

# Acculturation in the Shenandoah Valley: Rhenish Houses of the Massanutten Settlement

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*Because vernacular architecture is mainly the architecture of ordinary people, it commonly manifests their sense of collective identity. In a nation of immigrants like the United States, identity is often shown by a strong allegiance to a particular ethnic group. Edward A. Chappell's study demonstrates how ethnicity was expressed in a set of eighteenth-century vernacular structures built by a German-speaking community in Page County, Virginia.*

*From the evidence of surviving buildings, Chappell determined that the first Swiss Mennonite settlers built a type of dwelling they called a Flurküchenhaus or a hall-kitchen house. This building had an asymmetrical floor plan consisting of two, three, or four rooms arranged around an off-center internal fireplace and chimney. Over the course of about seventy-five years these Massanutten farmers modified their Old World building pattern by replacing the internal fireplaces, by shifting room functions, and by balancing the placement of doors and windows. While their new buildings were not exact copies of fashionable English houses, they did have visual features that allowed Rhenish builders to demonstrate their awareness of the trendy double-pile, central-passage Georgian plan.*

*Despite these significant changes, there were also significant retentions of German elements. Consequently Chappell suggests that cultural change does not have to be cataclysmic. As long as the will to remain different survives, ethnic distinctions will be manifested in some manner. Only after 1800, at the point when the Massanutten Germans were willing to plunge wholeheartedly into the Anglo culture of Virginia and universally adopted the I-house as their favored dwelling, did German architecture pass from the landscape.*

Form in folk architecture is primarily determined by the traditions and the symbolic needs of the people who construct and live in the buildings. For this reason, the identification and interpretation of building patterns in a region can provide a fertile resource for understanding the condition of people's culture. It is evident that much variation within artifact assemblages is the result of individual practical and psychological requirements. Yet patterns of

continuity and change in essential forms, such as recurring or changing combinations of spatial arrangements in architecture, reflect corresponding stability or unrest within the culture.<sup>1</sup> This essay presents a group of architecturally similar eighteenth-century Germanic-American houses built in a narrowly limited geographic area within a period of approximately fifty years. The unity of their forms is the result of the cohesive and separatist context in which the houses were constructed. Significant deviation in the form of some structures and later alterations to others are proposed as indications of the impact of acculturation.

The northern Shenandoah Valley, locally called the lower Valley, was settled in the last three quarters of the eighteenth century by Scots-Irish, English, and Germanic people migrating mostly from eastern and central Pennsylvania. The largest group consisted of Germans and Swiss, primarily first and second-generation immigrants from the Rhine Valley. In settling the lower Valley, this group of culturally related Rhenish people brought with them dialects, crafts, and according to contemporary accounts, a personal character that distinguished them from their Scots-Irish and English neighbors.<sup>2</sup> Although people of Germanic background retained numerical superiority in the lower Valley into the nineteenth century, they had, by the beginning of the century, begun to be absorbed into an Anglo-American regional culture. This is not intended to imply that some ethnic characteristics did not survive acculturation, or that some Germanic forms did not for a time affect the artifactual conceptions of the Scots-Irish and English.<sup>3</sup> Yet it was in the period around 1800 that the Germanic people rejected the most visible symbols of their background.

Two instructive examples are language and architecture. Klaus Wust has explained that there existed a bidialectal situation among the Valley Germans before they adopted the English language. The standard German language was used in writing and in public situations while a variety of related dialects, collectively called "Valley Dutch" but actually based on the dialects of the homeland, provided the

medium for informal conversation. As a highly visible symbol of separation and as an obstacle to involvement in local business and government matters, the former was largely abandoned in favor of English by about 1830. The more personal use of the dialects survived, in some cases into the twentieth century.<sup>4</sup>

Parallel to the abandonment of the standard German language was the rejection of a general house type that reflected both the aesthetic traditions and the domestic systems of the Rhenish settlers. Even the most casual examination of housing in the Shenandoah Valley reveals a rural landscape dominated by medium-sized farms with a single predominant house form, one that is distinctly nineteenth-century and Anglo-American. Throughout the century, the symmetrical two-story I-house was built in brick and frame in such numbers that its preeminence has not yet been seriously threatened by the tentacles of suburban ranch houses reaching out from the towns.<sup>5</sup> The overwhelming dominance of the I-house in the Valley is striking when compared to the diversity of vernacular house forms that were built in nineteenth-century Piedmont and Tidewater Virginia, where pre-1800 types continued to constitute a significant percentage of the houses built. It can be argued that the tenacious adherence to the I-house form in the Valley housing revolution represents a conscious replacement of the symbols of the old ethnic cultures.<sup>6</sup> For the Germanic people in the Valley, the I-house provided highly visible evidence of at least partial entrance into an acceptable regional culture. As a distinguishing cultural symbol, the form was less important to the relatively homogeneous population of eastern Virginia.

That the nineteenth-century housing revolution in the Shenandoah Valley swept away most of the buildings of the previous century also implies a relative lack of substantiality in the earlier buildings. Except for the most affluent, few nineteenth-century farmers could afford the luxury of replacing a sizable and sturdy old house when it could be altered to accommodate new needs. There is, for ex-

ample, a relationship with early postmedieval English housing developments, when second floors and chimneys were commonly inserted in earlier open-hall houses.<sup>7</sup> The dearth of eighteenth-century houses surviving in the Shenandoah Valley indicates that, as in the seventeenth-century Chesapeake region, most families lived in buildings that were less substantial than those built by people of average means in the following century.

There was, however, deviation from this pattern of insubstantial Shenandoah Valley housing. In several areas where settlements were established at an early date, farmers and small industrialists within one or two generations reached a level of economic success that led them to build dwellings of sufficient permanence to be occupied through the nineteenth century. An example of such a prosperous enclave is the Massanutten settlement in present Page County. In the 1720s a group consisting predominantly of Swiss Mennonites and led by Adam Müller (usually anglicized to Miller) settled a five-thousand-acre tract along the South Fork of the Shenandoah River east of Massanutten Mountain. Located roughly between Hawksbill Creek and the town of Alma, the land was purchased from Swiss immigrant Jacob Stover, a promoter who at the time of the sale had apparently not gained title to the land.<sup>8</sup> In 1733 eight Massanutten settlers petitioned Virginia Governor William Gooch for confirmation of their ownership. Adam Müller (Miller), Abram Strickler, Mathias Selzer, Philip Lang (Long), Paul Lung (Long), Michael Rhinehart, Hans Rood, and Michael Kaufman stated that after purchasing the land from Stover about four years before, they had sold their properties in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, settled the Virginia land, and "cleared sevl. Plantations and made great Improvements thereon."<sup>9</sup>

During the following seventy-five years, the Massanutten settlers or their descendants constructed a group of substantial houses that differ in form from the nineteenth-century houses of the region. Despite variations among the houses, unifying patterns exist that relate them to each other and to Pennsylvania Rhenish buildings. These patterns indicate a cultural distinction among eighteenth-century Ger-

manic people that would diminish in the following century.

Acculturation was not, however, an instant phenomenon that involved the rapid assimilation of the separate ethnic groups of the Shenandoah Valley into a relatively homogeneous population. Some evidence of the gradual process of change is supplied by several of the buildings in the Massanutten group. Before the I-house or one of its formal derivations became virtually the only house type a successful middle-class farmer in the region would build, certain of the ideas it embodied were utilized in combination with familiar Germanic forms. The original form of several of the buildings indicates a movement away from some of the old transported ideas of what a house should be. In addition, later alterations to most of the Massanutten houses are related to the new ideas. Definition of the essential characteristics of the group will help to establish the significant deviations.

The primary house form brought to America by eighteenth-century German and Swiss immigrants was a story-and-a-half or two-story building with a first-floor plan consisting of two, three, or four rooms disposed around an internal chimney.<sup>10</sup> Exposed timber-frame construction called *Fachwerk*, stone, and hewn logs were the materials usually employed for exterior walling. Stone and log construction came to be favored in America, and no examples of *Fachwerk* are known in Virginia. Limestone laid as coursed rubble was generally used for foundations and chimneys.

In this *Flurküchenhaus* or hall-kitchen house a front and often rear door give entry into a narrow kitchen room, or *Küche*, which was served by a large cooking fireplace (fig. 1). Related to the function of the English hall, the room was utilized both for cooking and as the primary informal living space. The *Küche* is located to the right of the chimney in 80 percent of the Massanutten examples. A wider room called a *Stube*, located on the opposite side of the chimney, was apparently used for more formal gatherings, a function similar to that of the Anglo-American parlor. That Valley Germans may have

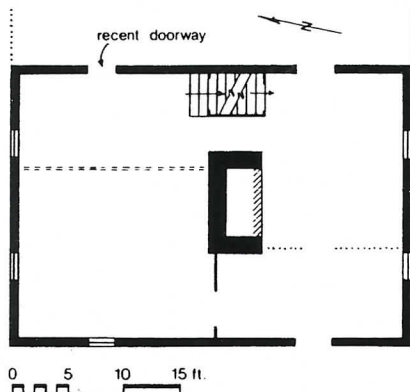


Figure 1. First-floor plan of the Abram Strickler House. For all plans the original fabric is shown as black, later fabric is hatched, and second stage alterations are stippled. The location of destroyed early features is indicated with broken lines, and recent additions are represented with dotted lines. Recent porches are omitted. Wall niches are noted with the letter n.

generally eaten in the *Stube* is indicated by Samuel Kercheval's statement that a long pine table was always located in a corner of the room, with benches permanently fixed on one side.<sup>11</sup> Similar fixed *Stube* furniture has been observed in houses in Switzerland.<sup>12</sup> In most large *Flürkuchenhauser*, the rear of the *Stube* is partitioned to form a narrow unheated sleeping chamber, called a *Kammer* by the Germans and a *Stibli* by the Swiss.<sup>13</sup> Traditionally, the *Stube* was heated by an iron or tile stove that was fed with coals through an opening in the rear of the *Küche* fireplace.<sup>14</sup> All such heating devices were removed when the Massanutten houses were altered, but plates from five-plate iron stoves have survived in the region. An example marked "MARLBORO FURN[ACE] 1768" from Isaac Zane's iron works in Frederick County was until recently used as a fireback at Fort Paul Long (fig. 2). At Fort Egypt, the room above the *Stube* was also heated by a stove, which was furnished with coals from a small elevated fireplace on the opposite side of the chimney. In some large-scale variations of the *Flürkuchenhaus* form, the rear of the *Küche* is partitioned to form a fourth room, a space that was utilized as a workroom in Switzerland.<sup>15</sup> Although

the fourth room has been identified as a pantry in Pennsylvania, an example at Fort Egypt is provided with a small fireplace (fig. 3b). Evidence of another such fireplace was previously visible at the rear of the *Küche* in Wildflower Farm, a similar house in adjoining Shenandoah County.

The second floor is reached by enclosed stairs most often located in the *Küche*, and in a number of houses an additional stair rises from the *Kammer*. There is considerable variation in second-floor room disposition among the houses in which the original upper-level plan can be determined. Generally, the space is divided axially at the chimney, with one or both of the spaces sometimes divided into two rooms (fig. 3c). Only in one-and-a-half-



Figure 2. Plate from an iron stove at Fort Paul Long cast at Isaac Zane's Marlboro Furnace.

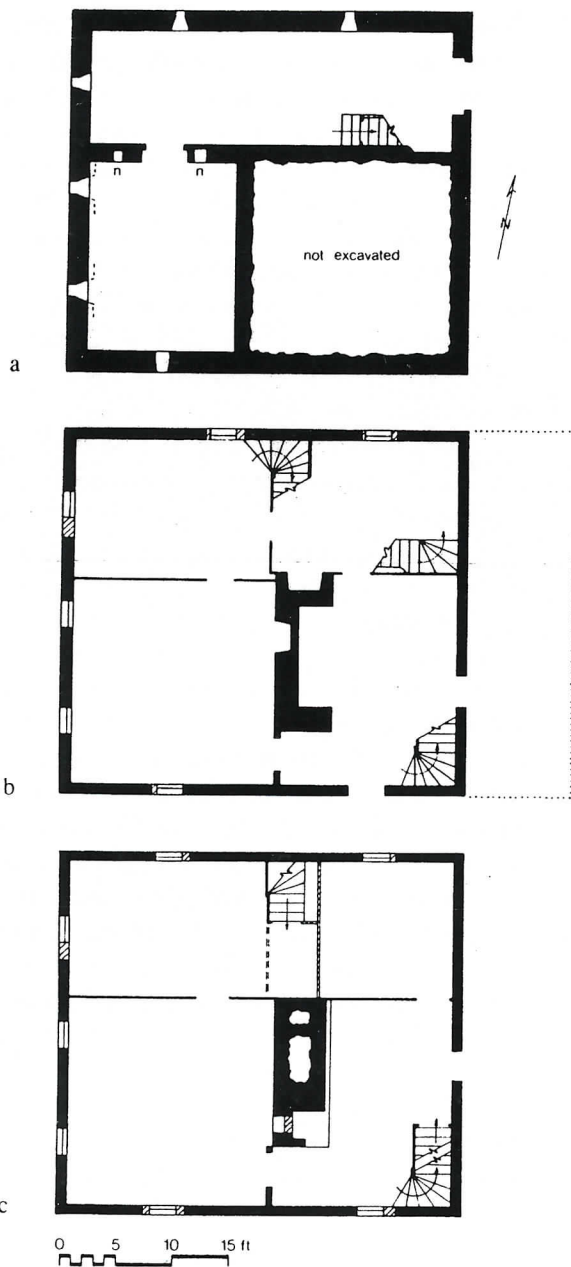


Figure 3. Cellar, first-, and second-floor plans of Fort Egypt. (1940 HABS plans revised by the author.)

story Page County houses is the loft space finished. The attics of all single- and two-story houses were originally undivided and the roof framing was left exposed.

