

Darby's Folly
N side State Rte. 658
Charlottesville
Albemarle County
Virginia

HABS VA-981

HABS
VA,
2-CHAR.V,
6-

ADDENDUM
FOLLOWS...

REDUCED DRAWINGS

Addendum to
Darby's Folly
Barrack's Rd. (State Rt. 658)
Charlottesville vicinity
Albemarle County
Virginia

HABS No. VA-981

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WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

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

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

DARBY'S FOLLY

HABS No. VA-981

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2-CHAR,
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Location: Barrack's Road (State Rt. 658)
Charlottesville vicinity
Albemarle County
Virginia

Present Owner: Harry and Jean Burn.

Present Status: Restored and occupied.

Present Condition: Excellent.

Statement of Significance: Darby's Folly is a vernacular story-and-a-half structure, side passage - double pile in plan. It is notable for its interior pine paneling and mouldings, finely carved mantels and massive brick end chimneys. Thought to be built around 1750-1760 for Adam Darby, it exhibits some early nineteenth century details as well as elements from the 1938 restoration by Stanhope Johnson, Architect.

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Ownership.

Tradition has held that DARBY'S FOLLY was built between 1750 and 1760 for Adam Darby, an Englishman, and that its name derived from the fact that he was unable to complete the structure.¹ However, no verification of this could be found in the records of Albemarle County. Therefore, the historic name of CHESTNUT RIDGE was used in tracing the background of this tract and house.

In 1736, Colonel Robert Lewis, son of John Lewis and Frances Fielding, obtained a large patent of 4030 acres in the Parish of Fredericksville of the Colony of Virginia. In 1740, he acquired 6500 acres near Ivy Depot, eventually amassing 20,000 acres in what became Albemarle County. One of the largest landowners in the county, he then married Jane, daughter of Nicholas Merriweather and another of the county's largest landowners.

At Colonel Lewis' death in 1765, his vast holdings were divided among his 11 children. Sarah, the wife of Dr. Waller Lewis, of Spotsylvania County, received one-quarter of a tract of land on Ivy Creek totalling 4000 acres. On March 19, 1774, she and Dr. Lewis sold her share of 1000 acres to Benjamin Lewis of New Kent County for the sum of 400 pounds. Five years later, he sold it to Thomas Garth, Sr. for 350 pounds.

Thomas Garth, Sr. continued his purchases in this area until he owned a large tract which contained "all the land stretching from near the Staunton Road opposite Jesse Lewis' place, to the forks of Hochum's and Moorman's Rivers."² Appointed a magistrate in 1791, Garth also served as sheriff in 1807. His wife, with whom he had 8 children, was Judith Long. He lived on the Ivy Creek tract of land until his death in 1812, but not before conveying it as a gift to his son Thomas Garth, Jr. on September 3, 1811. As the deed for this transaction mentions a house for the first time, it indicates that Thomas Garth, Sr. may have built the present house soon after he bought the land in 1779.

According to Wood's account in History of Albemarle, "Thomas succeeded his father at 'Chestnut Ridge'"³ He was married to Susan, daughter of Richard Durrett, and had 5 children.

Two of his children were William, the builder of "Birdwood," and Willis, who lived at CHESTNUT RIDGE.

When Thomas Garth, Jr., died in 1834, his will apportioned his land equally among his children. William and Willis were appointed trustees for their sister Elizabeth's share. When William declined to act as trustee, Willis was appointed sole trustee. In 1834, Willis determined that it would be in the best interests of Elizabeth to sell her portion of the land and apply the proceeds to her benefit. On Nov. 22, 1834, the land was auctioned to the public and William was the highest bidder at \$13.25 per acre.

Even though William was the new owner of CHESTNUT RIDGE, he apparently had no interest in living there since he had recently built a house at Birdwood on the land he had purchased from his uncle Jesse in 1818. Willis probably continued to live at the farm until his death in 1852. He was married to Martha Graves and was instrumental in the establishment of Mt. Harmony Church.

