

Works Progress Administration ~ Caroline County Survey, Card 107

December 18, 1936 ~ Selma Farmer, of Port Royal, conducted this survey of "Shady Grove," with an on-site inspection, plus information from Miss Leu Acore, of Supply, Va., and Mrs. Herbert Farmer, of Brandywine, Va. Additional information was drawn from Marshall Wingfield's "A History of Caroline County."

Shady Grove is located two miles northeast of Brandywine, and one-half mile west of Route 619. Built circa 1790, it was first owned by the Hord family [they sold to Daniel Reynolds in 1824] and eventually was conveyed to Birkenhead Boutwell to John Boutwell Smith.

It is a two-story rectangular house having a basement and attic. From the ground up there is a four-foot brick foundation. The bricks are laid according to the Flemish Bond. These bricks were made in a brick kiln on the adjoining farm. The rest of the house is of frame.

The house had a gabled top and is covered with metal. There are two chimneys, which are about seven foot wide at the base, and are divided into three sections. There are three rooms in the basement. They are ceiled with brick. Two of the rooms have plank floor but the other one is dirt.

The breast of the chimney above the mantel in the old parlor has panels of wainscoting which is very attractive. The mantel in this room is very elaborately hand carved and is about five feet four inches tall. There is a moulded cornice all around this room. In the hall there is a very beautiful arch which is hand carved. There is a mantel in the kitchen which was made by hand but this is very plain.

There is hand carved paneling around all the doors and windows and there is a chair rail and baseboard in all the rooms. The rooms are of the nine foot pitch.

In 1905, a small entrance room was added to the front of the house. The top of this room has not been ceiled. The original front door, which was a double transom door of the seven panel type has been removed and a very plain hand made one replaces it.

There are two graveyards here. One on the northeast side of the house for the white, and the one for the slaves on the east. There are no markers in either of these graveyards, and the graves are covered with vines and weeds. It is said that forty-one people have died in this house.

The timber used in the construction was imported from England and put together with mortice. It is said that this house was first built in England, [then] taken down and sent here, where it was put up a second time.

Historical Significance ~ Because the house was located in the woods, it was out of the range of gunboats that passed up the Rappahannock River during the War Between the States, and was used by many as a refuge. During the war, Mrs. Birkenhead Boutwell lived here. She turned the house into a hospital for wounded and disabled soldiers until the fall of Richmond.

These soldiers were given medical attention by Dr. Urquhart of Port Royal. There were seven left with Mrs. Boutwell after the fall of Richmond. All of these soon left except one who was unable to travel. An old family school house that stood in the yard was fitted up for him so that Mrs. Boutwell could look after and care for him. Her grandchildren liked to visit with him and to hear him talk and sing. When he decided to leave, all the children gathered around him to see him off. He fastened his pack on his back, and said, "Good bye, Purty gals, I am sorry to left you, but I am 'bliged to went." The children followed him for a short distance, then hastened back to tell their grandmother of his departure. She said she was sorry that she had not seen him go so she could have given him some money, as she had given the other six who had left some weeks before.

Birkenhead Hawkins Boutwell married Miss Catherine Harrison Smith. One of their daughters, Martha Smith Boutwell, married James Madison Smith, brother of Governor William Smith ("Extra Billy"), and her cousin. The last member of the Boutwell name in Caroline was Apollos Boutwell, who was born in 1828, and died in 1917. He was the son of Birkenhead H. Boutwell, who was considered a very rich man and was said to have kept the money in shot bags in the lockers room of his residence. He is also said to have kept three or four barrels of whiskey and brandy in his cellar "for family use" and for friends.

Descriptive Form ~ House is listed as two-story, with attic as an additional half story; bricks (foundation) in Flemish bond; roof gabled and covered with metal. Two chimneys were located at the east and west sides of the house, cornices of wood. There were nineteen windows, each with fifteen panels, each measuring eight-by-ten inches. There were seven rooms, and a stairway of the enclosed type with no handrails. The cellar stretched under the entire house, consisting of three rooms. Doors were six panel 'T' type, of oak wood and painted. Walls had been papered about 100 years ago, and were greatly in need of repair. Old HL hinges were still used, but old locks and doorknobs had been replaced. Floor was the original, uniform, of six-inch boards. There were two mantels, parlor and kitchen, and the house was at original except for the small entrance added to the front.

