

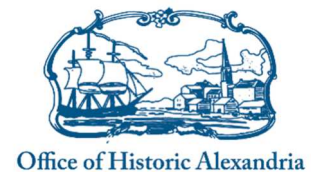
BUILDING AND PROPERTY HISTORY



1315 DUKE STREET ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA



BENJAMIN A. SKOLNIK, PhD
ALEXANDRIA ARCHAEOLOGY
OFFICE OF HISTORIC ALEXANDRIA
CITY OF ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA



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Cover image: Front of "slave pen," Alexandria, Va., Russell, Andrew J., photographer, [between 1861-1865], Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/item/2006683273/>. See Figure 89.

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SUMMARY

The following building and property history is centered on the structure currently at 1315 Duke Street in the City of Alexandria, Virginia and the infamous slave jail complex that once stood there. This four-story brick building, while heavily modified, is the only portion of this slave jail complex still standing.

Built on what was then the edge of town in 1812 or 1813, 1315 Duke Street originally consisted of the main block of the current structure, which was then only three stories tall, and possibly the original kitchen wing to the rear, and was the home of Brigadier General Robert Young. Between 1828 and 1837, it served as the offices and headquarters of Franklin & Armfield, one of the largest domestic slave trading firms in the country. They converted the residence into a massive slave jail complex that encompassed half of the block by adding a pair of enclosed yards enclosed by high brick walls, one to either side of the main block, and fenced in the remainder of the property. It was used until the Civil War by a series of subsequent businesses also engaged in human trafficking, first under George Kephart, formerly an agent for Isaac Franklin and John Armfield, and then by C. M. Price and John C. Cook. On May 24, 1861, the Union Army liberated the slave jail complex on the 1300 block of Duke Street when they entered Alexandria the day after Virginians voted to adopt the State's ordinance of secession.

During the Civil War, the Union Army used the slave jail complex as a military prison, slightly modifying the complex primarily to confine Union soldiers accused of various rule infractions and to accommodate the adjacent L'Ouverture Hospital and Contrabands Barracks. Shortly after the war, the majority of the complex was demolished by a private developer building new townhouses, save for the original residence and rear wing consisting of its original kitchen and passageway. The building was rented as a boarding house or apartments throughout the late 19th and for much of the 20th century, with a major renovation in the first decade of the 20th century seeing an additional story added to the front and back of the building and new windows. Another major renovation of the structure occurred in 1984 when the rear yard was enclosed within an addition to the building and the interior of 1315 Duke Street was reconfigured from apartments into office space. The Northern Virginia Urban League purchased the property in 1997 and the current museum exhibit in the basement opened in February 2008. The City of Alexandria purchased 1315 Duke Street in 2020 and plans on relocating and expanding the current exhibit into the rest of the structure and operating the building as a museum of the domestic slave trade.

The following building history narrative for 1315 Duke Street represents our current and best understanding of the history of the building and the property and has been drawn from an array of primary and secondary sources. These include deeds, newspapers, censuses, City tax lists, published narratives, maps, historic photographs, the 1987 archaeology report of excavations at 1315 Duke Street by Engineering-Science, Inc. (Artemel et al., 1987), Michael Ridgeway's 1976 thesis *A Peculiar Business: Slave Trading in Alexandria, Virginia, 1825-1861*, Robert

Gudmestad's 1999 dissertation *A Troublesome Commerce: The Interstate Slave Trade, 1808-1840*, and Calvin Schermerhorn's 2015 book *The Business of Slavery and the Rise of American Capitalism, 1815-1860*. A forthcoming book by Joshua Rothman, *The Ledger and the Chain: How Domestic Slave Traders Shaped America*, and an upcoming expansion of the Slave Voyages database (slavevoyages.org) to include the domestic slave trade will certainly further refine this history. This document represents a first attempt to pull together existing material that documents the site as well as additional historic, archival, and archaeological research not presented in these sources. From this analysis, there are issues raised in the following pages that are contradictory, not well-documented, or unclear from the evidence so far uncovered. Where possible, these uncertainties have been identified and future research has been recommended. It is hoped that any gaps or deficiencies in this document serve as a roadmap future research.

