofing system supports this supposition. An approximate date for the construction of this first period is 1850 to 1880 due to the use of cut nails and the presence of a ridgeboard, however, the unfinished timbers for the roof indicate that it was in the earlier part of this time span. The Period Two addition doubled the size and footprint of the building, and also continued with the specialization of space with the addition of two rooms linked by a swinging door and an additional exterior door on the front porch. Period Two construction likely occurred in the late nineteenth century or early twentieth century. The Period Three addition updated Craigs Store for modern living with the inclusion of a kitchen, plumbing, and bathrooms in the early to mid - twentieth century.

Historian(s): Catherine Kahl, May 2003.

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Project Information: The documentation of Craigs Store took place as part of Louis Nelson's (2003) field methods class at the University of Virginia, School of Architecture, Department of Architectural History. Students recorded various structures through measured drawings and written description; the record the students created was dependent on their ability to read what the structure was telling them about its construction history rather than on traditional documentary research. This structure was recorded as part of the Albemarle County Country Stores Survey.



Figure 1. The rolling farmlands of southwestern Albemarle County, on Craigs Store Road.



Figure 2. East (front) elevation of Craigs Store.



Figure 3. North elevation.



Figure 4. West (rear) elevation with the visible differences between the three different roof-framing systems.



Figure 5. Stone rubble foundation of Period One.

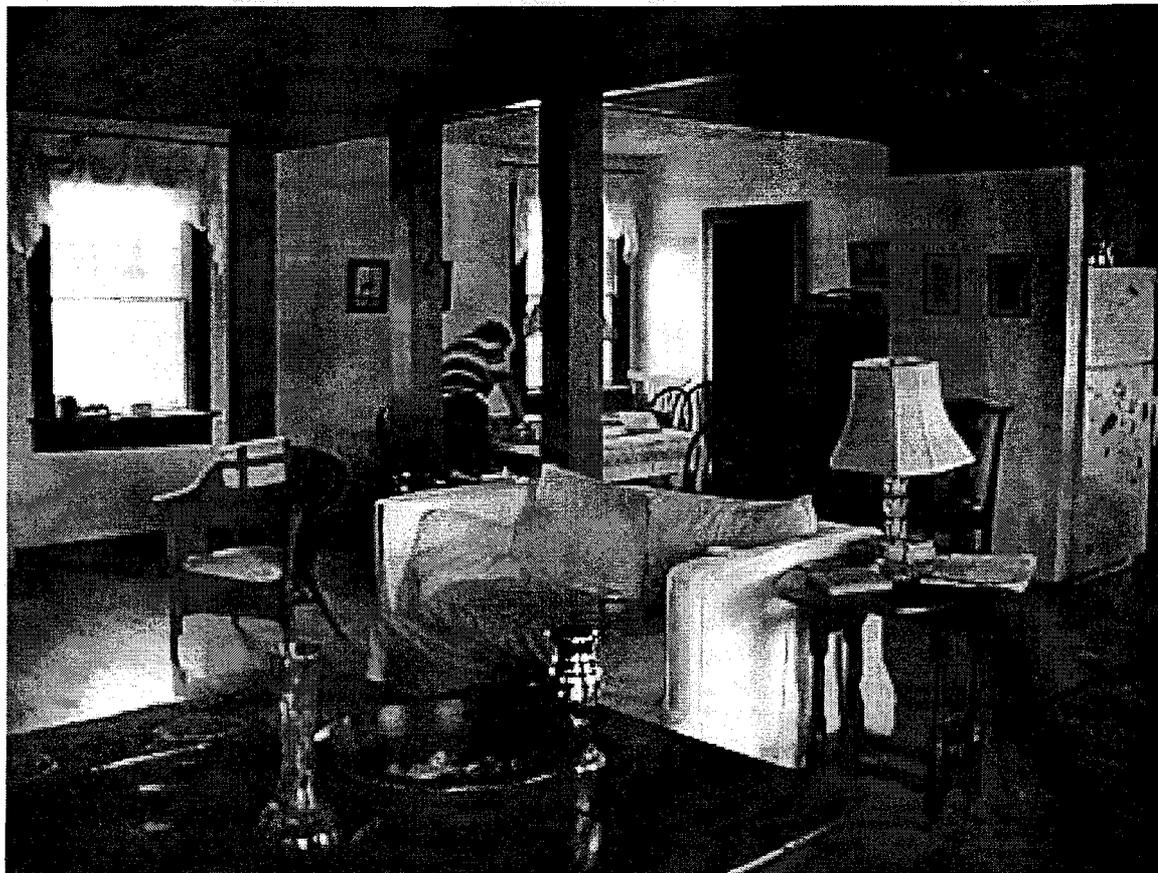


Figure 6. First floor great room interior with load-bearing piers, viewing from Period One central block north to the Period Two addition.