The most conservative fenestration of Virginia as well as Pennsylvania *Flurküchenhauser* consists of two openings in each story on the front and rear walls (fig. 4). Three-bay fenestration is also found, and at Fort Rhodes one of the two facade openings into the *Stube* was originally a door. Like eighteenth-century Anglo-American Virginia builders, Germanic builders in the Valley tended to balance exterior openings in relation to internal spaces rather than in relation to the elevation.<sup>16</sup> For example, the facade openings at Fort Rhodes are placed nearly equidistant from the ends of the *Stube* and *Küche*, with less attention given to exterior balance. This grammar of piercing was only loosely followed, however, and concern for external balance is per-

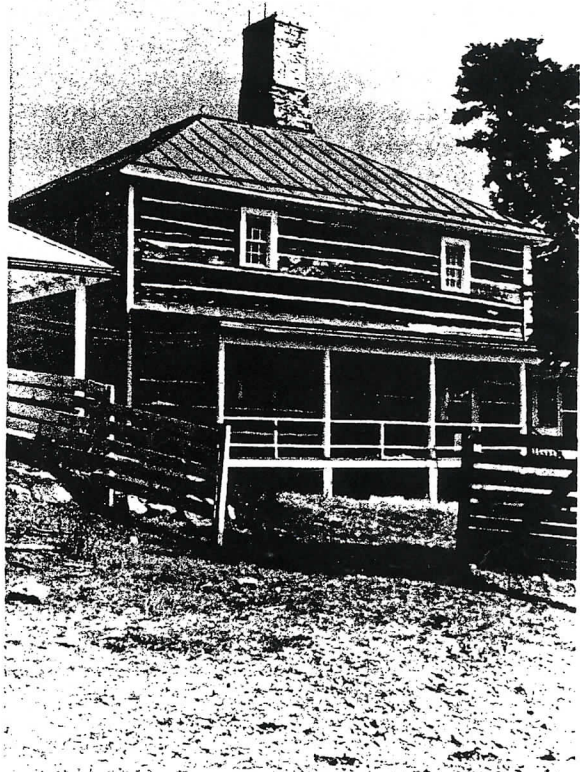


Figure 4. Fort Egypt.

ceptible in a number of the houses. Surprisingly, external symmetry is most often found on the gable ends.

Interior finish is characterized by an open expression of the construction methods, a quality that was distinctly avoided by later Valley builders. While the builders of nineteenth-century I-houses created spaces bounded by plastered surfaces and punctuated by nonstructural architectural elements, the ceiling framing and a variety of wall surfaces were left exposed in *Flurküchenhauser* and a minimum of cosmetic details were used. In most examples, interior trim is confined to chair rails, baseboards, and cornice strips over the fireplaces. With the exception of several short sections of masonry and exposed frame walls abutting the chimney, interior walls are of vertical-board construction. An early partition at Fort Egypt is constructed of plain boards and molded battens (figs. 5a, 6). Partitions on the first floor of Fort Rhodes and the second floor of Fort Stover consist of raised panels set into vertical boards with molded edges (fig. 5b). More common among the Massanutten houses, however, are partitions constructed of tongue-and-groove vertical boards with beaded edges (fig. 5c). Only at Fort Stover, a house exhibiting a number of features that deviate from traditional German-American forms, are plastered stud walls found, and there they are confined to the first floor. Consistently, the first- and second-floor interior surfaces of stone

walls are plastered, while log walls are usually left exposed and whitewashed. With the possible exception of the first floor at Fort Stover, ceiling framing was originally exposed in all the houses. In buildings of sufficient depth to require bridging beams, summers are used both singly and in pairs (fig. 7, 10). Running between the gable ends, most are set into the chimney masonry, although at the Abraham Heiston House and Fort Stover they are unsupported at the center. Unlike Anglo-American framing, the joists either rest entirely on top of the summers (as at Fort Egypt and Fort Stover) or are only partially set into them (as at Fort Rhodes).

Some of the Massanutten houses preserve roof structures of distinctly ethnic form, while others have simple common rafter roofs that to a certain degree can be recognized as an early acceptance of Anglo-American framing techniques. Two traditional Germanic systems of framing a complex gable roof were used in the Shenandoah Valley, both consisting of common rafters supported by a heavy substructure.<sup>17</sup> In the one method used at Fort Egypt, Fort Rhodes, and the Abraham Spitler House, but surviving unaltered only at Spitler, the supporting structure is comprised of horizontal purlins resting on three pairs of large vertical posts (figs. 8, 9). At the Spitler House and also at Wildflower Farm in Shenandoah County, the posts are connected to the joists by angle braces and to the purlins by arch braces. Collars tie together the posts and common

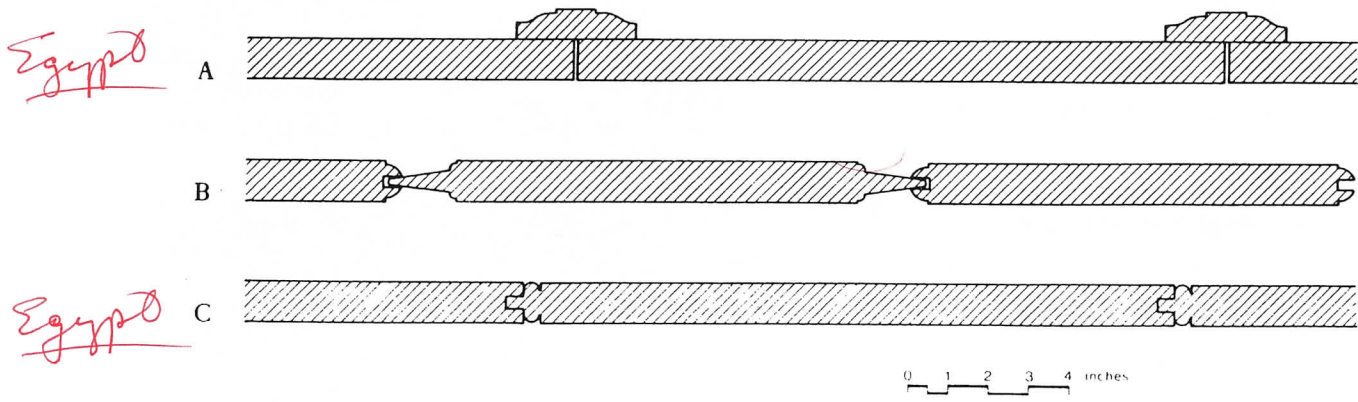


Figure 5. Interior partition details: a, between first-floor rear rooms at Fort Egypt; b, second-floor partition at Fort Stover; c, between the Stube and Kammer at Fort Egypt.

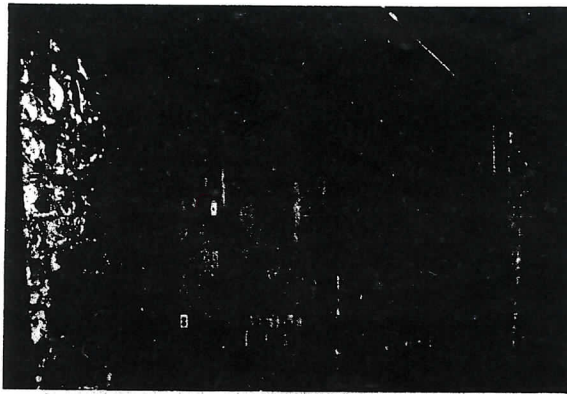


Figure 6. First-floor partition between the rear rooms at Fort Egypt.

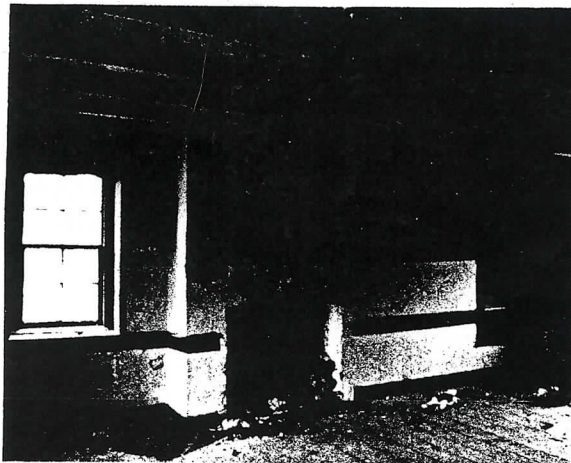


Figure 7. Second-floor north room at Fort Stover.

rafters above them, but the other rafters are without collars. Not found in the Massanutten houses but used at Fort Bowman in Shenandoah County as well as in Pennsylvania and Maryland buildings is a second system of rafter support which consists of pairs of truncated principal rafters linked by double collars (fig. 8b). The rafters broaden toward the top, where they are slotted to receive the purlins. A lower collar is morticed to the inner sides of the principals, and a larger collar rests on top, tying together the principals, purlins, and common rafters. Principal rafter collars on similar roofs at the Schiefferstadt House in Frederick, Maryland, and the Golden Plough Tavern in York, Pennsyl-

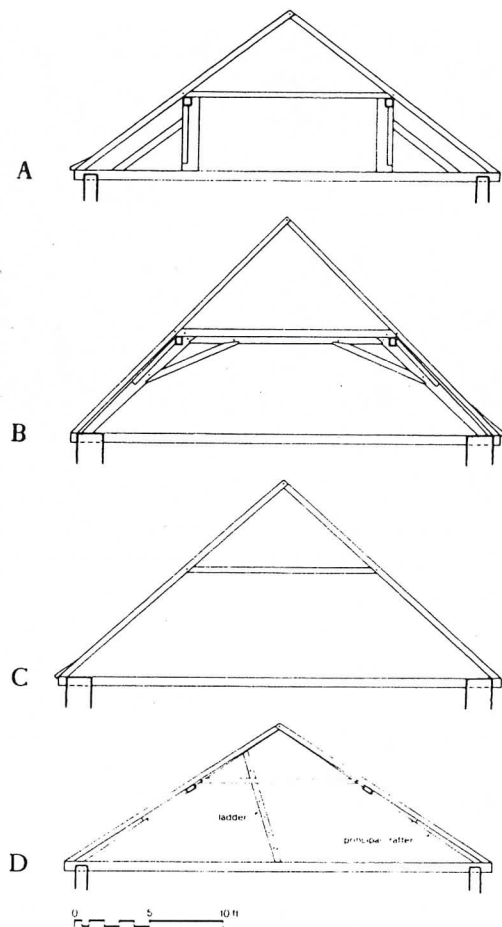


Figure 8. Roofs on Rhenish houses in the Massanutten settlement and nearby: a, the Abraham Spitler House; b, Fort Bowman, Shenandoah County; c, Fort Stover; d, an early nineteenth-century log house at Fort Paul Long. (Roofs a and b were drawn from measurements supplied by Dell Upton; roof c is based on a HABS drawing by Tarquin M. Rachele.)

vania, have a slight camber, although those at Bowman are straight.<sup>18</sup> Arch braces add additional stability by connecting the principals to the purlins and lower collars. At Fort Bowman, the common rafters have large 4" × 6" collars that are pegged to the purlins, and it is the common collars rather than the rafters that are directly seated on the support system.

In both the post and principal rafter systems, the rafter feet usually rest directly on the joists, without

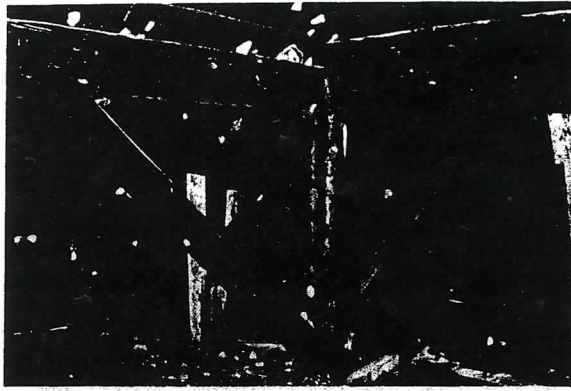


Figure 9. Roof post and purlin at the Abraham Spitler House.

the false plate intermediary that was popular in Anglo-Virginian framing.<sup>19</sup> Story-and-a-half houses represent an exception, for when the walls are carried above the level of the joists, the rafters must be seated on plates.<sup>20</sup> A feature common to Germanic roofs is a *kick*, or lowering of pitch near the eaves. In the Old World, this broken silhouette was often achieved by placing the rafter feet on the joists directly over the wall and extending the joists beyond. A short partial rafter, or *Aufschifter*, was then framed between the top of the extended joists and the common rafter.<sup>21</sup> Where the kicks are found on American Germanic houses, the rafter feet are often set above the outer face of the wall, and a wedge is merely nailed or pegged to the top of the rafter (figs. 8a and b).

