

West House
Yorktown,
York County
Virginia

HABS No. VA-82

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORIC AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
Washington, D. C. District

Historic American Buildings Survey

Prepared at Washington Office

WEST HOUSE
Yorktown, Virginia

Owner: Judge Sydney Smith

Date of Erection: c.1706

Architect: Unknown

Builder: Land bought by Miles and J. Manuel Wills
who built home. See records.

Present Condition: Good. (Original appearance and not moved)

Number of Stories: $1\frac{1}{2}$ (Basement first floor and second floor)

Materials of Construction: Frame on brick basement. Wide pine
floors.

Other Existing Records:

Additional Data: See text.

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This property was sold in 1706 by Thomas Ballard and William Buckner, trustees for the town of York, to Miles and J. Manuel Wills, and William Tinsley was clerk of the court and recorded the deed on the 8th day of June, 1706. Records found in York County Clerk's Office have abstract title. Owned by different parties, at different times.

John R. West bought the property from Elizabeth Nickolson in 1821, and since then it has been called "West House." John R. West, a member of the governor's staff, married Elizabeth Nelson, oldest daughter of General Thomas Nelson.

My father, Reverend Robert Nelson Crooks, bought the property in 1887, and after his death in 1916, Judge Smith (present owner) bought it from the heirs.

During the war, three Revolutionary cannon balls went through the house, a twelve-inch sill in the basement being cut in half by one of them, two going through the first floor. There are marks now on the walls in each room where the ball penetrated. This is now the home of the writer of this.

The old parlor is wainscoted, original paint, five colors - pink, lavender, and white, with cornice of green and gold. The halls through the middle of the house are wainscoted up to the chair rail; other rooms plaster.

Some architects believe that the front porch of this house was added later; they do not believe there was any porch when the house was built. As to this I can't say, but I am positive the back porch is the original. The front porch has been repaired and I doubt its being the original.

Mrs. Sydney Smith
(From "Old Yorktown and its History";
and from letter received.)