

## Virginia Slave Housing Project

**Building Name:** Buffalo Forge, Duplex

**Evidence Type:** Extant

**Site ID:** 081-0003

**City or Vicinity:** Glasgow

**County:** Rockbridge

**State:** VA

**Investigators:** Maddie Fanta, Morgan Fries, Douglas Sanford, Jessica Daubenspeck, Joey Savino

**Institutions:** Department of Historic Preservation, University of Mary Washington

**Project Start:** 2-18-17

**Project End:** 2-18-17; 9-18-17

### Summary Description:

The Buffalo Forge duplex is a brick, one-story, four-bay, side-gable roofed structure measuring approximately 40' by 20', with an open 5-bay porch running the length of the south-facing façade. The foundation is laid with rubble stone, which is exposed on the west where the ground surface slopes sharply. Remnants of a layer of stucco survive on all four walls. The fenestration on both the south and north elevations is symmetrical, with two doorways flanked by double-hung sash windows. The plan consists of two downstairs rooms of equal size, divided by a vertical-board partition, with each room heated by a fireplace served by an exterior end chimney. Enclosed stairways are positioned against the partition, rising to the south, consisting of four winder steps leading to a straight run of 10 steps. The doorways in the north wall are set apart more widely than those on the south to accommodate the stairways. The unheated garret is divided by a centered partition into separate spaces; the portion above the west room has been further divided into two roughly equal halves by a board partition wall with a centered opening.

The structure is relatively well preserved but underwent a series of extensive repairs in 2017. The porch is a 20<sup>th</sup>-century replacement for the original. Both the gable roof and the porch shed roof are covered with standing seam sheet metal, replacing the original wood shingles. Other alterations include inserting a doorway in the first-floor partition to allow access between the rooms, and reworking the fire boxes and replacing the brick hearths with concrete.

The duplex is paired with a second brick structure of similar character, which is located within 10 feet to the east. Both buildings are aligned with the two-story, stone, iron master's house, which is located just a few feet farther to the east. The second brick building is also divided into two separate downstairs rooms, with the west room serving as a quarter, while the other room has a large fireplace and other features that suggest that it served another purpose. Given the proximity to the main house, it is likely that the east room served in some supportive function that required a substantial fireplace, such as a

laundry or a cook room. Documentary evidence indicates that construction of the brick buildings began and likely was completed in 1858 (Dew 1994:243).

Buffalo Forge was the home farm and industrial center of the iron works enterprise that William Weaver, of Pennsylvania, and his business partner purchased in 1814, and which Weaver substantially enlarged and operated from 1823 until his death in 1863. In addition to the forge where the iron was refined into merchantable bars and hollow wares, other components consisted of both flour mills and sawmills, blacksmith and carpenter shops, a store, and barns and an array of other structures to support the associated agricultural operation. Numerous quarters to house the enslaved workers were spread around the complex; documentary records indicate that they included stone and log structures in addition to the two brick buildings. Pig iron to supply the forge was produced primarily at Weaver's remote Etna Furnace. The labor force employed at both the forge and the furnace was comprised principally of enslaved Blacks, either owned by Weaver or those he hired from their enslavers to work on an annual basis.