Simple common rafter roofs are known in the Rhineland, and to some extent their use here might be attributed to their cheapness and sufficiency for spanning shorter distances.<sup>22</sup> Yet the size of the building does not constitute the essential factor in the choice of roof type, as illustrated by Moravians' use of the Spitler roof system on relatively small buildings in Salem, North Carolina. While it is true that unsupported common rafter roofs are used on all the smaller Massanutten buildings, they are also found at the Abraham Heiston House and at Fort Stover (fig. 8c), both of which are deeper than Spitler and Bowman. What seems to have happened at the Massanutten settlement and at other Germanic communities in America is a gradual aban-

donment of the complex roofing systems that were indigenous to Germanic culture. Although the old systems were remembered and aspects of their forms were used on barns and a few other large nondomestic buildings as late as the second half of the nineteenth century, they were apparently abandoned for houses, where simple common rafter roofs usually would suffice.<sup>23</sup> The general demise of the traditional roofs was exemplified by the construction of a log house built by the Long family at Fort Paul Long early in the nineteenth century. The new house was as deep as the Spitler House, and because the roof was to have a low (33°) pitch, it was felt that a common rafter system was not sufficient. The builders eschewed the old systems, however, and instead built an Anglo-American principal rafter roof with butt purlins (fig. 8d).

An essential feature of the Rhenish farm on both sides of the Atlantic is the provision for storage within the body of the house. In some Shenandoah Valley houses an old concept of multi-level attic storage has survived in the utilization of space above the roof collars, reached by a permanent ladder. Kercheval states that garnerers for grain were a common feature in the upper floor of Valley German houses, and Robert Bucher has described a similar practice in Pennsylvania.<sup>24</sup>

The most dramatic accommodation, however, is a variable cellar form drawn from Rhineland and Pennsylvania precedents.<sup>25</sup> As an integral part of their houses, the Massanutten builders constructed single- and two-room cellars employing techniques that protected large quantities of perishable food from changes in temperature. The cellars housed functions that were relegated to detached spring houses in the nineteenth century, and two Massanutten cellars, as well as a number of Pennsylvania examples, contain springs.<sup>26</sup> The primary insulation method involved construction of a rubble stone barrel vault rising from low walls (figs. 10, 11). These vaulted rooms, or *die Gewölbkeller*,<sup>27</sup> were provided with small vaulted and trabeated window openings that were tapered toward the exterior. Iron and wooden hooks embedded in the



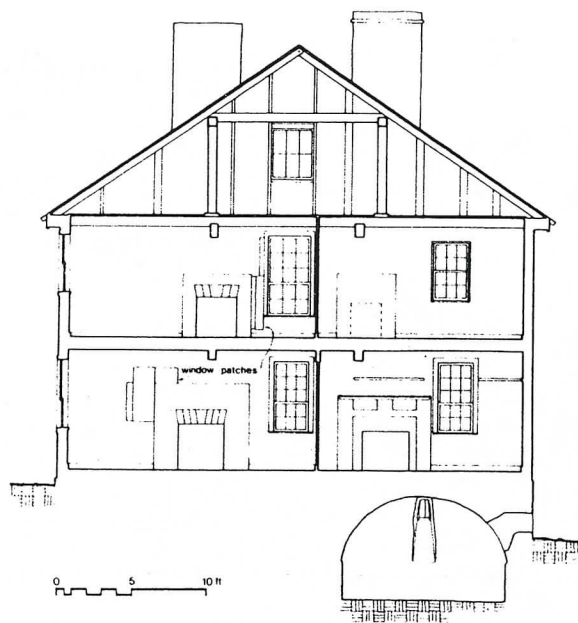


Figure 10. Section of Fort Rhodes.

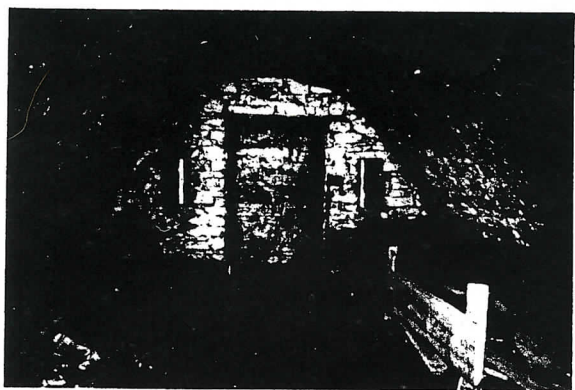


Figure 11. Cellar of Fort Paul Long.

vaults carried wooden poles for suspension of foods such as meat and cheese.<sup>28</sup> Surviving in two of the Massanutten houses is a second insulation method, which consists of straw and clay infilling between the cellar ceiling joists (fig. 12). The latter method is found in Germanic buildings north of the Shenandoah Valley, both confined to the cellar (for example, at the Alexander Schaeffer House at Schaefferstown and the Golden Plough Tavern at

York in Pennsylvania) and extended to insulate the upper floors (Ephrata Cloister in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania and the Schiefferstadt House in Frederick, Maryland). The walls of both cellar forms are pierced with small rectangular niches, which are locally called *pine holes*. The oral evidence that at least some of the niches were used to burn pine knots or other lighting material is supported by one example that has a flue (fig. 29), although it has been suggested that similar recesses in New England Anglo-American cellars were used for cooling.<sup>29</sup> Further, the cooling function is unlikely for two niches that are located in the chimney breasts of the upper floors (fig. 20a). In both Pennsylvania and the Shenandoah Valley, early houses have sometimes acquired the term *fort*, and present use of the prefix may have been encouraged by conjecture about the defensive functions of the vaulted cellars. Despite the improbability of this function, it is of interest that White House was referred to as a "Fort House" as early as 1827.<sup>30</sup>

Several patterns of cellar room disposition and entrance are evident in the Massanutten houses. With the exception of the Andrew Keyser House, all of the cellars have an exterior entrance. The larger houses originally had an additional internal entrance from the first floor. In two-room cellar plans, the external doorway provides entrance to the outer room and the inner room is given the strongest method of insulation, usually by means of a vault. Although it is assumed that both rooms were used for storage, a fireplace in the outer room at the Abraham Spitler House and underground access to a well from the lower of two vertically stacked cellars at Fort Philip Long suggest that those rooms were also the scenes of productive activities. Full-size windows in the cellars at Fort Philip Long and in the outer rooms at the Spitler House and Fort Stover further evidence their use as work rooms. The presence of a cooking fireplace in the outer cellar room at Fort Stover is an indication of changing functions within the *Flurküchenhaus* form, although Robert C. Bucher has interpreted cellar

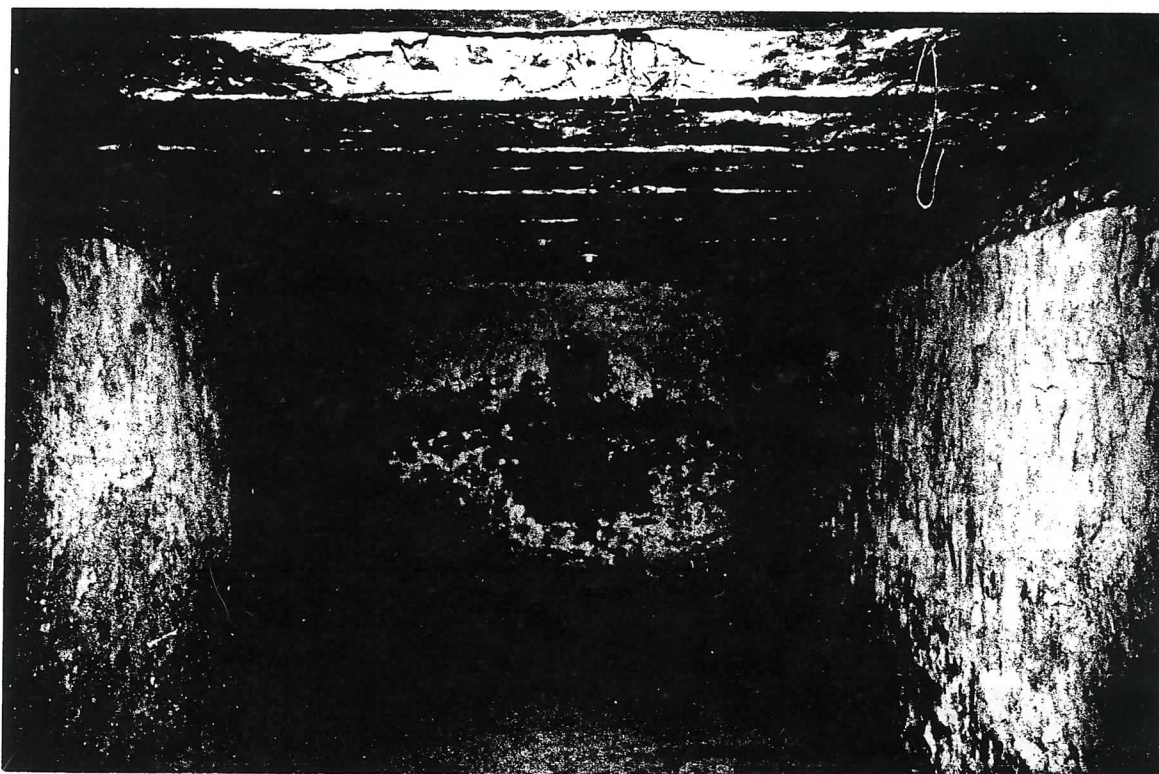


Figure 12. Outer cellar room of Fort Egypt.



Figure 13. Fort Philip Long.

kitchens in early Pennsylvania houses as survivals of a Swiss *Weinbauern* housing tradition.<sup>31</sup>

Most of the existing houses are sited so that the ground slopes downward at the rear and at one gable end, allowing external entrance to the cellar either at ground level or by way of a short flight of steps. This method of hillside siting, with relatively direct entrance into two floors, is a distinguishing feature of the Rhenish house in America. Multilevel dwellings and farm buildings that take advantage of sloping ground exist in Britain, but the form is seldom found in English-settled areas of Tidewater and Piedmont Virginia.<sup>32</sup> The occasional appearance of the siting choice in nineteenth-century Shenandoah Valley houses can be attributed to the persistence of a Germanic minority trait.<sup>33</sup>

The formal, structural, and functional characteristics of the Rhenish houses in the Massanutten group constitute a set of related traits, most of

which were rejected by the builders of similarly scaled houses in the nineteenth century. Structural characteristics include stone and log exterior walling and an honest expression of a diverse assortment of internal construction devices. Formally, the houses often utilize sloping topography to allow direct entrance to cellar and first-floor levels. The first-floors plans consist of two to four rooms grouped around an internal chimney, with an exterior entrance directly into the principal living room, without the mediation of a passage or lobby. The fenestration, like the off-center placement of the chimney, is asymmetrical. Productive and storage functions were contained within the body of the house. Cooking took place in the same room in which the family gathered, and the cellar is equipped with features intended to preserve the food stored there for the family's use. Despite variations, the surviving buildings form a coherent group that is recognizably distinct from the contemporary house forms of other ethnic groups in the region, and that is indicative of the separate nature of Germanic culture in eighteenth-century Virginia. The shared characteristics of the buildings represent an architectural vocabulary that was one aspect of a transported cultural heritage.

Members of the Germanic community, however, became increasingly susceptible to the acculturative pressures of the dominant ethnic group. Because of social and perhaps political aspirations, some wealthy Valley Germans were especially receptive to Anglo-American affectations. Klaus Wust has cited examples of families who in the eighteenth century sought to associate themselves with Anglo gentility by giving properly bucolic, English-sounding names to their estates and by sending their sons to English schools.<sup>34</sup> Jacob Stover even attempted to follow an English-speaking route to heaven by receiving Presbyterian baptism on his deathbed in 1741.<sup>35</sup>

Some of the buildings of the Massanutten group display significant deviations from the *Flurküchenhaus* model, changes that can be attributed to selective cultural assimilation, both aesthetic and functional. The amalgam of Rhenish and English forms does not follow a clear pattern of

development towards a formal Georgian model, and a number of disparate English forms can be discovered in different houses. The two surviving Long houses, for example, present a complex mixture of Rhenish and English building types of an equally informal nature.

The original first-floor plan at Fort Philip Long (fig. 14) consisted of two rooms of essentially *Flurküchenhaus* proportions, that is, a narrow *Küche* with wider *Stube* adjoining. Yet the chimneys are located on the gable walls, with the kitchen entrance beside the large cooking fireplace, following the form of some submedieval Western English and Welsh houses.<sup>36</sup> The large irregularly shaped kitchen chimney is placed off center on the gable end and the flue of a corner fireplace in the *Stube* rises through the wall to a small internal stack. Into this informal massing was introduced an unfamiliar form of symmetrical fenestration, with a single door near the center of the front wall giving entrance to the larger room, and three windows evenly spaced in the rear wall. At Fort Paul Long we find an English hall-parlor plan, with the cooking fireplace in the larger room (fig. 15b). There both chimneys are located on the interior of the gable walls, but no attempt has been made toward symmetrical fenestration. Both Long houses utilize sloping ground to provide access to cellars of distinctly Rhenish form.