Out of necessity, this report is not comprehensive. While related, it does not focus on the domestic slave trade in either Alexandria or in Washington, D.C. It does not address the contours of urban or agricultural slavery in the City. It largely omits biographical sketches of the individuals mentioned here and it does not include a discussion of surviving ledgers, letters, or other records like shipping manifests that highlight the scope and scale of the activities of the businesses operating out of 1315 Duke Street beyond that which is relevant to a discussion of the physical building and property. These are relevant topics to the history of 1315 Duke Street but are planned to be addressed in separate research products to be produced in the future, including a more detailed architectural analysis of the current structure and a reanalysis of the previous archaeology conducted at the site.

RESIDENCE (1812– 1828)

Unimproved Lot

Alexandria was founded in 1749 and the original 84 one-half acre lots were sold at auction on July 13 and 14, 1749.¹ The original boundaries of the town stretched from half of a block beyond Duke Street in the south, half of a block beyond Royal Street in the west, in places, almost a full block to the north of Oronoco Street, and to the Potomac River in the east. In 1762, the House of Burgesses authorized an expansion of the town² and in May 1763, the trustees

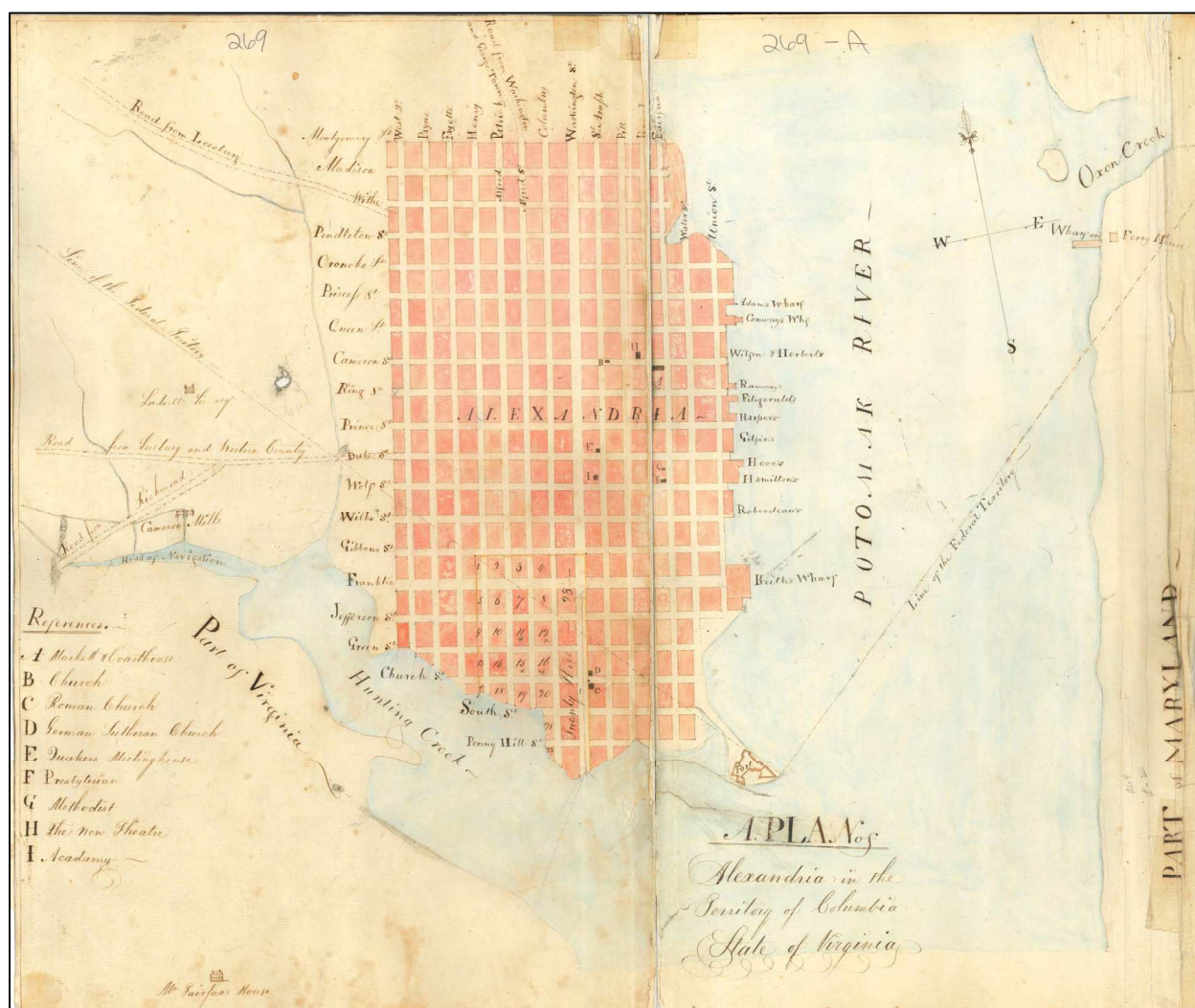


Figure 1. A Plan of Alexandria, Fairfax County Deed Book E-2, Page 269, 1804.