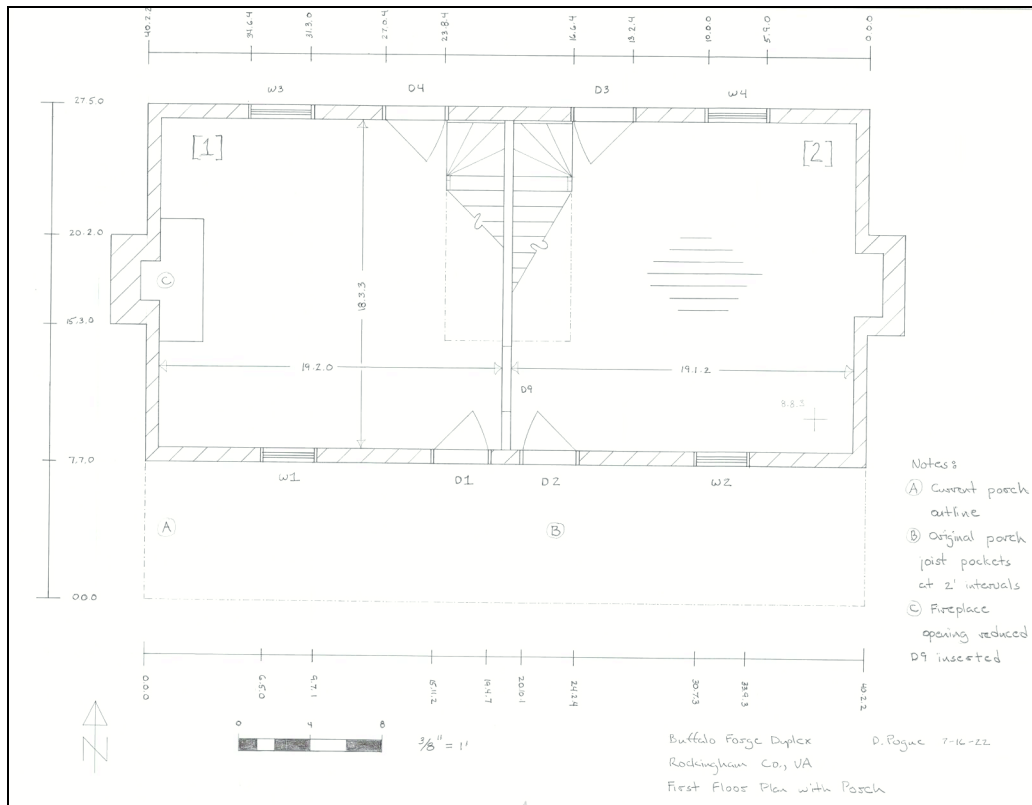
**Other Documentation:**

Charles B. Dew, *Bond of Iron: Master and Slave at Buffalo Forge* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1994).

Buffalo Forge, *National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (2004)

**Principal Construction Type:** Masonry; brick with stone foundation; one story with garret

**Footprint:**



**Number of Rooms:** 5 rooms (2 down, 3 up)

- Dimensions:** (1) 18.3.3 (N-S) x 19.2.0 (E-W) x 8.8.2 (H)  
 (2) 18.3.3 (N-S) x 19.1.2 (E-W) x 8.8.3 (H)  
 (3) 18.6.3 (N-S) x 11.5.2 (E-W) x 8.4.2 (H – to roof peak)  
 (4) 18.6.3 (N-S) x 19.4.0 (E-W) x 8.4.2 (H – to roof peak)  
 (5) 18.6.3 (N-S) x 8.3.1 (E-W) (sub-division of Room 3)

**Doors:** 9

	<b>Rm. 1 S (1)</b>	<b>Rm. 2 S (2)</b>	<b>Rm. 2 N (3)</b>
<b>Type:</b>	Board & Batten; note chamfers on battens, vertical boards	4-panel door	Board & Batten; chamfers on battens
<b>Dimensions:</b>	3.0.1 (W) x 6.0.0 (H), 0.1.0 thick	3.1.2 (W) x 6.11.2 (H); 0.1.2 thick	3.1.0 (W) x 6.0.0 (H); 0.0.3 thick
<b>Hardware:</b>	5 knuckle butt hinges with machine screws; metal stock lock with ceramic knob; wooden stock lock	Not original hardware; butterfly hinges with machine screws	Butterfly hinges (replacement); machine screws; iron latch
<b>Swing:</b>	In	In	In
<b>Replacement:</b>	No, but replacement hinges. Door frame has wooden pegs.	Reused door, does not fit doorway; Original door frame: 3.0.0 (W) x 6.3.0 (H), w/wooden pegs like door 1	Part of frame replaced