Figure 7. Second floor central hall with stone mantel, looking west.



Figure 8. Looking from Period Three roof south as it cuts into Period One roof gable.

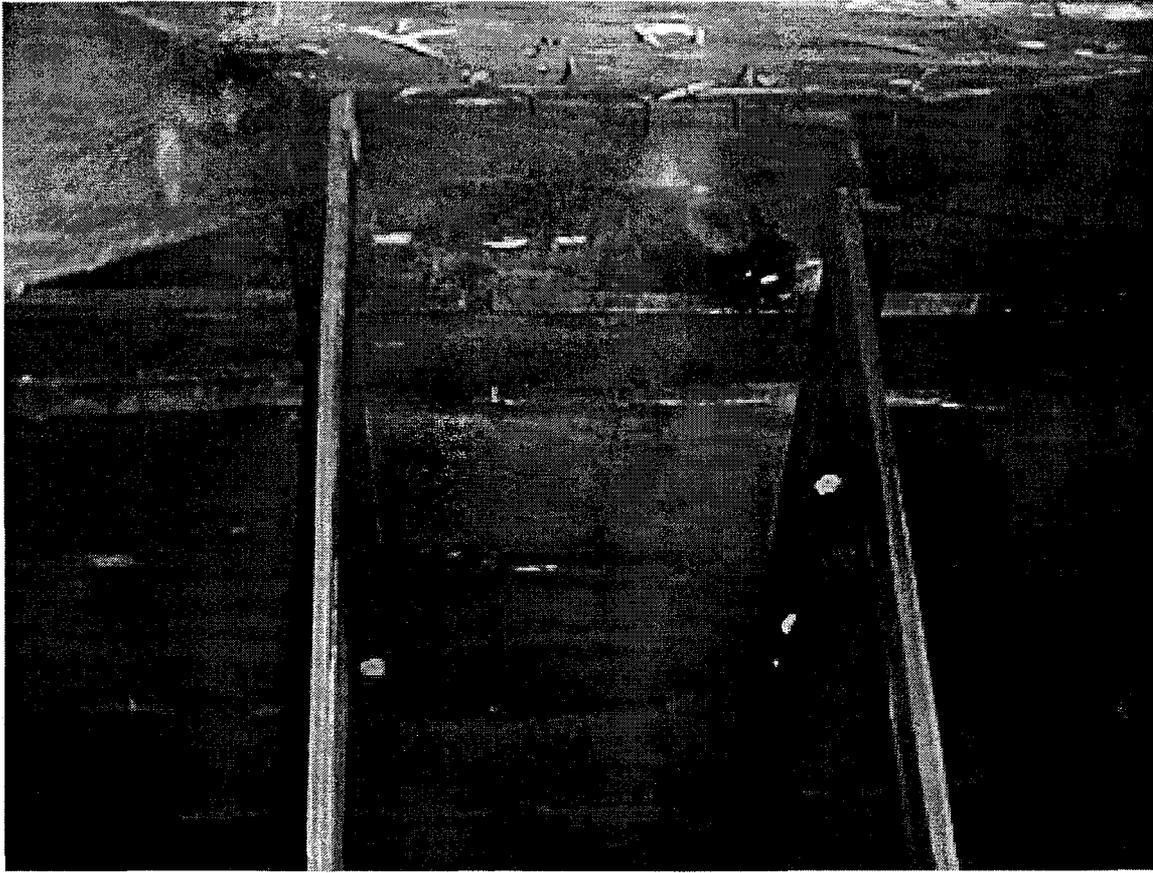


Figure 9. Ridge board and common rafter system in Period One roof.