

McCabe-Marmion Building  
(Building 43)  
Harpers Ferry National Historical Park  
Harpers Ferry  
Jefferson County  
West Virginia

HABS No. WV-165

HABS  
WVA,  
19-HAVE,  
27-

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, DC 20013-7127

HABS  
WVA,  
19 - HARP,  
27-

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

MCCABE-MARMION BUILDING (Building 43) HABS No. WV-165

Location: On the north side of Shenandoah Street, Wager Lot 47, Harpers Ferry, Jefferson County, West Virginia.

Present Owner and Occupant: National Park Service

Present Use: National Park Service blacksmith shop/interpretive exhibit

Significance: The McCabe-Marmion Building is an example of a combination commercial and residential structure which was constructed in Harpers Ferry's Lower Town area.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of construction: 1845
2. Original and subsequent owners: Dr. Nicholas Marmion and Francis McCabe were the original owners. Subsequently, the building was owned by their heirs.
3. Builders: Dr. Nicholas Marmion and Martin Grace
4. Original plans and construction: Built in 1845, the McCabe-Marmion Building was a 3 1/2-story stone structure with a slate-covered gable roof, and a wide chimney at either end. A large three-story frame porch with round columns extended across the full width of the Shenandoah Street elevation. Two sets of four dormers pierced the front and rear slopes of the roof. The exterior of the rubble stone walls was pargecast. The structure was six bays or 40 feet wide and about 31 feet deep. Windows had sills of cut stone and contained six-over-six lights. The entrance doors, at all three levels, were set in the third and fourth bays from the right, and all were topped by rectangular transoms with three lights.

The building was divided into two independent sections, each three bays wide, by means of an eight-inch thick brick party wall that ran along the division line of the lot. Center halls, containing the stairs and located on either side of the party wall, ran through the structure from front to rear. The first floor of each half contained a shop or storeroom and the upper 2 1/2 stories were designed for use as two sets of living quarters. At the upper three levels both units were two rooms deep and each room on the first three floors had its own fireplace.

5. A four-story store annex, with one room on each level, was apparently added to the rear of the left (west) portion of the building after 1845. The first floor of this shed-roofed 11-foot square rear wing was probably used as a warehouse for the store; the second contained the kitchen for the dwelling in the west portion of the building and the upper two rooms were probably used as extra bedrooms.

The exterior of the building has been restored but the interior of the building collapsed in 1960 and has not been restored. A three-story porch was added to the south portion fronting on Shenandoah Street in 1975.

- B. The McCabe-Marmion Building has been employed to house a variety of commercial ventures, as well as being utilized for residential purposes. The description below covers the years 1845-1861.

<u>Store 1 (West or Marmion Portion)</u>	<u>Store 2 (East or McCabe Portion)</u>
December 1845-March 1850: Arnold S. Stephens' Boot, Shoe, Hat, Cap and Trunk Store	Circa 1848-March 1852: Grocery and dry goods store of F.J. Conrad and Brother
May 1850-?: Louisa Evans' Cleaning and Dying Shop; also probably a small grocery and dry goods store	Circa 1852-1853 to ?: Store of Isreal Russell, fish merchant
1859-1861: Not known, but possibly the tailor shop of David Whip, or John Legg's Shoemakers shop; upper level being used as a boardinghouse	? to 1859: Probably the grocery store of J. & J. Mathews  December 1859-1861: Probably the grocery and liquor store of Lawrence Kirwan; upper floors were a boardinghouse

In 1894, both sections of the building were being used as dwellings.

## PART II. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

### Bibliography:

- Frye, Dennis E. Correspondence from National Park Service historian, Harpers Ferry National Historical Park, to Holly K. Chamberlain, HABS, April 23, 1987.
- Snell, Charles W. The Business Enterprises and Commercial Development of Harpers Ferry's Lower Town Area, 1803 to 1861. April 9, 1973. Photocopy of typescript.

PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

This project was financed from funds of the "Mission 66" program of the National Park Service. The measurements were done July 1958 under the supervision of resident architect A. W. Franzen, National Park Service, and Professor F. Blair Reeves, University of Florida.

Prepared and transmitted by: Holly K. Chamberlain, Historian  
Historic American Buildings Survey  
May 6, 1987