	<b>Rm. 1 N (4)</b>	<b>Rm. 1 Stair closet (5)</b>	<b>Rm. 2 Stair closet (6)</b>
<b>Type:</b>	Board & batten; chamfers on battens	Board & batten; chamfered battens; tongue-and-groove boards	Board & batten
<b>Dimensions:</b>	3.0.2 (W) x 6.2.0 (H), 0.0.3 thick	2.0.2 (W) x 2.7.0 (H) 0.1.0 thick	1.11.1 (W) x 2.7.2 (H), 0.1.0 thick
<b>Hardware:</b>	5 knuckle butt hinges, w/machine screws	Wood latch, 3 knuckle butt hinges	Wood latch, machine-cut nails, 3 knuckle butt hinges
<b>Swing:</b>	In	Out to Room 1	Out into Room 2
<b>Replacement:</b>	No; sill replaced with concrete	No	No

**Doors:** continued

	<b>Rm. 1 stairs (7)</b>	<b>Rm. 2 stairs (8)</b>	<b>Partition (9)</b>
<b>Type:</b>	Board & batten; chamfers on battens, vertical boards	Board & batten; chamfers on battens; vertical boards	No door, but opening within central partition
<b>Dimensions:</b>	2.11.0 (W) x 5.5.3 (H), 0.1.0 thick	2.2.3 (W) x 5.6.0 (H), 0.1.0 thick	3.4.2 (W) x 6.6.0 (H)
<b>Hardware:</b>	3 knuckle butt hinges, machine screws	3 knuckle butt hinges, machine screws	NA
<b>Swing:</b>	Out into Rm. 1	Out into Rm. 2	NA
<b>Replacement:</b>	No	No	Later insertion

**Door 10:** Centered opening (2.9.1 wide) in the garret partition between Room 3 and Room 5. The south edge of the opening is 7.10.0 from the inside edge of the roof rafter to the south; north edge of the opening is 7.11.0 from the inside edge of the roof rafter to the north (the partition's total length measures 18.5.1).

Hand wrought nails are used to clinch the boards in the exterior doors.

**Windows:** 6

	<b>Rm. 1 S (1)</b>	<b>Rm. 2 S (2)</b>	<b>Rm. 2 N (3)</b>
<b>Type:</b>	Double hung sash, 6/6	Double hung sash, 6/6	Double hung sash, 6/6
<b>Dimensions:</b>	2.10.0 (W) x 4.6.0 (H)	2.10.2 (W) x 4.6.0 (H)	2.10.2 (W) x ?, height inaccessible
<b>Hardware:</b>	None	None	None; lower sash missing
<b>Shuttered/Slide/Swing:</b>	Replacement sash and frame	Replacement sash; original sill & header	Replacement frame

**Windows:** continued

	<b>Rm. 1, N (4)</b>	<b>Rm. 4 (5)</b>	<b>Rm. 5 (6)</b>
<b>Type:</b>	Sash removed; evidence of single hung sash	Sash removed; replacement frame	3 x 3 casement sash, hinged on north side
<b>Dimensions:</b>	Sash opening 2.10.0 (W) x 4.6.2 (H)	Window opening 2.7.2 (W) x 2.6.2 (H)	2.0.0 (W) x 2.2.0 (hH)
<b>Hardware:</b>	None; molding around sash has machine-cut nails	Unknown	Replacement frame and sash
<b>Shuttered/ Slide/ Swing:</b>	NA	East gable end; boarded over at present	Swing out; West gable end

EXTERIOR

**Foundation:**

**Continuous Masonry:** Stone (Limestone)

**Thickness:** 1.6.0 - 1.7.0

**Height:** @ SW corner: 6.1.0 @ NW corner: 3.3.1 (foundation at ground level at the NE corner); ground slopes downward from north to south

**Bond:** Regular coursing

**Mortar Type:** Sand & Clay, w/limestone and brick fragments

**Joint:** Flush, roughly finished

**Repaired:** Yes

**Porch:** Yes, on the south façade, with shed roof. Current porch is a modern replacement with circular sawn and pressure treated lumber and wire nails. Rectangular socket holes (3-3½" wide) spaced at 2' intervals above the height of doors and windows for joists for original porch.