When Willis died, he left no children. William then conveyed the property to his son, James Woods Garth on Jan. 29, 1852 as a gift. However, J. Woods suffered severe financial reverses after the Civil War. In 1869, he owed Martha Southall, executrix for V.W. Southall, \$5400 and Mary S. Brown \$4800. To secure the debt, Garth was forced to convey his 835 acre farm "Chestnut Ridge" in trust to R.T.W. Duke. The trust deed describes the property as "formerly belonging to Willis Garth, dec'd, and containing some 800 acres ... and being a part of Chestnut Ridge which belongs to J. Woods Garth and which was the place of his residence."⁴

Later, on April 29, 1875, Garth conveyed all his property, real and personal, to Duke in trust to secure his other debts. When Southall and Brown finally purchased the land at \$8 per acre, Garth's other creditors sued to have the proceeds applied to their debts. On Feb. 12, 1876, the Circuit Court of Albemarle entered judgment for Southall and Brown, and the deed was conveyed on Feb. 24, 1876.

In June of 1876, Southall and Brown sold 350 acres of "Chestnut Ridge (a farm formerly belonging to J. Woods Garth)" to Leigh R. Waddell for \$18 per acre.⁵ Waddell sold 101 acres of the land to his son Robert on Jan. 11, 1898. This was formally deeded to him by Mrs. L.M. Waddell on March 28, 1901 by special order of the Court of Chancery. However, Leigh Waddell continued to own 240 acres, including the house, at his death in 1905. At that time, his widow Lilly divided the estate with Robert and Bello, children of Waddell's first marriage. In return for \$1250.81, she received 86½ acres of the "home place" and 12½ acres of woodland. The total acreage was valued at \$2854.38. This was divided into five equal interests and Lilly and her four sons owned it as tenants in common. Her four sons by Leigh Waddell were Joseph, J. Alexander, John, and Donald.

Donald Waddell occupied Chestnut Ridge until 1937 and the house was commonly known as "the Old Waddell Place". Then, in 1937, J. Alexander sued his brother Donald, seeking to sell the estate in order to collect his one-fifth interest. By order of the Circuit Court, Albemarle County, the land was sold at a public auction on Jan. 21, 1937. Legh Walker and Hope Gleason bought it for \$7000 and subsequently transferred it to Evalyn M. Galban for \$11,000 on April 19, 1937.

Evalyn Galban (Mrs. Julio Suarez Galban) purchased the property with the express purpose of restoring the house. She engaged the well-known architect of the colonial revival, Stanhope Johnson from Lynchburg, to restore the house to its original condition. In addition, he enlarged the house by two flanking wings replacing the 19th century additions. He also made such modern improvements as a heating system, bathrooms, electricity and telephone service. Mrs. Galban renamed the house, Darby's Folly, in accord with the legend if not necessarily fact.

Mrs. Galban continued to acquire property adjacent to Darby's Folly and, on Dec. 13, 1965 conveyed the entire estate as a gift to her daughter Gloria Fennel and son-in-law W.T. Fennel. At that time, another two-story addition was made to the west wing.

On July 30, 1974, Mrs. Fennel sold the house and 18½ acres to Harry Burn III and Jean R. Burn, the present owners, while she retained the rest of the land.

Chain of Title.

Location of records: Transfers Reference Deed Books (DB) or Will Books (WB), by book number and page. Records are located in the Records Room of the Clerk of the Court, Albemarle County Courthouse, Charlottesville, Virginia.

1 September, 1757, WB 2-204, Parish of Fredericksville
County of Louisa
Colony of Virginia

To: Jane Merriweather, Mary Cobbs, Mildred Lewis, Sarah Lewis.
From: Colonel Robert Lewis.

"tract of land on Ivy Creek, containing four thousand acres, ...to be equally divided amongst them."

19 March, 1774, DB 7- 332.

To: Benjamin Lewis.

From: Waller Lewis and wife, Sarah.