¹ Riker, Diane, 2009 *Alexandria and Belhaven: A Case of Dual Identity*, <https://www.alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/planning/info/Waterfront/AlexandriaandBelhavenDRiker.pdf>.

² Hening, Vol. vii, p. 604.

began selling these new lots that included half of a block to the south of Wolfe Street, half of a block to the west of Pitt Street, and to the south side of what is now Pendleton Street.³ In 1796, the boundaries of the town of Alexandria were enlarged yet again to include “extending to the north to a range of lots, upon the north side of a street called Montgomery; upon the south, to the line of the district of Columbia; upon the west, to a range of lots upon the west side of West street, and upon the east, to the river Patowmac”.⁴ This area included the block on Duke Street between Payne and West Streets and the two blocks west of West Street, on the north and south sides of Duke Street that would become associated with 1315 Duke Street for much of the 19th century. The well-known 1798 George Gilpin *Plan of the Town of Alexandria in the District of Columbia* and the less-well-known *A Plan of Alexandria* located in Fairfax County Deed Book E-2 (Figure 1) shows this range of lots extends back from West Street one half block.⁵ Political jurisdiction of this annexed area was transferred to the new District of Columbia along with the rest of Alexandria on February 27, 1801 when Congress created Alexandria County within in the District of Columbia and acquired it from the State of Virginia as per the Residence Act of 1790.

At some point prior to 1802, William Thornton Alexander purchased the land on which 1315 Duke Street would eventually be built and in that year, Alexander’s vacant lot on Duke between West and Payne was assessed at \$600.⁶

This land, along with a lot on the northwest corner of Duke and West Streets, was sold by William Thornton Alexander and his wife Lucy to John Mills on March 5, 1804 for \$800.⁷ In 1805, Mills was taxed for his vacant, one-acre property listed at the corner of Duke and West Streets (and Payne Street), which was valued at \$1,000.⁸ By the 1811 City tax assessment, John Mills was still listed as owning one acre of vacant land on Duke Street, which was then valued at \$1,000.⁹

Robert Young

On February 4, 1812, John Mills sold several lots in Alexandria, including a “parcel of ground lying upon the north side of Duke Street, west side of Payne Street and east side of West Street, and one hundred seventy-six feet to the north, parallel with Duke Street” and “also one other piece or parcel of ground situate lying and being upon the north side of Duke Street and on the

³ *Minutes of the Trustees of Alexandria, 1749-1767.*

⁴ *The Statues at Large of Virginia: From October Session 1792, to December Session 1806, Inclusive...* pp. 40-1, Chapter 32 – An ACT adding to the town of Alexandria, certain lots contiguous thereto, and for other purposes therein mentioned, [passed December 13, 1796].

⁵ George Gilpin, *Plan of the Town of Alexandria in the District of Columbia*, 1798; *A Plan of Alexandria*, Fairfax County Deed Book E-2, Page 269, 1804, a nearly identical copy of this map appears in Alexandria, D.C. Deed Book G, page 465 as the property being mapped here straddled the boundary line between the two jurisdictions.

⁶ 1802 Alexandria tax list.

⁷ Alexandria Deed Book J, p. 445.

⁸ 1805 Alexandria Wards I and IV Land and Personal Property tax lists.

⁹ 1811 Ward IV tax list, p. 11.

west side of West Street”, to Robert Young¹⁰. This first parcel consisted of two City lots, measuring one-half acre in size each, and comprised the southern half of the block bounded by Duke, Payne, Prince, and West Streets. Robert Young obtained the lot on the south side of Duke Street between West and Hamilton Lanes from Peter Shenon [Sheron?] sometime before 1817.

The 1812 City tax assessment for Ward IV listed Robert Young as the proprietor for this one acre at West and Duke, which was still listed as vacant and assessed at \$1,000.¹¹

The following year, in 1813, the assessed value of Robert Young’s one acre lot at West and Duke increased to \$3,000 and included a new house, which is noted as being vacant (Figure 2).¹² Further details about Young’s new building, such as the number of stories, are left blank on this tax assessment, but the value of this vacant house increased to \$4,000 in the annual assessment of 1814 and stayed at \$4,000 through the 1819 assessment.¹³ In 1816, the City tax list indicates the property was not vacant, but instead occupied by Edgar McCarty, who is listed as the occupant with two tithables, three horses, and a single two-wheeled carriage. McCarty’s tenancy lasts only a year and between 1817 and 1819 the property is again listed as vacant.

