

WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION OF VIRGINIA
HISTORICAL INVENTORY

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COUNTY: Spotsylvania

CLASS : Home

"SUNNYSIDE"

This write-up is a part of the Virginia W. P. A. Historical Inventory Project sponsored by the Virginia Conservation Commission under the direction of its Division of History. Credit to both the Commission and W. P. A. is requested for publication, in whole or in part. Unless otherwise stated, this information has not been checked for accuracy by the sponsor.

Research made by
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Fredericksburg, Virginia.

1. SUBJECT:

"Sunnyside".

2. LOCATION:

West side of Route #51, five and one half miles south of Fredericksburg, Virginia.

3. DATE:

Not known.

4. OWNERS:

This is hard to trace because it was a part of the Leavell property for a long time. Edmund S. Leavell sold it to Mrs. Betsy Barton French in 1860. Mr. Ashton White is the present owner.

5. DESCRIPTION:

This must be the original house on the property, for the present owner says he has seen no evidences of any other house site on the place. The house is frame and nearly square, painted white, and well kept now. For further description see form #3686, attached.

6. HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE:

Mrs. Elizabeth Maxwell Alsop Wynne, in her "Geneology and Traditions", tells several interesting things about "Sunnyside".

She says that "Sunnyside" being on the road from Fredericksburg to Spotsylvania Court House, was resorted to by great and small.

Mrs. French was a very religious old lady, and each morning she conducted a period of Morning Worship in her home.

Under the heading "Religious Indignation", Mrs. Wynn tells the story of some Federal soldiers coming to "Sunnyside" and taking the grain from the granary. Mrs. French begged them not to do it, telling them that she and her servants, also the animals were dependent on it for food. They paid no attention to her but went right on, even taking the mules too. Mrs. French caught the bridle of one of the mules, but the soldier roughly slapped her hand away. Then she strained up and said: "May the curse of the widows' and orphans' God be upon you". Some time later, this company was practically wiped out.

Mrs. Wynne goes on to say that during the war there were many noted visitors at "Sunnyside". Among them were General Robert F. Lee and his staff, General John R. Cook, General J. F. B. Stuart, General Thomas J. Jackson and General Rosser. One evening General Jackson came to call, and he and Mrs. French spent the entire evening discussing religious subjects.

When Jackson received word of Mrs. French's death he was just dressing to go to a dinner party. After hearing the news he refused to go, saying that he could not be gay when a dear friend had just departed.

7. ART:

8. SOURCES OF INFORMATION:

Informant: Mr. Ashton White, owner.

Court Records:

"Geneologies and Traditions" by Mrs. Elizabeth M. A. W. Published privately in 1931. Copy used is the property of Mrs. R. O. Gordon, Spotsylvania, Virginia.

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ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION OF BUILDING CALLED FOR IN
5-A. of BULLETIN 3400

3686

Name of Building "SUNNYSIDE"

EXTERIOR

- 1. Building Plan _____ Cellar ()
- 2. No. of stories: (2) Attic classed as 1/2 story.
- 3. Material: Brick () Frame (x) Stone () Log ()
- 4. If brick, state what bond: Flemish () English () Common () Other ()
- 5. Kind of roof: Hip () Gabled () Gambrel (x) Lean-to () Deck ()
- 6. If church, describe or draw sketch of roof on reverse side.
- 7. Roof Material: Slate () Shingle () Metal (x) Tile ()
- 8. Chimneys; Number (3) Brick (x) Stone () Location Ends and back c
house.
- 9. Weatherboarding: _____ Beaded () Plain ()
- 10. Cornices: Plain or Elaborate Plain Material _____
- 11. Windows: Number () Size and number of panes Six panes in each s
- 12. Shutters: Describe: _____
- 13. Dormers: Number, and Shape of roof None.
- 14. Porch: _____
- 15. Type of Entrance: _____
- 16. Columns: Doric () Ionic () Corinthian () Square ()

INTERIOR

- 17. No. of Rooms: (9) Large () Small () Approx. ceiling height. _____
- 18. Stairway: Open String (x) Closed String () Describe: Round newel, round
rail, square balusters.
- 19. Cellar: Describe None.
- 20. Doors: Style and type of wood Four panel; very wide, about four f
- 21. Walls: Panelled, papered or painted Papered.
- 22. Interior Cornices _____
No old locks, inside hinges.