"...certain tract or parcel of land lying in Albemarle County containing one thousand acres...being a part of a larger tract lying on Ivy Creek which was devised by the Last Will and Testament of Colonel Robert Lewis of Albemarle County, dec'd. to ...Sarah Lewis... and all and single appurtenances."

14 October, 1779, DB 7-384.

To: Thomas Garth, Sr.

From: Benjamin Lewis

"...a certain tract lying in Albemarle County... which was allotted to Sarah Lewis."

3 September, 1811, DB 17-426.

To: Thomas Garth, Jr.

From: Thomas Garth, Sr.

"the tract of land (a part of the barracks)...containing by estimation six hundred fifteen acres... and all houses, building appurtenances."

1 December, 1832, WB 11-543.

To: William, Willis, Frances, Jesse, and Elizabeth.

From: Thomas Garth, Jr.

"the late residence of Thomas Garth, Sr. deceased, containing by survey, three hundred and eighty-seven acres."

22 November, 1834, DB 50- 268.

To: William Garth.

From: Willis Garth in his own right and as acting trustee for Elizabeth, under the will of the late Thomas Garth.

"...tract of parcel of land lying and being in Albemarle County, formerly belonging to the estate of Thomas Garth, and deeded to the said William Garth the 22nd of November, 1834, containing by survey three hundred and eighty-seven acres.

29 January, 1852, DB 50-268

To: J. Woods Garth.

From: William Garth.

gift of three hundred and eighty-seven acres.

22 November, 1869, DB 64-476. Deed of Trust.

To: R.T.W. Duke, trustee.

From: J. Woods Garth.

"...Hereby grant and convey with general warranty, unto the said R.T.W. Duke, the tract of land, situated in Albemarle County and formerly belonging to Willis Garth, dec'd., and containing some 800 acres... and being a part of Chestnut Ridge which belongs to J. Woods Garth and which was the place of his residence until he moved to Birdwood, in November 1868."

24 February, 1876, DB 70-112.

To: Martha Southall, ex. for V.W. Southall and Mary S. Brown.

From: R.T.W. Duke, trustee for J. Woods Garth.

"...the said 835 acres is in one body, bounded by the lands of William Early, Mrs. Garland Garth and others...which contains the dwelling and outbuildings and constitutes a part of said 835 acres..."

16 June, 1876, DB 71-69.

To: Leigh R. Waddell.

From: William H. Southall, and Mary S. Brown.

"three hundred and fifty acres of 'Chestnut Ridge' (a farm formerly belonging to J. Woods Garth) for eighteen dollars per acre... which contain the dwelling and the outbuildings, contiguous thereto, including barn stables."

20 March, 1905, DB 130-234.

To: Lilly Waddell, Joseph A. Waddell, J. Alexander Waddell, John A. Waddell, and Donald Waddell.

From: Leigh R. Waddell.

"...a certain tract or parcel of land in the County of Albemarle, Virginia, being a portion of the Home Place of the late Leigh R. Waddell, containing 86 1/6 ...and being that part of said Home Place which lies south of the branch running from Garth's meadow to Carr's Farm, and on which are located the dwelling house and other buildings."

21 January 1937, DB 234-296.

To: Legh Walker and Hope W. Gleason.

From: J. Alexander Waddell, Donald E. Waddell, Lilly W. Waddell, Joseph A. Waddell, James A Waddell.

sold at public auction by order of Circuit Court to settle suit.

19 April, 1937, DB 235-313.

To: Evalyn M. Galban.

From: Hope W. Gleason and Legh Walker.

86 1/6 acres plus 12 1/2 acres "situated in Albemarle County near Owensville,"

13 December, 1965, DB 413-572.

To: Gloria Galban Fennel.

From: Evalyn M. Galban.
gift of 134 acres.

30 July, 1974, DB 557-393.

To: Harry Burn III and Jean R. Burn.

From: Gloria G. Fennel and W.T. Fennel.

"...13.682 acres fronting on State Route 653 in Albemarle County.