Gable-end chimneys and multiple fireplaces were also employed in conjunction with the *Flurküchenhaus* plan at three larger, and probably

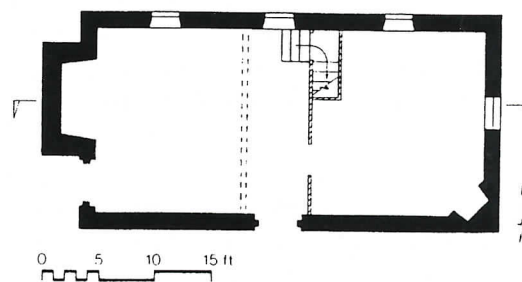


Figure 14. First-floor plan of Fort Philip Long.

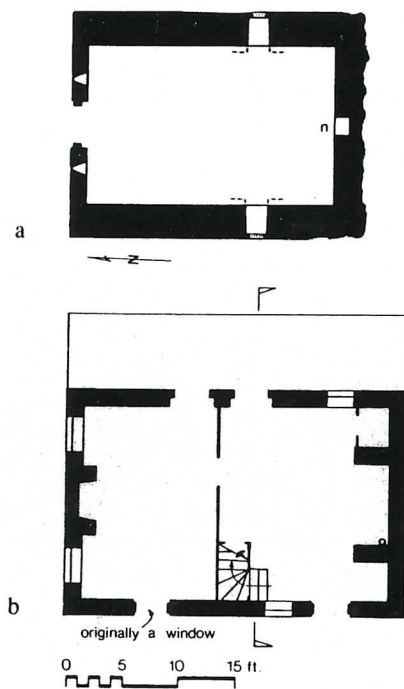


Figure 15. Cellar and first-floor plans of Fort Paul Long.

later, Massanutten houses: the Abraham Heiston House, Locust Grove, and Fort Stover. At the Heiston House the chimneys were simply an affec-tation of Anglo-American form grafted to a house that retained a two-bay fenestration and traditional interior spacial distribution and functions (fig. 16). But at Locust Grove and Fort Stover, the formal changes were more extensive, and in them we see a desire to present an external facade that more completely resembled the two-story Anglo-American hall-parlor or center-passage house. In both cases, the fenestration of the front wall is ordered in an approximation of symmetrical tripartite form, with windows flanking a doorway. The builders were still designing their houses in accordance with the spatial arrangements of the *Flurküchenhaus* model, how-ever, and rather than placing the front door at the center of the facade, they located it far to one side, so that it still provided entrance to the old *Küche* space (fig. 17). The tripartite fenestration was barely attempted on the rear wall of either house; there the

builders were content to utilize more or less tradi-tional patterns of openings.

Locust Grove no longer stands, and insufficient information survives to clearly determine its room uses. Fort Stover, however, exhibits a functional change that indicates that the effects of accultura-tion within the ethnic community were not confined to a new concern for visual order. That the living patterns within at least one of the familiar spaces had significantly changed is shown by the location of the cooking fireplace in the cellar rather than in the usual first-floor *Küche* location (fig. 18). The separation of food preparation from the primary liv-ing space of the house represents abandonment of an essential characteristic of the Rhenish house.

A parallel division of cooking and living spaces that occurred in the English-settled Chesapeake re-gion around the middle of the seventeenth century is considered by scholars to represent an attempt by house owners to separate themselves from the ac-tivities of indentured servants and slaves.<sup>37</sup> Al-though a desire for social division may in fact have been the primary impetus for the detached kitchen in the American South, the expulsion of cooking, with its attendant sounds and smells, conforms with the rationalizing concepts that reached the eigh-teenth-century American masses as what James Deetz and Henry Glassie call the Georgian world view and Norbert Elias calls an advance in the threshold of delicacy.<sup>38</sup> Whatever its initial stimulus, the suppressed kitchen became a feature common to the households of eastern Virginia slaveowners and non-slaveowners alike, and in the nineteenth century it was part of the regional cultural complex accepted by Germanic people in the Shenandoah Valley. The kitchen occupied a number of positions in relation to the ubiquitous nineteenth-century I-house, primarily at the end of the rear ell, in the basement, or in a detached building, but never within the main body of the house.

All of the Massanutten houses that continued to serve as dwellings in the nineteenth century were altered to accommodate Anglo-American room functions. The general pattern of alteration involved

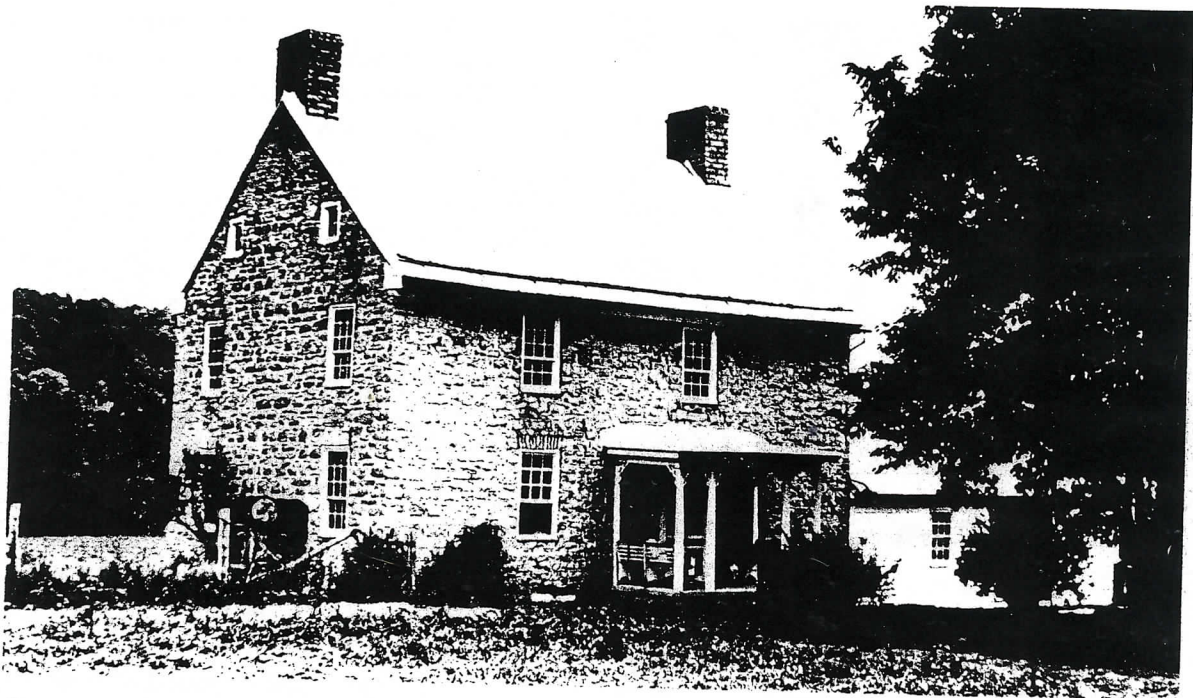


Figure 16. The Abraham Heiston House.

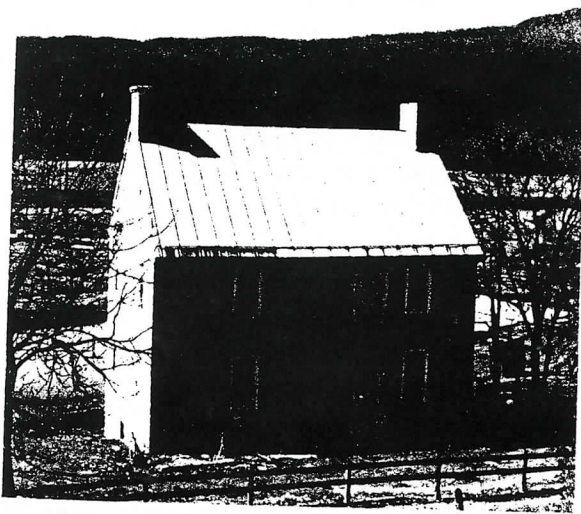


Figure 17. Fort Stover.

removal of the kitchen and provision of heating fireplaces for two rooms of comparable size, although plan changes were more drastic in some buildings than others (fig. 19). Late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century functions described by informants indicate that the two rooms were used as living room and parlor. At the Charles Keyser House, the larger room was reserved for the entertainment of guests, and it contained the best furniture in the house. The smaller room was used as both a bedroom and family gathering place. The functions of master bedroom and living room were commonly combined in the same first-floor space in nineteenth-century and later Piedmont Virginia houses, a combination that was also found at Fort Rhodes. At Fort Rhodes, the left rear room was utilized as a living room-chamber and the larger left front room was a parlor. In winter, the family living at Fort Rhodes ate in the former *Küche*, and in the summer in the detached kitchen. Alterations to first-floor partitions at the Abraham Heiston House resulted in two rooms of nearly equal size, both

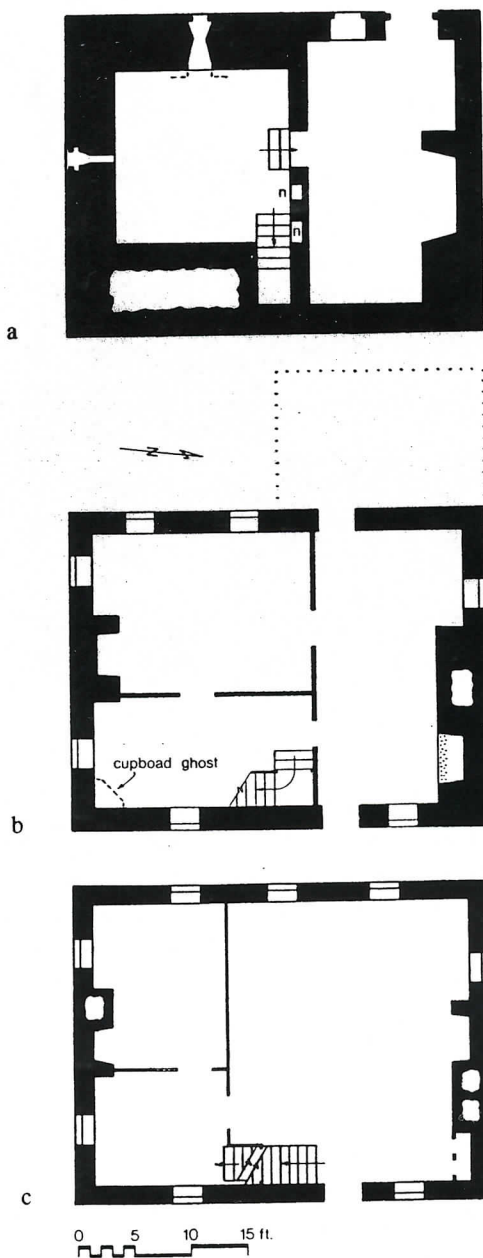


Figure 18. Cellar, first-, and second-floor plans of Fort Stover (From 1940 HABS plans.)

entered by way of a narrow lateral passage (fig. 20). The right-hand room, occupying part of the original *Küche*, was and still is used as a parlor, and the *Stube* space to the left was used as a living room. A warping frame socket in the ceiling indicates that at one time weaving was done in the living room of the Heiston House.

Henry Glassie has drawn a parallel between transformational linguistic models and artifact analysis that is helpful in understanding the process of change in ethnic cultures. According to Glassie, traditional builders call on conceptual models that provide direction for design.<sup>39</sup> The models consist of both a basic idea of what a house or other artifact should be, and a limited number of ways in which the artifact can be transformed. The builder performs mental operations using the obligatory and optional rules of the model to generate a specific form that fulfills individual need, resource, and fancy. As a result, buildings produced by the members of a culture share characteristics, but are not exactly alike. The transformational model is derived from experience, that is, abstracted from observation of examples. It follows that essential change or replacement of the model is an indication of some disruption in the culture. By studying the nature of model changes, both the forces at work and the systems of response can be approached.

Eighteenth-century German and Swiss immigrants to America established groups of individual farms located in socially related rural enclaves, a pattern that allowed the survival of a strong cultural identity. Germanic settlements presented a sufficiently cohesive ethnic front to be viewed by some English-speaking politicians as threats to the stability of the Anglo-American culture.<sup>40</sup> The continued relationship between families sharing, among other things, a common minority language, resulted in the retention of traditional conceptual models that might not have long survived in a more intensely heterogeneous environment, like those encountered by German immigrants in nineteenth-century American cities. The most prominent artifact model in the mental assemblage brought from

Figure 19. Cellar and first-floor plans of Fort Rhodes.