**Roof:**

**Roof Form:** Gable

**Roof Covering:** Standing seam sheet metal

**Roof Framing:**

**Exposed:** Yes

**Form:** Common Rafters

**Rafter Number:** 19 pairs

**Rafter Dimensions:** 0.2.2 – 0.3.0 (W) x 0.3.0 – 0.3.2 (H)

**Collar Ties:** Yes, removed

**Method of Joining:** Single machine-cut nail per end

**Height from Roof Peak to Floor:** 8.4.2

Some of the common rafters exhibit Roman numeral carpenter marks. The rafters are sash sawn and the rafter pairs are spaced on approximate 2-foot centers. The rafters are joined at the peak with ship laps, pegged. The roof rafters in the western half of the garret (Rooms 3 and 5) are whitewashed, those to the east are not.

**Building Height:**

<b>@ SW corner:</b>	<b>@ NW corner:</b>
<b>Ground to Top of Stone Foundation:</b> 6.1.0	<b>Ground to top of stone foundation =</b> 3.3.0
<b>Ground to Top of Roof:</b> 16.8.2	<b>Ground to Top of Roof:</b> 13.4.1
<b>Ground to Bottom of Eave:</b> 15.8.2	<b>Ground to Bottom of Eave:</b> 12.8.3
<b>@ W. gable end, from ground to Top of Chimney:</b> 24.11.2	<b>@ W. gable end, from ground to top of chimney base:</b> 4.4.0

**Walls:**

**Masonry:** Brick

**Bond:** Random, various common bonds (3, 5, or more courses of stretchers per row of headers). Variation may be due to being covered by stucco.

**Mortar Type:** Sand and Clay, with limestone fragments

**Joint:** Flush, roughly finished, likely due to exterior stucco treatment

**Repaired:** Yes; repaired with concrete

**Chimney(s):**

**Chimney (1):** West gable end

**Material:** Brick (foundation of stone: 4.2.5 high)

**Location:** Exterior – End

**Height:** 24.11.2

**Chimney (2):** East gable end

**Material:** Brick (foundation of stone)

**Location:** Exterior – End

INTERIOR

**Wall Framing:** NA (brick masonry)

**Wall Finish:** Plaster (white wash on rough coat) on brick

**Fireplace (1):** End, Center

**Fireplace Material:** Brick

**Fireplace Overall Dimensions:** Chimney is flush with brick gable end wall.

**Fireplace Opening Dimensions:** 2.10.0 (W) x 2.8.0 (H) x 1.1.0 (D); Lintel bar: 0.2.2 wide; opening has been altered and made smaller

**Hearth Material:** NA, removed and replaced with poured concrete

**Hearth Dimensions:** 2.5.2 (E-W) x 6.9.2 (N-S)

**Fireplace (2):** End, Center (partially robbed out)

**Fireplace Material:** Brick

**Fireplace Overall Dimensions:** NA, flush with brick gable end wall

**Fireplace Opening Dimensions:** 3.7.2 (W) x 3.2.0 (H, estimated) x 1.7.3 (D);  
reduced during repairs to 3.2.2 (W) x 2.11.0 (H) x 1.5.0 (D)

**Hearth Material:** NA, removed and replaced with poured concrete

**Hearth Dimensions:** 2.4.2 (E-W) x ? (N-S not accessible)

**Stairs:** Yes, Stair 1 located in the NE corner of Rm. 1; Stair 2 located in the NW corner of Rm. 2.

**Type:** Enclosed – Winder (4 steps) with straight run of 10 treads

**Stairwell Dimensions:** to landing (base): 3.10.3 (N-S) x 3.3.3 (E-W); stairwell  
portion: 3.0.0 wide (E-W) x 7.4.0 long (N-S)

**Number of Treads:** 14

**Stair Tread Dimensions:** 3.3.0 (L) x 0.10.1 (W) x 0.7.2 (H)

Beneath each staircase is a small closet with a door.

**Floor:** Wood; garret floor has tongue-and-groove floorboards measuring 0.8.0 – 1.0.2  
wide

**Date:** 1858 based on documentary evidence

**Dating Evidence:**

**Dendrochronology:** NA

**Saw Marks:** Sash Sawn

**Nails:** Machine Headed Cut

**Comments:** Repairs to the structure were underway during the site visit  
in September 2017; at the time this entailed repointing mortar joints and  
replacing missing brick, and reapplying stucco to the walls.