FOOTNOTES

1

Roy Wheeler, Historic Virginia, (Charlottesville, 1949), p. 329.

2

The Reverend Edgar Woods, History Of Albemarle, (Bridgewater, Va., 1932), p. 203.

3

Woods, p. 204.

4

Deedbook 64-776, 22 November, 1869.

5

Deedbook 71-69, 16 June 1876.

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ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

General Statement and Description.

DARBY'S FOLLY is a vernacular Virginia, story-and-a-half structure with a side passage - double pile plan. As such, it resembles other area houses, for example Findowrie, ca.1733, or Temple Hill, 1788, or Wakefield, 1781. The massive end chimneys, fixed-louver shutters, raised panel doors with H and HL hinges and transom lights are typically eighteenth century, suggesting a building date of circa 1780.

However, the appearance of American bonding in the chimneys, unbeaded weatherboarding, metal seam roof, attenuated window muntins and Federal Style mantels indicates alterations made in the early nineteenth century. In the 1938 restoration, the house was returned to an eighteenth century appearance by the addition of flanking wings, the reconstruction of hipped dormers, and the re-use of nine-over-nine light windows.

Exterior Description.

Overall Dimensions: The basic structure measures 30'9 $\frac{1}{2}$ " by 41'5". From sill level to roof peak measures approximately 27'6", while to cornice soffit, 12'. The wings to either side extend 50' to the west, and 32' to the east.

Foundations: Foundation walls are constructed of brick, laid in Flemish bond. Thickness is approximately 12-13". Wall height from exterior ground level to bottom of sill ranges from 1'8 $\frac{1}{2}$ " on the south to 2'3/4" on the north. Brick gutters, measuring 2' wide are located on the non-gable sides.

Exterior Wall Sheathing: Walls are covered with weatherboarding, 6" exposure on three sides and flush or shiplap on the south elevation, approximately 11" wide. Corner boards are double, measuring 4" with a 3/8" bead. Rake boards taper toward the ridge of the roof and end in a decorative profile at the eaves. Dormers have flush beaded boarding parallel to the roof. Part of the 1938 restoration, these boards replaced lapped horizontal boards. Also visible are rose-headed nails 18" O.C. to fasten weatherboards.

Structural System: Construction is post and stud framing, with studs approximately 18" O.C. The hewn summer beam supporting the partition wall measures 14 3/4" wide and 10" deep. Sills are 10" deep, hewn joists measure 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ " by 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ " with a 6" mortise, and are located 24 $\frac{1}{2}$ " O.C.

Porches/Stoops: Wide porch across front is supported on piers. Square posts, chamfered and with simple impost caps, are pegged into the overhead beam. Back porch/stoop is covered by a gabled roof with an arched opening articulated by beading along the curve, supported by tapering posts ending in impost caps.

Chimneys: Two massive exterior chimneys stand against east gable end. Construction is brick, with stepped shoulders and corbelled caps. The brick is laid in three course American bond to the first set of shoulders, then in Flemish to the stack, where common is used. The exterior chimney on the west gable end is in five course American bond, with common bond used on the stack. All chimney stacks are free-standing. The average brick size is 8" by 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ " by 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ " with $\frac{1}{2}$ " of mortar between. The joints of the west chimney have been lined with white.

Doorways/Doors: Front and back doorframes are identical, with simple architrave moulding surrounding the door and transom light. The transom lights consist of a single row of four panes and the doors are raised six panel type.

Windows/Shutters: Windows are nine over nine lights, sliding sash. The panes measure 8" by 10" and have attenuated muntins $\frac{1}{2}$ " wide. The surrounds are simple architrave mouldings. The upstairs windows are similar, but have six over six lights. The dormer windows are six over nine single hung sash. Basement windows consist of three or four lights, and reconstructed grilles of close set bars. Also in the 1938 restoration, the dormer windows and the south window of the west facade replaced the nineteenth century two over two light windows, and the north window was reproduced to match. The shutters, of the fixed-louvered type, are held back by iron shutter catches.