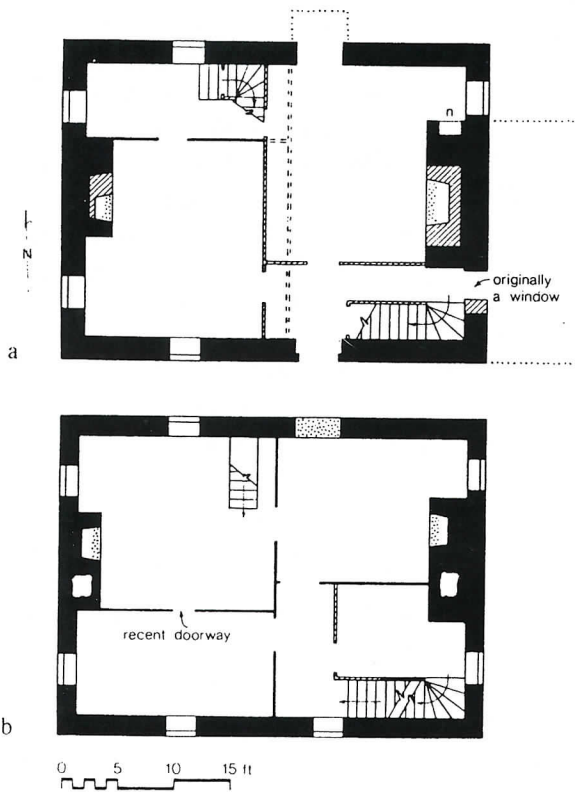
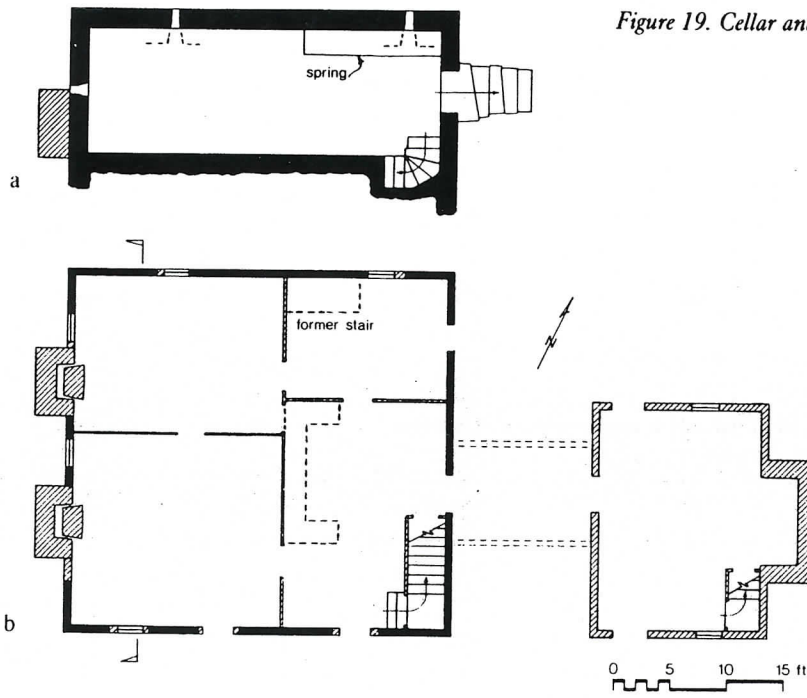


Figure 20. First- and second-floor plans of the Abraham Heiston House.

the Rhine Valley was the *Flurküchenhaus*, a house form with an unbalanced plan, asymmetrical fenestration, an off-center internal chimney, and a kitchen located on the first floor. Available evidence indicates that the *Flurküchenhaus* remained the primary model for German and Swiss houses built in America through most of the eighteenth century.

Contact between cultures and the observation of foreign artifacts allows the assimilation of new models, but as Dell Upton has pointed out, familiarity with new ideas does not necessitate their adoption.<sup>41</sup> The grafting to the *Flurküchenhaus* of some Anglo-American building features, such as simple common-rafter roofs, gable chimneys, and rooms heated with fireplaces rather than with stoves, can be viewed as similar to the use of various stylistic details on vernacular buildings. Although these features represent the acceptance of some parts of a foreign building model, they do not signal a shift in functions within the old house form. The same might be said regarding the quasi-symmetrical ordering of window openings, but where this stylish affectation is found in the Massanutten group, at Fort Stover, a significant functional change has also occurred: the cooking fireplace has been moved from the main floor of the house. This shift in functions suggests that the traditional conceptual model of family activities within the familiar plan has changed, and the occupants have accepted aspects of the domestic patterns of their Anglo-American neighbors.

Soon after 1800, the *Flurküchenhaus* was entirely abandoned for new construction in the Shenandoah Valley, and thereafter moderately successful German and Swiss farmers there would normally build their houses according to the Anglo-American I-house model. Characterized by symmetrical elevations and a balanced plan with rooms of near-equal size flanking an entrance passage, the I-house represented a radical formal change.

More importantly, use of the new form enforced and was engendered by essential functional changes. Similarities exist in the functions of the most prominent rooms in both forms: the *Küche* and *Stube* in the *Flurküchenhaus* and the hall and parlor

in the I-house. Unlike the *Küche*, however, the hall is entered only by way of a passage, an intermediate space with psychological and especially proxemic implications that have been discussed by Glassie.<sup>42</sup> Appendages to the I-house further provided for a division of functions that was unknown in the Rhenish house. People most often ate in a room in an ell, and the kitchen was located either in the rear of the ell or in another position distant from the family's living space. In addition, storage and farm-related activities that had once been housed in the attic and cellar were dispersed to detached buildings.

The abandonment of the traditional Rhenish house model and a roughly concurrent replacement of the standard German language are conspicuous indicators of a breakdown in the separate identity of Germanic culture in the Shenandoah Valley. It is because of the highly symbolic nature of the two complex models, however, that they should not be interpreted as signaling the demise of all ethnic distinctions. Rather, the most visible minority distinctions are often the first to fall to the pressure of a dominant group. Although German inscriptions are seldom found on gravestones south of Pennsylvania after about 1800, Germanic motifs continued to be utilized to embellish the stones through the first half of the nineteenth century, and a related decorative aesthetic remains visible in the distinctive interior woodwork of Valley houses from around 1800 to 1840.<sup>43</sup> English inscriptions were combined with old design formulas in *Fraktur* in the early nineteenth century, and the painted decoration of barns remains a prominent feature of the Valley landscape. Dialects survived as a means of communication between close friends into the twentieth century, and distinctions between cultural backgrounds is still a part of the social consciousness of the region.<sup>44</sup>

Beginning in the eighteenth century, Germanic people in America experienced pressure to conform to the culture of the dominant Anglo-American group. That Germanic culture survived as a distinct entity through the century is indicated by the re-



gional sample provided by the Massanutten houses. When acculturation took place, it was not a rapid process that erased all levels of ethnic distinction. Families that first accepted features of eastern Virginia living patterns did so within a familiar building form, although the exterior of the house might resemble an Anglo-American house. The traditional house model, like the German language, was finally replaced because it represented a conspicuous symbol of ethnic division. Other less visible, culturally derived, and ethnically distinct models remained in use.

### Partial Catalog

#### FORT EGYPT

The least altered as well as most complex internal-chimney Rhenish house in Page County is Fort Egypt (fig. 4), located at the middle of a large tract of arable land in a bend of the South Fork of the Shenandoah River, opposite the mouth of Mill Creek. Harry Strickler relates the tradition that Fort Egypt was built by Jacob Strickler, son of Abram, a first generation Swiss immigrant.<sup>45</sup> The nearly square 36' × 32'2" house is constructed of logs averaging 9" × 1'4" in section, with narrow interstices and dovetail corner notching. Except for the principal facade, the house is now covered with asbestos siding. A nineteenth-century deck-on-hip roof replaces the original gable roof, and the line of the higher old roof ridge is visible on the stone chimney shaft. In the 1940s, a shed-roofed room was added to the east side of the house, in the location of a destroyed nineteenth-century gable-roofed addition.

The first-floor plan (fig. 3b) consists of four rooms disposed around a central chimney, with the front door giving access to the *Küche* to the right. The chimney is brought forward of center, allowing the rear of the *Küche* to be partitioned as another room. The space to the left of the chimney is divided into an 18'3"-square *Stube* and an 11'10"-deep rear *Kammer*, with the partition wall attached to the

rear summer beam. An 8'10"-wide cooking fireplace in the *Küche* is now open, although it had been enclosed to form a smaller heating fireplace when the house was recorded by the Historic American Buildings Survey in 1940.<sup>46</sup> The room to the rear of the kitchen is served by a small fireplace that is apparently original, but a roughly finished interior and flue indicate that the *Stube* fireplace is a later insertion. Enclosed stairs rise from both the right front corner of the *Küche* and the right rear corner of the *Kammer*.

A similar four-room plan is found on the second floor, although the partition between the rear rooms has been moved to the right of the stair (fig. 3c). Conspicuous evidence for an original heating stove is found at the front of the chimney stack, where a small recessed fireplace with a raised hearth faces the room over the *Küche*. In the rear of the fireplace is a 1'5" × 1'4" opening through which coals could be pushed into a five-plate stove. The opening has been partly blocked, and there are no further indications of the stove's form. The diminutive size of the fireplace suggests that it, like a fireplace in the second-floor passage of the Schiefferstadt House in Frederick, Maryland, was principally intended to provide fuel for the stove rather than to directly heat the room in which it is located.

Recently, whitewash coating has been stripped from the interior surface of the log walls, providing clearer evidence of early fenestration. Log patches indicate that although the original fenestration of the front and rear walls was similar to that of the present nineteenth-century arrangement, the previous windows were horizontal openings measuring approximately 3' × 2'. The same change in window form is visible at Fort Rhodes, and comparable horizontal openings survive in the log Adam Miller House at Elkton in Rockingham County. Despite the large proportions of the Fort Egypt plan, the house retained a conservative two-bay fenestration, with a single door and window piercing the first-floor facade.

Following the precedent of framing in Pennsylvania Rhenish houses,<sup>47</sup> exposed second-floor and attic joists rest on top of pairs of summer beams

extending from the gable walls to the chimney. The edges of both the summer and joists have beveled chamfers. The forward summer on the first floor has been removed, perhaps to facilitate addition of a board ceiling that remains in the *Stube* and *Kammer*, but chamfer stops on the exposed *Küche* joists indicate its original location. The form of interior partitions varies at Fort Egypt. On both first and second floors, the short partition abutting the chimney and separating the front rooms is a frame wall with exposed posts. The partition between the first-floor rear rooms (figs. 5a, and 6) is constructed of vertical boards with 3" battens enriched with fillets and flattened cymas. All other partitions are of vertical tongue-and-groove beaded boards (fig. 5c). Early doors in the cellar and upper floors are constructed of vertical boards and horizontal battens, and are hung on HL and curvilinear strap hinges. As in other Shenandoah Valley Rhenish houses, latches at Fort Egypt are of a decorative quality that relates them to Germanic latches elsewhere, but they are considerably less rich than the most flamboyant Pennsylvania examples.

Although the original roof was removed in the nineteenth century, a pair of mortices in the top of a joist and corresponding holes in the early attic flooring to the west of the chimney indicate that the house previously had a triple-truss roof frame like that surviving at the Spittler House.

The cellar consists of two rooms (fig. 3a), each incorporating Pennsylvania-German methods for insulating storage space. A 32'4" x 9'11" room (fig. 12) at the rear runs the length of the building and is entered through double doors in the east gable wall, and by a recent flight of steps descending from the room behind the *Küche* through an original opening in the ceiling framing. In constructing this room its builders utilized a ceiling form, paralleled at a large number of Rhenish houses in Pennsylvania and at the Abram Strickler House in Page County, that helped provide a constant cellar temperature by insulating the space between the joists. The sides of the 6" x 8" joists are slotted to receive wooden slats wrapped with straw and clay, and the surface is plastered and whitewashed, with the lower faces of

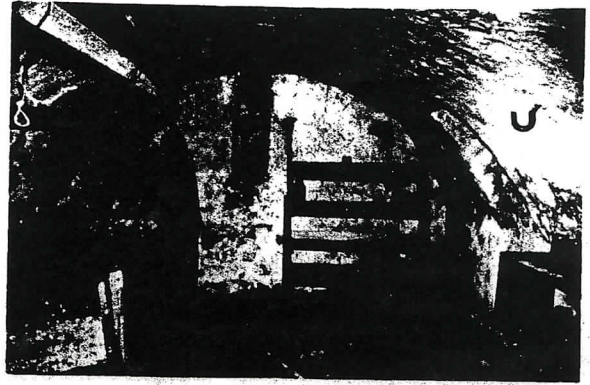


Figure 21. Inner cellar room of Fort Egypt.

the joists left exposed. The room is lighted by unglazed windows cut directly through the exterior walls. Toward the end of this long room is a door to an inner cellar room, which is ceiled with a stone barrel vault and is without exterior entrance (fig. 21). Light shafts taper upward from wide openings in the vault to narrow slots in the exterior wall, and several niches pierce the stone partition wall. Embedded in the vault are iron and wooden hooks for suspension of poles. Until the floor was recently covered with a concrete slab, this room is reported to have had an open spring in the southwest corner. Like the other room, the vaulted room is plastered and whitewashed. The land drops away to the rear of the house, so that the outer room is at ground level and the vaulted room is more than half below grade.