*Genealogy of the Hord Family ~ Rev. Arnold Harris Hord (pg 65)*

John Hord came to Virginia and purchased a large tract of land in what is now Caroline County, on the Rappahannock River, which he named "Shady Grove." This tract was a part of an original grant made to Sir Thomas Lunsford. His house was brought from England in sections, and is still [1898] standing. It is located two miles south of the Rappahannock River, and eight miles below where the village of Port Royal now stands. The present dividing line between the counties of Caroline and Essex passes near it. It is a large, double mansion, with a spacious hall ten feet in width running through the centre, having on each side rooms twenty feet square. In the middle of the hall is an archway handsomely carved. The entire building is massive and substantial, having hard-wood floors, tall white mantels, and handsomely panelled doors. It is two stories high, built of massive timbers, with brick foundations and chimneys. Projecting from the ground in front are the remains of two brick pillars, all that is now left of an upper and a lower porch. The house in its day was a handsome one, although at the present time it is very much dilapidated.

*The Hord Family of Virginia ~ Rev. Arnold Harris Hord (pg 41-46)*

The house is now situated in Caroline County, but in 1717 that part of Caroline County was within the boundaries of the County of Essex. An indenture between Thomas Coghill of St. Ann's Parish, Essex County, and Thomas Dickinson of Hanover Parish, King George County (May 20, 1734), the land sold is described as ... "situated on a branch of Portobago Bay, called the deep branch, thence up the branch to the line of John Hord...."

Portobago Bay is in Caroline County near the border of Essex County, and John Hord's land was near Portobago Bay, an inlet of the Rappahannock River.... Other tracts of land were added to the original 200 acres purchased by John Hord from Edward Booker, one of which, lying in Essex County, John Hord mentions in his will. I was informed twenty years ago [ca 1898] by Mr. Hudgin, Clerk of Caroline County, a very old man at that time, that his impression was, in the absence of deeds destroyed during the Civil War, that the "Shady Grove" estate comprised about 2100 acres of land.

The Hord family owned also an estate known as "Liberty Hill," on Port Tobago Bay. Tradition affirms that John Hord lived at "Liberty Hill" during the winter months. The house commanded a fine view of four Virginia counties. It was destroyed by fire a few years ago.

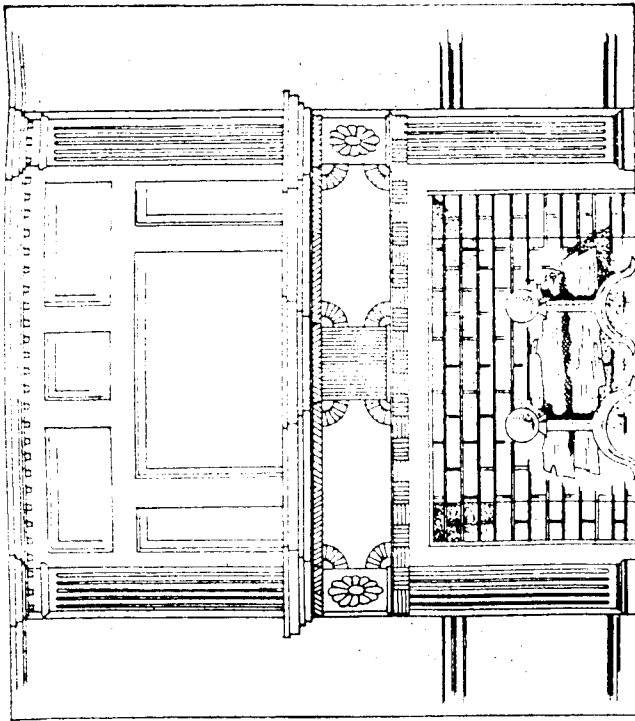
[Notes on ownership] ~ John Hord in his will of 1747, gave the house and land to son Ambrose Hord, who died without issue, leaving his entire estate to brother John Hord. This John Hord was the father of Robert Hord, who sold it to Daniel Reynolds in 1821. Reynolds was living in the house in 1838.

The writer first visited "Shady Grove" in 1893 and again in 1913. On the latter visit he found the old house considerably altered in appearance. A portion of the rear of the building had been torn down, new clapboards had been substituted for the old, and the original thick green windowpanes had been replaced by modern glass. The writer now has in his possession one of these old windowpanes given to him on his first visit. The style of the house indicates that it was built at an early period. The panels of the doors are fastened together with wooden pins. In a lower panel of a door of one of the bed-rooms on the second floor is a small hole which was intended to give admission to the cat. It is exactly like a door which may be seen in General Washington's Mansion at Mt. Vernon.