Roof: The roof is a medium pitch gable in the proportion of 2 to 3 with a slight break for the pitch of the porch. The roof is presently covered with standing seam metal. The dormer roofs were changed in restoration to hipped roof design to replace the nineteenth century pitched roofs. (source unknown) The boxed cornice, with moulding, is stopped with a shaped end board, having an angular profile.

Interior Description.

Floor plans: Basement was originally a crawl space, with access from the north side. Presently it has been dug deeper and finished on the east end. First floor: 3 rooms, a passage, 11'7" by 30'5 $\frac{1}{2}$ ", a parlor, 18'3 $\frac{1}{2}$ " by 16'2", and a dining room, 18'3 $\frac{1}{2}$ " by 13'8". Second floor: originally 3 rooms, a passage and two chambers, 15'2" by 12'6" and 15'2" by 11'6", passage now partitioned into a bathroom, 7'7" by 5'3 $\frac{1}{2}$ ", a bedroom, 8'6" by 11'8 $\frac{1}{2}$ ", and 3 closets.

Stairway: The stair, open well and open string, rises from the passage. Three risers bring the stair sideways, four fan-shaped treads turn the corner and 12 risers reach the upper passage. A simple rounded handrail, straight balusters and three square capped newel posts are provided.

Flooring: Flooring is tongue-and-groove pine ranging from 6" to 14" in width. That in the dining room was replaced with old flooring in the 1938 restoration.

Wall and Ceiling Finish: Walls and ceiling are plaster on lath, except the downstairs rooms which feature a wide board wainscot with bolection molded chair rail and baseboard.

Doorways/Doors: Doorways are of the simply molded architrave type, and similar throughout. The door panels are raised and feathered into an ovolu moulding at the stiles. The door to the second floor southwest chamber shows traces of being reversed and reused.

Interior trim: In addition to the architrave-type window and door surrounds, there is a deeply moulded cornice and a simple dado with a bolection molded chair rail or dado cap and base board on the first floor. The chair rail becomes the sill for the first floor windows, while under the upstairs windows is a simple apron. The parlor mantel is original to the house, though probably of Federal Style origins with its oval forms, pilasters and cornice-like lintel. The dining room mantel is now located in the entry passage, its mantel being presently in storage. Much simpler in detail, it exhibits bolection moulding, a cavetto cornice and a row of decorative circular holes. The present dining room mantel came from a Waynesboro House, and was put in place during the 1938 restoration. The upstairs fireplaces each have a simple surround plus a shelf supported on two curved brackets. The interior woodwork is pine and was originally painted. The section of wainscoting beneath the later parlor window was removed from under the east dining room window. This was replaced by new plain board panelling and painted. The dining room wainscot and mantel remain painted, as does the upstairs woodwork, although chemical paint analysis should be done to reveal the original paint colors.

Hardware: Hung on H and HL hinges, the doors are fastened by iron stock locks with brass knobs and oval escutcheons.

Site and Surroundings.

Orientation and General Setting: The long axis of the house runs from west southwest to east ndtheast. The setting is just off Route 658 with a view to Jumping Branch Creek to the north and to the Blue Ridge Mountains to the north and west. It is located several miles from the Barracks.

Outbuildings: According to a map drawn by a member of the Waddell family, there originally existed a separate kitchen with an enormous fireplace, a loom house, a smoke house, a carriage house, ice pit and numerous log cabins. The ice pit was 30 feet deep, of dried laid stone. An octagonal house, measuring 20 feet in diameter, was built over the pit in the 1940's, while the small well house, 10'4" square, was built close to the site of the detached kitchen.

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PROJECT INFORMATION

This project was undertaken by the School of Architecture at the University of Virginia, under the direction of K. Edward Lay, Professor of Architecture, during the Fall Semester, 1978. The material was developed by Leslie Kuhl and Louise Jones McPhillips. It was donated to the Historic American Buildings Survey. The material was not developed under HABS supervision, nor edited by members of the HABS staff.