#### FORT RHODES

Closely related to the form of Fort Egypt is Fort Rhodes (fig. 22), located four miles downstream on the west side of the South Fork of the Shenandoah River. Believed to have been built after the house of Mennonite Minister John Rhodes or (Rodes) at this site was burned by Indians in 1764,<sup>48</sup> the large two-story *Flurküchenhaus* was more radically altered in the mid nineteenth century, but it retains details and evidence of a plan similar to Fort Egypt. The 34'9"

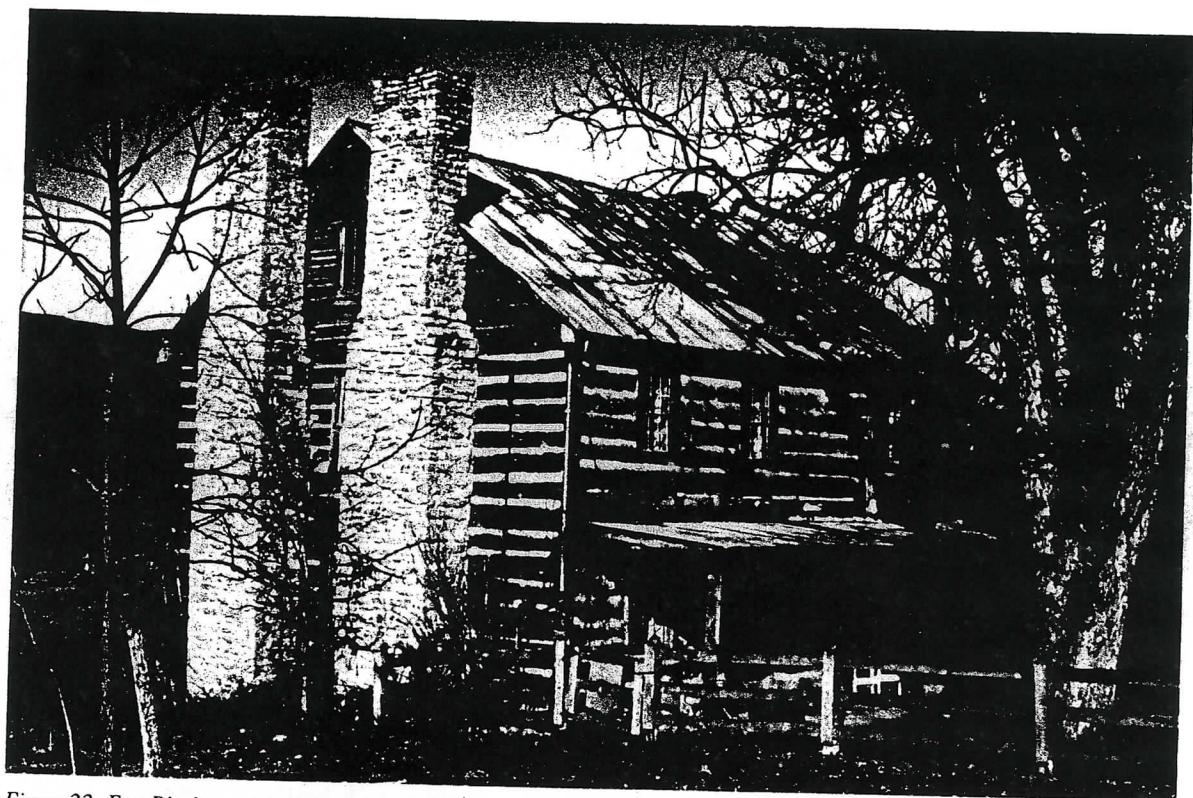


Figure 22. Fort Rhodes.

× 32'3" house has been stripped of its exterior weatherboarding to reveal log walls with dovetail corner notching and chinked interstices. Nineteenth-century alterations intended to remove cooking activities to a detached kitchen building involved the demolition of a large interior chimney, the construction of stone exterior chimneys on the northwest gable wall, and the alteration of the second-floor plan. Interruption of the first-floor ceiling framing indicates the location of the original chimney and cooking fireplace, which served a right-hand *Küche* (fig. 19b). As at Fort Egypt, the rear of the *Küche* is now partitioned to form a fourth room. The partition between the left-hand rooms is constructed of vertical bevel-edged sheathing set between boards with quarter-round molded edges. An original door in this wall is constructed of vertical boards held together with dovetailed tapering horizontal battens, and is hung on IHL hinges. Although other first-floor partitions, of flat vertical

boards with beaded edges, may be nineteenth-century replacements of eighteenth-century fabric, it is uncertain whether or not the partition between the *Stube* and *Kammer* was moved forward in order to equalize the size of the left-hand rooms.

A patch in the second-story floorboards indicates that a stair rising from one of the two rear rooms was the predecessor of the nineteenth-century stair that now is located on the front wall of the *Küche*. Patches in the log walls demonstrate that the rooms at Fort Rhodes were lighted by horizontal openings like those at Fort Egypt. Evidence appears for two early first-floor windows in both the southwest gable and rear walls, and a single first-floor window in the facade. Front doors entering the *Küche* and *Stube* appear to replace shorter and wider early doors in the same locations.

Representing a slight variation from the framing method used at Forts Egypt and Stover, joists are

joined to pairs of summer beams with 3" slots rather than resting entirely on top of the summers (fig. 10). Both summers and joists are cut with a rough chamfer. The ceiling framing remains exposed on the second floor, but first-floor *Stube* and *Kammer* joists were covered with sheathing in the nineteenth century. Roof framing, which has been reworked using early members, consists of common rafters supported by a pair of purlins and collars seated on vertical posts. The rafters are lapped and pegged at the ridge, and at the eaves they rest on a thin board plate set into the joists. The light framing of the gable visible in figure 10 dates from the twentieth century.

The single-room cellar plan at Fort Rhodes (fig. 19a) is similar to the outer room at Fort Egypt. The 31'6" × 10'10" room is located at the rear of the house, where the land slopes downward, and is ceiled with a vault pierced by two window openings. A third window, in the southeast end wall, is partly covered by a nineteenth-century chimney. Entry to the cellar is through an exterior door in the northeast wall, and a blocked series of stone steps beside the door show that originally there was also interior access from the *Küche*. A spring flows from the north corner of the room out through a hole in the rear wall, and an opening in the vault above once allowed water to be drawn up to the first floor.

The ruinous nineteenth-century kitchen is a one-and-a-half story building with gable walls longer than the facade. The walls are constructed of V-notched logs that are smaller and less carefully finished than those of the log Rhenish houses in Page County. Seams in the exterior walls of both buildings indicate that the kitchen was previously attached to the house by an enclosed frame passageway.

#### ABRAM STRICKLER HOUSE

Located on a knoll that commands a view of the South Fork of the Shenandoah River and White House to the north is the Abram Strickler House, a two-story log building of *Flurküchenhaus* form (fig. 23). Although the exterior is now covered with as-

bestos siding and the sash and chimney stack are replacements, the house retains its original two-bay facade fenestration and clear evidence of a three-room first-floor plan (fig. 1). The Strickler House measures 25' × 35'11", with a 16'7"-wide *Küche* located to the right. Presently partitioned into two rooms, the *Küche* is entered by opposed front and rear doors, and was served by a cooking fireplace that is now sealed. To the left is a single large room that plaster seams indicate was once divided into a roughly square *Stube* and narrow *Kammer*. A stair rises to the second floor from the rear of this room, with steps below it descending from the *Küche* to the cellar. The second-floor room arrangement is modern, and the alterations obscure evidence of the original plan.

Notable surviving details are the two exterior doors, with six raised panels on the exterior surface and horizontal sheathing on the interior, hung on tapering iron strap hinges with decorative ends. The combination of interior board sheathing and exterior panels is a method of door construction found in early buildings in New England and the Chesapeake region, but while it does not commonly appear in later eighteenth-century Anglo-American buildings on the East Coast, it was retained as a standard feature of both Pennsylvania and Virginia Rhenish houses throughout the century.

Floor joists are covered by later plaster ceilings, but those visible from the attic are cut with beveled chamfers and whitewashed. In the roof, common rafters are joined by pinned open-face mortices at the ridge and are stabilized with lap-jointed collars and 1½" × 6" diagonal braces set into their upper surfaces at both gable ends.

The ground floor below the north end of the Strickler House provides another variation on the two-room cellar concept found at the Abraham Spitzer House and Forts Egypt and Stover. As in those houses, the desire for a storage space buffered from temperature change led the builder to construct two cellar rooms, the smaller inner room provided with a more heavily insulated ceiling and entered only by an interior door from the outer

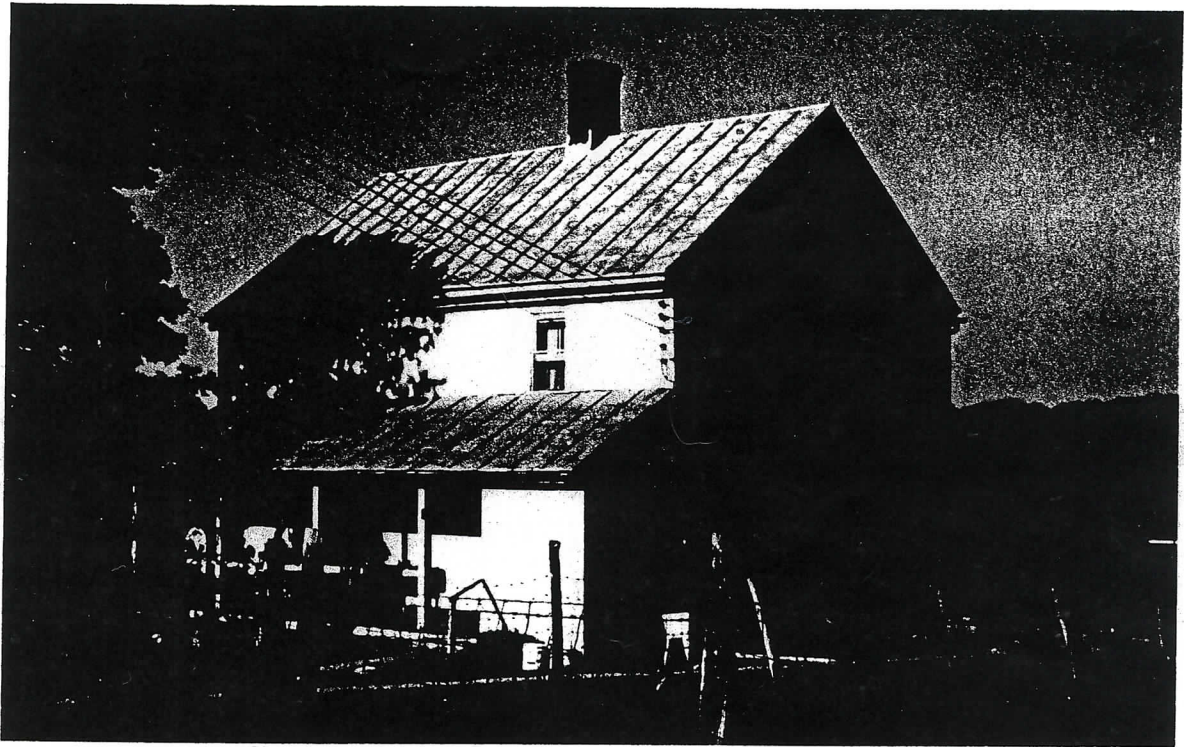


Figure 23. The Abram Strickler House.

room. The outer room, measuring 20'7" × 12'6", is entered by enclosed stairs from the *Küche* and an exterior doorway in the rear wall, and is lighted by windows in the rear and north gable walls. It is ceiled with exposed floorboards and log joists hewn only on the upper and lower surfaces. Rather than being vaulted, the 15'10" × 7'10" inner room is provided with an insulated joist ceiling similar to that in the outer cellar room at Fort Egypt. In this case, however, the joists are not structural, but rather are seated below the log joists, on a summer beam just within the larger room and on board sills set into the front exterior wall and atop the interior stone partition. Wooden slats wrapped with straw and clay are inserted in triangular grooves in the sides of the 5" × 7½" lower joists, and the interstices are plastered and whitewashed. The house is sited at the edge of a knoll, with the land sloping

away to the rear, so the placement of the inner room at the front of the house further buffered its contents from external elements.