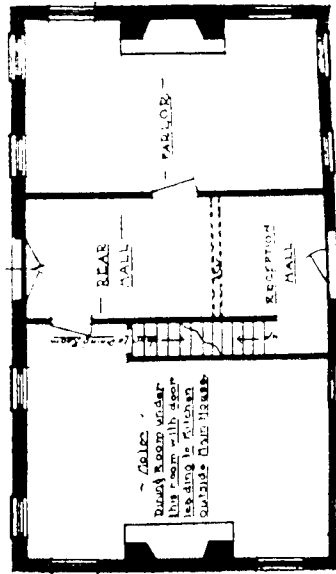
The house at Shady Grove was so badly in need of repair in 1913 that it was uninhabitable. Drawings were made at that time of the interior of the building, of the mantelpiece in the parlor and of the arch in the hall. These drawings, which have been reproduced for this volume, indicate that it was originally a handsome Colonial residence. Around the house are several of the largest and finest oak trees that I have ever seen, probably the remains of a larger grove that gave the estate its name "Shady Grove." In the rear of the house are two wooden buildings with quaint conical roofs after the style of some which may be seen at Mt. Vernon. These alone remain of a group of smaller buildings which formerly belonged to the plantation. The house is situated about half a mile from the public highway and is approached by a winding road which is probably two-thirds of a mile long. The first sight of the house from the pike is extremely pleasing. It stands upon a knoll or ridge overlooking the surrounding country. From the broad hall that extends through the building from front to rear, one may look in either direction over many miles of country. The house occupies the most conspicuous point in the landscape and with its white walls and red roof visible through the great oak trees that surround it, makes an attractive picture. About two hundred yards distant is the burial ground of the Hord family, which is marked by a group of tall trees standing in the midst of a field. The graveyard is overgrown with honeysuckle to the depth of two feet.

In the doorway, shown in the plan, at the rear of the hall, John Hord, who was paralyzed for three years before his death, sometimes sat and watched the slaves working in the fields. I received this tradition many years ago from Mrs. Boutwell Smith, a resident of Caroline County, whose granddaughter is the present owner of "Shady Grove."

— Best of the Hazed Family —



— VIEW OF PARLOR MANTLE —

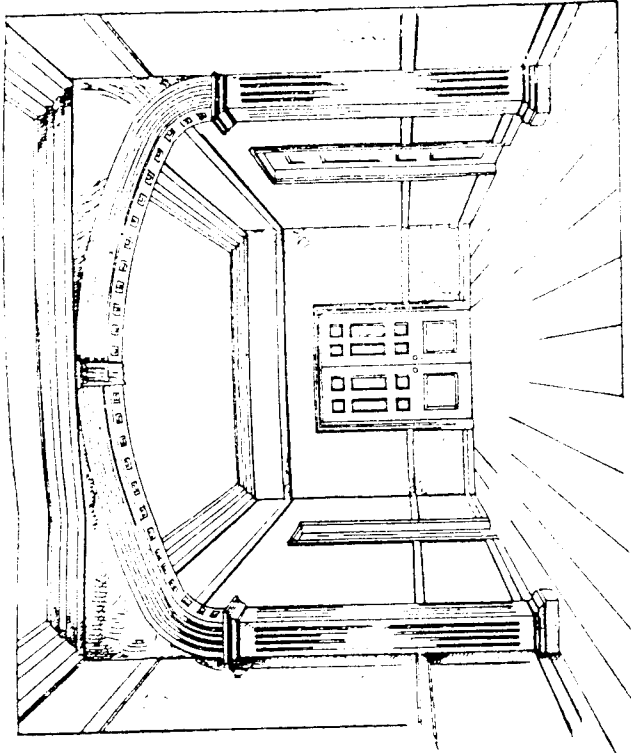


— FIRST FLOOR PLAN —

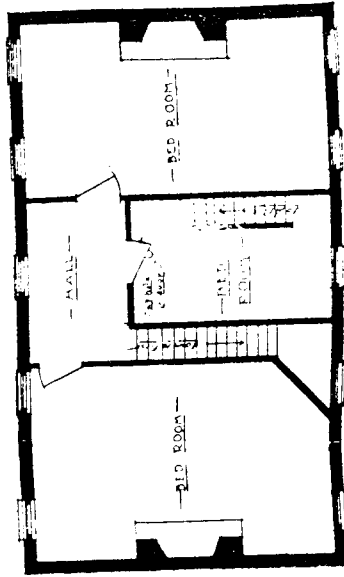
PLAN OF THE INTERIOR OF "SHADY GROVE" HOUSE,

BUILT ABOUT 1717

at Fort Mifflin, Pennsylvania



— THE MAIN HALL —



— SECOND FLOOR PLAN —

PLAN OF THE INTERIOR OF "SHADY GROVE" HOUSE,

BUILT ABOUT 1717

at Fort Mifflin, Pennsylvania

