

## **MILITARY FURNISIDNGS AND ROOM USE**

The central role Verandah House occupied during the Civil War can be illustrated to visitors by interpreting two rooms and a portion of the hall as the military may have furnished them. This report recommends the west side of the 1857 house be considered for that purpose. Visitors would enter through the front, east door to view the parlor (103) and best bedroom (101) with the "civilian domestic" arrangement discussed in "Room Use in Verandah House." The west end of the hall, the second bedroom (102) and the sitting/dining room (104) would be fitted out for military use. The 20<sup>th</sup> wcentury addition to the house would hold modern exhibits interpreting the importance of Corinth, especially Verandah House, during the Civil War. Visitors would exit from the west door of the addition.

In reality, the effect of military occupation on a residence varied greatly. In some cases officers occupied a house abandoned and devoid of furnishings because the occupants had been fortunate to have time, wagons, and horses at their disposal (Figure 25). At the other extreme, a house might be fully furnished if the occupants had fled with little time to pack anything except essentials or had every reason to believe the property

would be safe until they returned. The latter was the case of Arlington House near Alexandria, Virginia, which General and Mrs. Robert E. Lee left completely furnished when they moved to Richmond, the capital of the Confederacy, at the beginning of the war, little thinking that within a year the area would be in Union hands and Federal officers would make the house their headquarters (Figure 26).

In between these two extremes is the example of General Albert Sidney Johnston living in the Corinth house of Major and Mrs. William Inge with the family. Presumably many of their furnishings, especially large items, remained in the rooms made available to Johnston and his aides while small, portable, personal items were removed. A version of this arrangement has been successfully used elsewhere.

In 1994, the Pamplin Foundation contracted Farmer Puckett Warner Architects of Charlottesville, Virginia, to undertake the restoration of Tudor Hall in Petersburg, Virginia, in preparation for creating the Pamplin Park Civil War Site and the Museum of the Civil War Soldier which, as its name implies, honors both Confederate and Union troops. Tudor Hall, a two and a half story clapboard house on a raised basement, was built about 1812 and enlarged in the 1850s.<sup>69</sup> In 1864 as military operations drew close, the Boisseau family, who owned the house, moved to a parent's plantation near the Appomattox River away from the fighting. In the fall, 1864, Brigadier General Samuel McGowan made the house his headquarters in the defense of Petersburg. On April 2, 1865, the Union forces broke those defenses and Tudor Hall became a Union field hospital.<sup>70</sup> In addition to the house and the new museum, Pamplin Park also contains one of the most intact stretches of earthworks of the Petersburg Perimeter.

LCA Associates was subcontracted to Farmer Puckett Warner to acquire furniture, decorative arts, wallpapers, carpeting, and window coverings and install them in four rooms and the stair hall on the first and second floors of Tudor Hall. When it was later determined that the west parlor and west bed chamber should depict civilian life in the summer, 1864, and the east side parlor and east bed chamber represent the military headquarters in the winter, 1864, LCA Associates asked William L. Brown to become a member of the team. Brown was the author of *The Army Called It Home, military interiors of the 19<sup>th</sup> century* published in 1992. At the time of the Pamplin Park Project, he was chief curator in the Division of Historic Furnishings, National Park Service,

Harpers Ferry Design Center. His knowledge of military furnishings greatly informed the project, images of which are included in this report.

### **Center Hall (room 100)**

The hall tree in civilian use by the front door should be echoed by a much smaller board with wooden knobs or hooks by the door at the west end of the hall and hung with an overcoat, cloak, poncho, hat, and a whisk broom. A pair of folding camp stools should be placed opposite by the door along with a lantern. A map of Tishomingo County should be nailed to the wall above the stools. The tall case clock should be moved to the north wall across from the family's hall tree.

### **Northwest Room (room 102)**

This space is reinterpreted as an officer's bedroom. Large items from the pre-War, domestic furnishing plan should remain including the four-post, full tester bedstead and the c.1845 chest of drawers. The bedstead should be moved from the middle of the west wall to the north, thus covering the doorway to the bath (room 107) added in the 1920s. A washstand is necessary along with a basin and two buckets -- one for fresh water and one for waste water (Figures 27 and 28). The stand and buckets can be located on the west wall and should be placed on a piece of floor cloth painted a single color such as dark green. The sofa upholstered in black horsehair should be moved to this room from the sitting/dining room (room 104) across the hall and placed on the north wall partially blocking the French doors to the verandah. The door between rooms 101-102 should be kept closed. A small square table, a table cover, and three or four chairs should be placed near the center of the room. Two chairs from the sitting/dining room could be placed here and at least one folding chair (Figure 28 and 29). One or two trunks essential for transporting the officer's clothing should be acquired and placed on the south wall. (Figure 30).

While Confederate and Union officers occupied this room at various times during the war, most had been educated at West Point. The most visible differences between them would have been their uniforms and their firearms. Reproductions of these items should be included in the room along with gauntlets, a riding whip, a pair of boots, and a

military sword. A uniform jacket might hang from the back of a chair. There were also small differences marked by what their governments provided such as the wood buckets and distinctively striped army blankets seen with Union troops (Figure 28). A certain amount of detritus is also important. The fireplace mantel might hold a few books, assorted candlesticks or a camphene lamp, a pipe and tobacco sack, a dispatch case, etc.

### **Southwest Room (room 104)**

This space is reinterpreted as a meeting room for the military. Some furniture from the pre-War domestic interior should remain including the bookcase, the set of rush-seat, ladder-back chairs, and the cellaret. The set of dining tables acquired for this room should remain. The tables should be set up in the middle of the room and covered with a large square of green baize or some other plain wool cloth; the cover is utilitarian and should not be embellished with decoration. The doors to the closets on either side of the mantel should be closed.

This room should also represent the work of the officer of the day who received daily reports, consolidated them, and passed them on to Division Headquarters. A field desk on a stand (Figures 25, 31, and 33) was essential for his work. It should be placed on the south wall by the window for maximum natural light. Across the room a cot should occupy the west wall; with an officer always on duty in this room, the cot would allow him to grab a little sleep during rare, quiet moments (Figure 32).

The ten McKenney and Hall prints could remain in this room; a sketch of Major Wolfe's office in Fort Delaware, in July, 1864, shows a careful arrangement of framed art on several walls (Figure 33). However, copies of period maps should also be reproduced and also affixed to the walls (Figure 34) as well as placed on the table.

The fireplace mantel becomes another flat surface for books, candlesticks, whiskey bottles, cups, glasses, and tobacco paraphernalia. A spittoon is also essential for those who "took" their tobacco in the form of snuff or chewing tobacco (Figures 29, 33, and 34).

It is essential that a military historian and/or knowledgeable re-enactor assist in presenting the details of military occupation in the house.<sup>71</sup> There are also several purveyors of accurate reproductions of textiles, clothing, and paraphernalia suitable for

the Civil War interpretation. Nick Sekela [[www.nsekela.com](http://www.nsekela.com)] offers some clothing but also objects including various bottles, bone-handled toothbrushes, writing kits, shaving brushes, etc. all at reasonable costs. Ben Tart in North Carolina [[www.bnbtrul.com](http://www.bnbtrul.com)] carries textiles with an emphasis on North Carolina troop uniforms. Charlie Childs in Ohio [[www.crchilds.com](http://www.crchilds.com)] has textiles and makes uniforms to order based on Confederate and Union models. Family Heir-Loom Weavers in Red Lion, Pennsylvania, weaves textiles for uniforms, shirts, etc. as well as producing ingrain and Venetian carpeting.