#### ANDREW KEYSER HOUSE

The Andrew Keyser House (fig. 24), survived as a largely intact small three-room plan *Flurküchenhaus* until it was regrettably demolished about 1967. Believed built around 1765 by a first-generation German immigrant, the house was sited on level ground at the edge of a terrace above arable land on the South Fork of the Shenandoah River opposite the mouth of Hawksbill Creek. As with Forts Paul Long and Philip Long, the small size of the Keyser House may have been a major factor in the decision to replace it with a larger house in the nineteenth century. The result of the construction of a new frame I-house at midcentury and the loss of the old building's status as the primary dwelling on the property

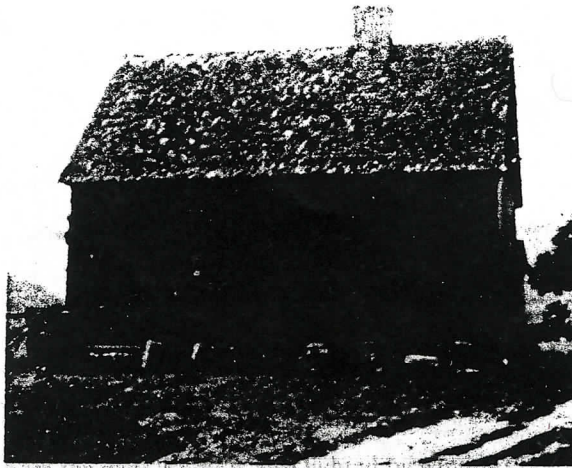


Figure 24. The Andrew Keyser House. (From the W.P.A. Collection, Virginia State Library.)

was the preservation of its original internal spatial arrangement and the retention of the first-floor *Küche* as a room used for cooking.

Photographs show that the house was a story-and-a-half two-bay log structure with dovetail corner notching and narrow interstices. Parts of the foundations remain exposed, and with the owner's description, allow a reconstruction of the first floor plan (fig. 25). Front and rear doors gave access to a narrow *Küche* provided with an eight-foot wide cooking fireplace. An enclosed stair rose to the upper half story from the right corner of the windowless *Küche*, and in the opposite corner a stair descended to the cellar, which survives. The house was divided axially by a board partition in front of the chimney and a masonry wall to the rear. Another board partition separated the roughly square *Stube* from a narrow *Kammer*, each lighted by a single window. The *Stube* was heated by a fireplace in the center chimney, but whether or not the fireplace was a later insertion is unknown. Second-floor joists and the interior surface of the log walls were exposed and whitewashed.

The upper half story was partitioned into three rooms, a room over the *Küche* with no windows and two southern rooms of near-equal size, each lighted by a single window in the gable wall. Second-floor

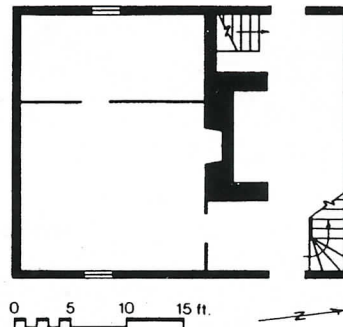


Figure 25. Restored first-floor plan of the Andrew Keyser House.

ceilings and end walls were finished with board sheathing.

A 17'2" × 12'2" cellar below the northwest corner of the house was entered only by a flight of interior steps passing under the exposed end of the vault. Window openings pierce the south end wall and the west side of the vault, and a small niche is located in the south wall.

#### CHARLES KEYSER HOUSE

On the same terrace a quarter of a mile west of the Andrew Keyser House is located the Charles Keyser House, a narrowly-proportioned story-and-a-half Rhenish house with an internal stone chimney. Its walls are constructed of log with dovetail corner notching and, except for the weatherboarded rear, are whitewashed on the exterior and interior. Although the building has been extended to accommodate a change in room use, the original two-room *Flurküchenhaus* plan (fig. 26) has remained unchanged. A partition wall located at the rear of the *Küche* fireplace divides the house into almost equal halves. There is no visible evidence that the *Stube* was partitioned, and space used solely for sleeping was probably confined to the upper half story. An uncommon feature of the *Stube* is its gable exterior entrance.

As at the Andrew Keyser House, only single windows pierce the front and rear walls of the *Stube*,

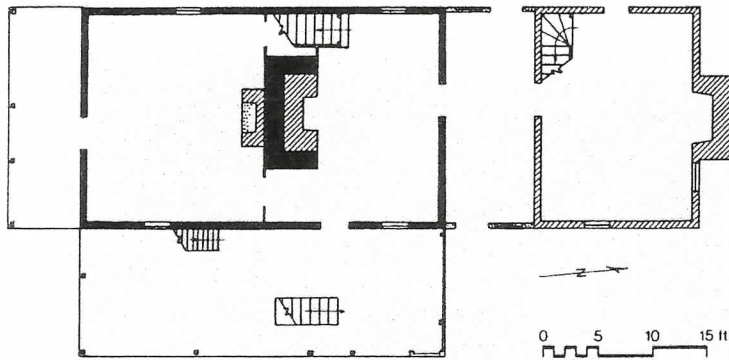


Figure 26. First-floor plan of the Charles Keyser House.

but here the wide *Küche* is also lighted by windows in both long walls. Breaking with the precedent of small window openings at the Andrew Keyser House and Forts Egypt and Rhodes, and perhaps supplying an indication of a later date, first floor windows have six-over-six sash and frames with cyma-molded architrave trim. The *Stube* ceiling received a platerboard covering in the twentieth century, but previously its whitewashed joists were exposed like those of the *Küche* and northern addition.

The second floor is partitioned by board walls into two rooms flanking the chimney and a small lobby containing the stair from the *Küche*. Neither second-floor room has a fireplace. The roof framing, covered by horizontal boards on the interior, consists of common rafters resting on log plates that project from the gable ends. Splayed eaves indicate that wedges were inserted above the ends of the rafters, as at the Abraham Spidler House and Fort Stover.

A 14'7" × 10' vaulted cellar is located below the south end of the porch, and is reached by stone steps descending from a trap door in the porch floor. The cellar room is lighted by a window in the south end wall. Reached by an open ladder stair with beaded stringers, space in the pent above the porch was probably used originally, as it is today, for storage.

Early in the nineteenth century, the Keyser

House was altered and enlarged in order to remove cooking activities from the main block, and to provide heating fireplaces for the original first-floor rooms. A weatherboarded log kitchen with 15'2" × 20'4" dimensions similar to those of the nineteenth-century Rhodes kitchen was built eight feet north of the *Küche*, and the old kitchen fireplace was reduced in size. The two buildings were later connected by a frame hyphen. Stonework was also added to the rear of the chimney to provide a fireplace for the *Stube*. It was probably during this renovation that dormers were added to the old roof, supplying light for the north attic room, which may have previously been lighted by a gable window.

#### FORT PAUL LONG

Several Massanutten houses combine the *Flurküchenhaus* model with features of the Anglo-American hall-parlor house. Two single-story stone houses that are built into hillsides and have Rhenish cellar forms and first-floor kitchens are provided with chimneys on the gable ends and have rooms heated with fireplaces rather than stoves.

The smaller of the two houses (fig. 27) is locally believed to have been built by Paul Long, or Lung, in the second quarter of the eighteenth century, although a third or fourth quarter date is perhaps more likely.<sup>49</sup> It is located at the edge of the first ridge rising from a wide expanse of bottom land on the northwest side of the South Fork of the Shen-



Figure 27. Rear view of Fort Paul Long.

andoah River two miles above the mouth of Masanuttun Run, also called Big Run. The 30'3" × 20' house is sited with gable ends facing the slope, allowing direct entrances to the *Küche* through the front wall and to the vaulted cellar in the downhill gable end. Two rear first-floor doors are reached by means of a porch supported by floor joists that cantilever beyond the wall. Wall construction is of coursed limestone rubble. Except at the cellar door, which is spanned by a flat arch of cut voussoirs, the weight above openings is carried by window and door frames and internal lintels. Chimneys project on the interior of both gable walls, each serving a single first-floor fireplace.

The plan (fig. 15b) consists of two rooms divided by a vertical-board partition. The larger room, entered by the original front doorway, contains a 7'-wide cooking fireplace and an enclosed stair to the

attic, and the smaller room is served by a small heating fireplace. Joists are now covered with plaster, and aside from rear batten doors with strap hinges hung on pintles, no early interior trim survives. Because the house was replaced as the primary dwelling on the farm by a larger house early in the nineteenth century, however, the *Küche* fireplace was never altered, and iron sockets for a cooking crane remain exposed in its right rear corner. Conforming to a practice found elsewhere in the Shenandoah Valley, the attic joists are seated on thin boards set flush with the exterior surface of the walls, and spaces between the joists are filled with stone. The original roof structure was removed and the walls were raised with wood in the late nineteenth century.

A single cellar room occupies most of the space below the first floor (fig. 15a). The surface of its asymmetrical elliptical vault is unplastered, and



seams formed by the centering boards used in its construction remain visible. The cellar is lighted by tapered slots flanking the doorway and by shafts that rise to square openings in the long walls (fig. 28). The western opening retains its original frame with diagonally set, square vertical bars and a solid wooden shutter hung with strap hinges. A breach in the west wall allows examination of the relationship between the first-floor joists and the rough top surface of the vault. Adzed only on their upper and lower surfaces, the joists were undercut at the center in order to clear the top of the vault.

#### FORT PHILIP LONG

Related in form to Fort Paul Long is Fort Philip Long (fig. 13), located two miles upstream on the east side of the river. It is a 37'7" × 19'4" stone structure that, like Paul Long, has a two-room plan with end chimneys and is built with gable walls facing up a hillside. Details of the form vary considerably from the other Long house, however. The fenestration of Fort Philip Long is more regular, with a single doorway near the center of the facade and three evenly spaced windows in the first floor of the rear wall. A large asymmetrical chimney is located off-center of the exterior of the uphill gable, and a small interior chimney stack protrudes from the roof at the opposite end. Wall openings are spanned with thin wooden lintels, a rare feature in Virginia Germanic houses.

The plan was altered early in the present century, but ghosts of an old interior wall and a stair patch in the attic floor illustrate that it previously consisted of two rooms, the smaller of which was a *Küche*, with a cooking fireplace and exterior door on the east gable wall and a single window in the south wall (fig. 14). The attic stair appears to have risen from this room. Breaking with *Flurküchenhaus* tradition, the front door enters the larger room, which was heated by a corner fireplace and lighted by three windows. Pintles in the original frames indicate that the doorway to the *Küche* was hung with a

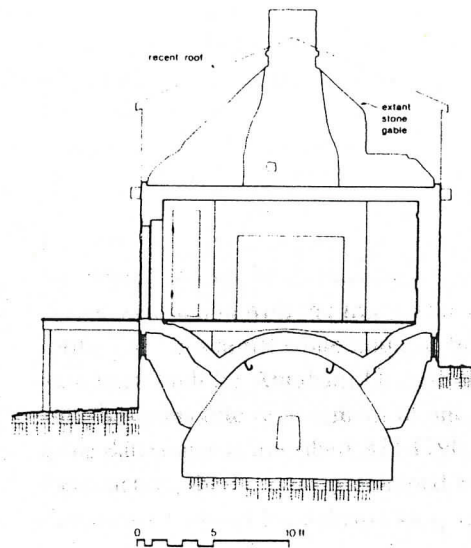


Figure 28. Section of Fort Paul Long.

pair of Dutch doors and the front door was a single piece. Nailed to the cooking fireplace lintel is an early shelf supported by a heavy classical cornice consisting of cyma and ovolo moldings separated by a fillet. A plaster ceiling now covers the joists, which have chamfered edges. As at the Andrew Keyser House and Fort Paul Long, this house was replaced by a larger dwelling in the nineteenth century, and as a result its fireplace arrangement has not been altered.

Recently stripped of its modern interior sheathing, the roof structure consists of common rafters morticed and pinned together at the ridge and to the ends of the joists below. Following a common Pennsylvania and Shenandoah Valley practice, the end rafters are seated on pairs of short timbers exposed on the exterior of the gable walls. There were originally no collars, and the attic was unfinished until the twentieth century, when two dormers were added. Previously the space was lighted only by a window in the east gable and a tiny opening in the west gable.

A distinctive feature of this extraordinary house is its cellar arrangement, which consists of two rooms, one beneath the other, the lower of which has un-

derground access to a well through a 44' tunnel (fig. 29). The upper room is entered by a door in the south long wall, and is lighted by horizontal rectangular windows that are reminiscent of the early openings at Forts Egypt and Rhodes. Unique within the Page County group, a niche or pine hole in the west wall has a small flue that winds upward through the wall to the chimney above. The lower room is entered by a gable-end doorway flanked by horizontal windows with diagonally placed, vertical wooden bars. The present ceiling framing in this room is said to have replaced a system of close-set joists with mud and straw in-fill. A low door in the rear wall opens into a 3'6" to 5'-tall tunnel cut through the hillside to an opening in the river-cobble lining of a well dug from the surface. There is no evidence of stairs for interior circulation between the cellar rooms and the main floor, so an activity requiring relatively easy access to water is indicated for the lower room.

#### ABRAHAM HEISTON HOUSE

Three two-story Page County houses of the scale of Forts Egypt and Rhodes combined distinct remnants of the *Flurküchenhaus* plan with internal gable end chimneys. Of the two that survive, the Abraham Heiston House (fig. 16) west of Bixler Bridge on the South Fork of the Shenandoah River retains the closest association with the traditional Germanic form. The substantial stone house is believed to have been built for Abraham Heiston in 1790, and a modern concrete replacement of one of two lost gable datestones is inscribed AH 1790. Soon after construction, the house was obtained by wealthy slaveowner Colonel Daniel Strickler, and it has since remained in the Strickler family. Morris Strickler, the present owner, states the tradition that both Heiston's and Strickler's families were Swiss immigrants who moved to the Shenandoah Valley after first settling in Pennsylvania.

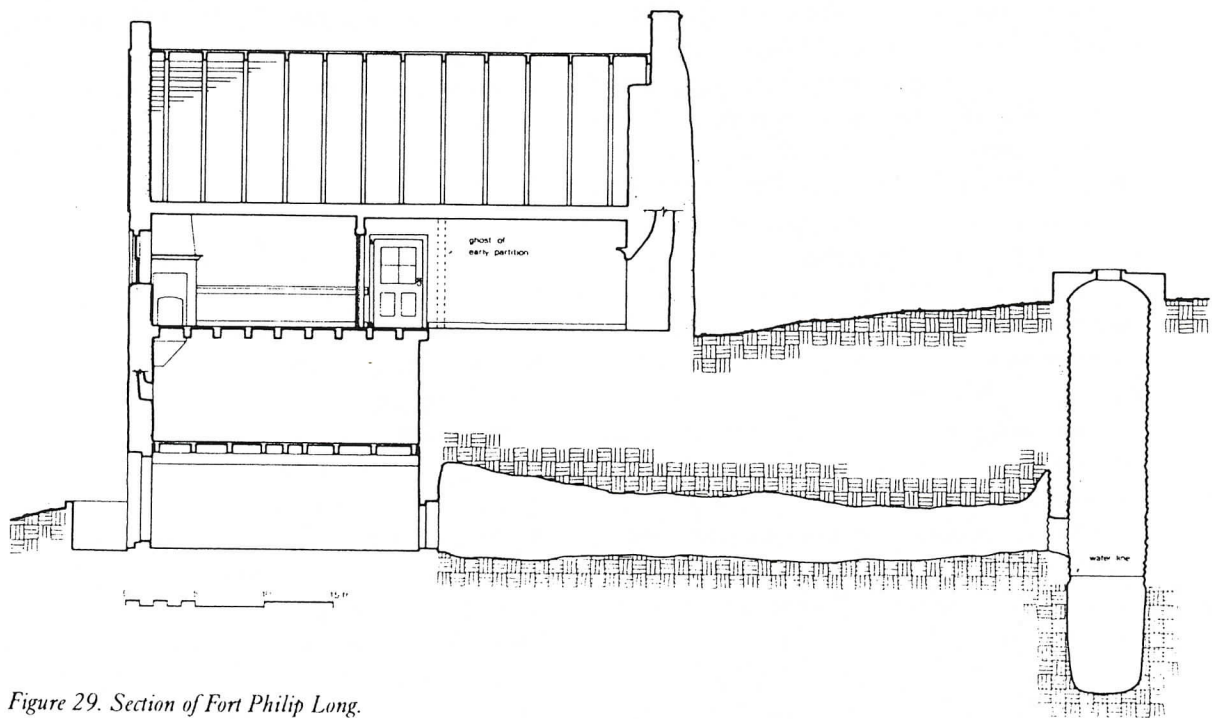


Figure 29. Section of Fort Philip Long.

The house is constructed of coursed rubble limestone with a facade of randomly alternative long and short squared blocks. Both front and rear elevations have a two-bay fenestration, with doorways located to the right. An apparently original doorway, now blocked, once served a second-story rear porch whose marks are visible across the rear wall.

The first floor was altered early in the nineteenth century, but there is evidence that the original plan consisted of three rooms following the *Küche*, *Stube*, *Kammer* pattern (fig. 20a). The present vertical-board axial partition appears to be original fabric and seams in the masonry walls indicate it was moved two feet to the left. Originally entered by opposed front and rear doors and not partitioned, the right-hand room served as a *Küche*, with an approximately seven-foot-wide cooking fireplace. The present stair in the front right corner of this room is a successor to an earlier stair that occupied the same location. A reused early post-and-panel door with molded frame serves a closet below the stair, and a lateral vertical-board partition dividing the space to the left of the *Küche* appears to be original. Before being shortened in the alteration, the partition separated a wider heated *Stube* and unheated *Kammer*. Masonry walls in the *Stube* retain the lower part of a plate shelf that extended around two sides of the fireplace breast. During the present owner's childhood, the small room was used as a bedroom for the oldest member of the family.

Dating from the alteration, a stair in the rear room rises between floor joists that, like the summer beam on which they rest, are molded with a bead below a thin cyma. Joists in the two larger first-floor rooms are covered with board sheathing, and the joists in the *Kammer* and second-floor rooms were covered at a later time. The interior first-floor batten doors date from the nineteenth century, but the front door, constructed of vertical boards with tapered battens and hung with three strap hinges on pintles, is original.

The four-room second-floor plan (fig. 20b) remains intact, with vertical board partitions hung with six-panel doors. The larger rear rooms are

provided with fireplaces, and an original stair winds up to the attic from the corner of the front right room. Family tradition identifies the smaller left-hand room as "the strangers' room," and previously its only access was from the room in which the stair rises.

The roof is constructed of common rafters with lapped half-dovetailed collars. The rafters are open face morticed and pinned together at the ridge, and morticed and pinned to the joists below.

A 10'11" × 24' vaulted cellar beneath the *Küche* space is now entered at the south end through stairs descending from the addition. A five-foot-wide opening in the vault at the southern end of the cellar and patterns in the whitewash of the end wall indicate that interior entrance was previously by way of steps below those at the front right corner of the *Küche*. In addition, there was a 4'10"-wide bulkhead entrance in the rear wall, now blocked and provided with a window. The angle of the vault is unusually low, a factor that combined with an adventurously wide window arch in the eastern wall to cause a fault that has been remedied by timber shoring. The single south window opening has a square aperture similar to that at Fort Paul Long.

#### FORT STOVER

Fort Stover provides a pivotal example illustrating the change from the traditional concepts that directed Rhenish house building in eighteenth-century America to the popular ideas that affected both later building in the Shenandoah Valley and the alterations that were made to earlier houses. Believed to have been built about 1760 by mill-owner Samuel Stover, the two-story stone house is located at the base of a steep ridge paralleling the South Fork of the Shenandoah River three-quarters of a mile downstream from the mouth of Hawksbill Creek. Except for its front and rear asymmetrical fenestration, the exterior of Fort Stover (fig. 17), with a 36'5" × 28' rectangular plan and interior end chimneys, could be mistaken for an Anglo-American hall-parlor house. Yet the fenestration gives evi-

dence that this little-altered house was in fact constructed around a plan that is directly derived from traditional *Flurküchenhaus* spatial distribution. The uphill east elevation, apparently considered the facade, has a three-bay fenestration with first- and second-floor openings ordered one above the other. Eastern exterior doors to both floors are located to the right of center. The piercing of the three-story west elevation is more irregular, with no opening placed directly above another, and first-floor and cellar doors located to the left of the windows. As at the Abraham Heiston House, upper-level doors on both walls must have served elevated porches, and broad stone piers now supporting a modern rear lean-to may be the remains of an early first-story west porch. Despite its asymmetrical composition of wall openings, the exterior of Fort Stover recalls Anglo-American or Renaissance ideas of visual order. Chimneys are built at both ends, and although the plan made a symmetrical tripartite facade impossible, doors placed toward the center of the east wall are flanked by balancing windows, and the second-floor windows of the west wall have nearly equal spacing.

The first-floor plan of Fort Stover (fig. 18b) follows a three-room *Flurküchenhaus* model, with opposed exterior doors giving entrance to a narrow room flanked on one side by two wider rooms of unequal depth. Room use within this familiar spatial distribution had changed, however, for the cooking fireplace is located in an outer cellar room below the first-floor entrance room (fig. 30), and the old *Küche* and *Stube* spaces are heated by small fireplaces. Coexistent with the owner's somewhat schizophrenic concern for external visual order was his desire to separate such productive activities as cooking from the living space of the house, an attitude shared by owners who later altered most of the houses previously examined. At Fort Stover, the unheated first-floor room with narrow proportions is located on the uphill side of the house. Whether or not the room retained its traditional use as a chamber is uncertain, but a plate shelf with hanging pegs and the marks of a built-in corner cupboard

indicate that its functions may have included the storage and display of eating accoutrements. An enclosed stair to the second floor rises from this room. The first-floor interior walls are constructed of studs and covered with plaster.

The second-floor plan (fig. 18c) originally consisted of two rooms separated by a paneled wall of the type found at Fort Rhodes. Fireplaces heated both the large 24'7" × 21'2" room and the smaller 11'8" × 21'2" room, later partitioned into two rooms. The former was provided with a closet with hanging pegs. Although the first-floor ceilings are plastered, the framing is exposed on the second floor, revealing a system of joists resting on a single summer beam extending between the two chimneys (fig. 7). Both the summer and joists have beveled chamfers and are whitewashed.

The first- and second-story trim consists of chair rails, baseboards, and cornice-strip mantels. Standard six-panel doors are hung with strap hinges on pintles. Historic American Buildings Survey drawings and ghosts on surviving doors illustrate that the house retained until recently a group of iron latches of traditional decorative form.

The roof framing consists of common rafters pinned together at the ridge with open-face mortices and resting on the attic joists (fig. 8c). The collars are half-lapped to the rafters.

The two-room cellar pattern seen elsewhere is utilized at Fort Stover, with exterior access to the inner vaulted room through a larger outer room (fig. 18a). Here the outer room served as a kitchen; it has a dirt floor and a ceiling constructed of 10" to 1'2" × 7" hewn timbers laid side by side. It is lighted by a window hung with a batten shutter. The vaulted room is lighted by window slots that taper to 1'4"-wide exterior openings that, like the larger openings, are spanned with flat arches. A partial set of stone steps rising through the north-east corner of the vault indicates that the inner room was also originally entered through an opening below the first-floor stairs. Wooden and iron suspension hooks are embedded in the plastered and whitewashed vault.

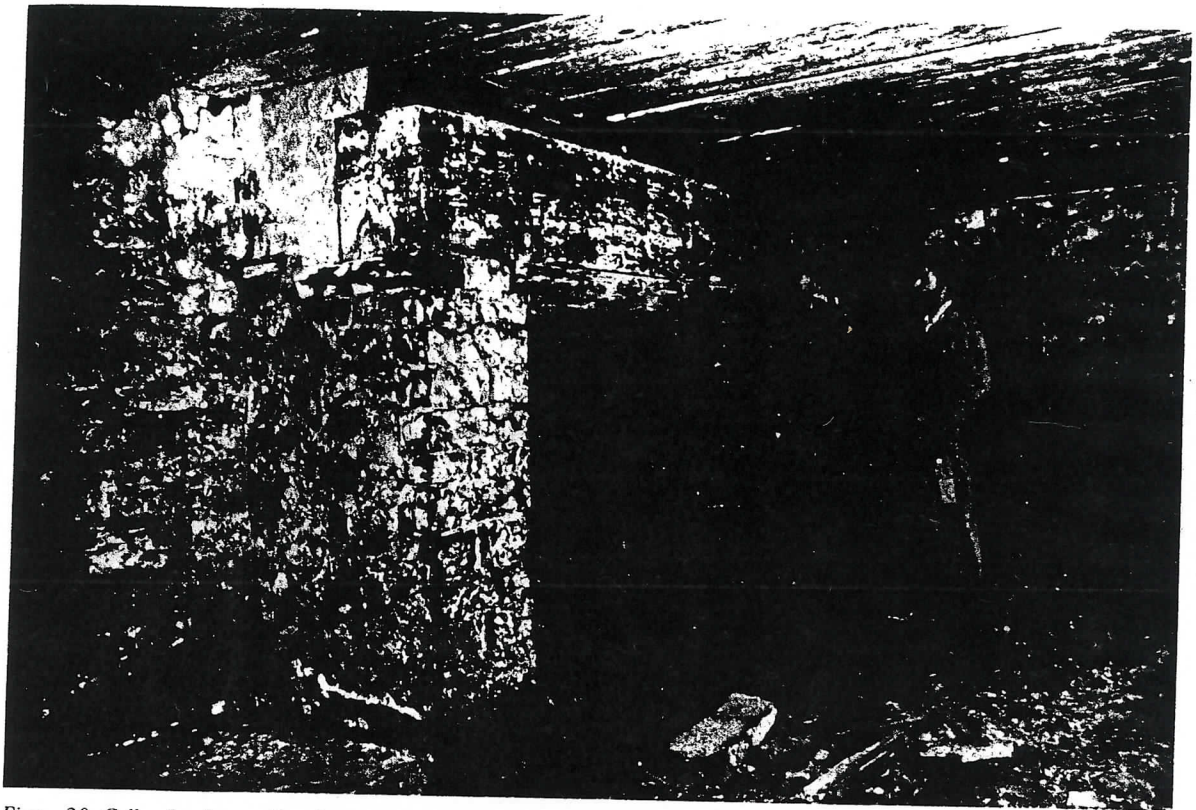


Figure 30. Cellar fireplace at Fort Stover.

## Notes

This article is a slightly revised version of the one which was originally published in the *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* (February 1980). All illustrations are by the author unless otherwise noted.

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