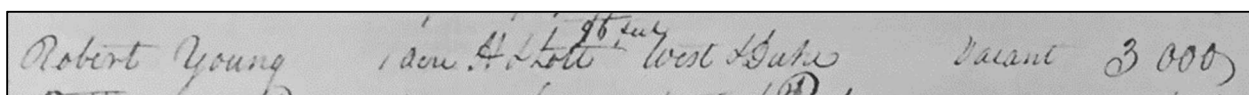


Figure 2. 1813 Ward IV tax list showing Robert Young's house and lot at West and Duke Streets.

On May 22, 1817, Young conveyed these three properties on Duke Street to James Carson in trust for Adam Lynn.¹⁴ Lynn had endorsed City tax lists indicate the property remained vacant. It would appear that this transaction represents a Young mortgaging the property with the Mechanic’s Bank. Lynn maintained a residence on the 500 block of King Street and a shop near the waterfront.¹⁵

At the end of November 1817 and running into December, Young placed a pair of similar advertisements in the *Alexandria Herald* and the *Alexandria Gazette & Daily Advertiser* (Figures 3 and 4):

PUBLIC SALE

ON WEDNESDAY, the 13th day of DECEMBER next, will be offered for
sale, on a long credit, a number of
BUILDING LOTS,

¹⁰ Alexandria, D.C. Deed Book W, p. 84; For a biography of Robert Young, see https://www.alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/historic/info/freedomhouse/Web_Boxes/BiographyRobertYoung.pdf.

¹¹ 1812 Alexandria Ward IV tax list p. 11.

¹² 1813 Alexandria Ward IV tax list p. 10.

¹³ 1814 Alexandria Ward IV tax list p. 10, 1815 Alexandria Ward IV tax list p. 10, 1816 Alexandria Ward IV tax list p. 9, 1817 Alexandria Ward IV tax list p. 9, 1818 Alexandria Ward IV tax list p. 9, 1819 Alexandria Ward IV tax list p. 8.

¹⁴ Alexandria Deed Book F2, p. 120.

¹⁵ Artemel et al. 1987 p. 23, personal communication with Barbara Magid.

binding on Duke Street, to the eastward and westward of West Street.
ROBERT YOUNG¹⁶

And:

For Sale.
On the 13th day of December next will be offered at sale on a long credit—A number of BUILDING LOTS, binding on Duke st. to the eastward and west-end of West street.
ROBERT YOUNG.¹⁷

From these two advertisements, it appears that Young tried to sell his vacant lots to the west of West Street, and not necessarily the improved lot on Duke between Payne and West with the house on it already. By 1818, Young began looking for a tenant to occupy his then-vacant house or for a buyer to purchase it. He placed the following advertisement that appeared in the *Alexandria Gazette & Daily Advertiser* on August 4, 1818 (Figure 5):

For Sale or Rent,
The brick house, &c. on the corner of King and Washington str'ts, to which is a large Ice House attached—suitable for a tavern.
On SATURDAY, 29th Aug, at 3P M
I will offer for sale, on the premises, that commodious House, with out-houses attached, situate on Duke-st. to the east of West st. Also a number of vacant lots, suitable for building. The western turnpike road entering this street, it only wants a few persons in business to establish themselves on it to become one of the first streets in Alexandria.
ROBERT YOUNG.¹⁸

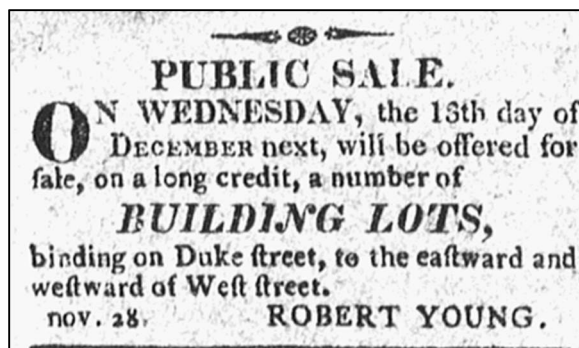


Figure 3. *Alexandria Herald*, December 12, 1817.

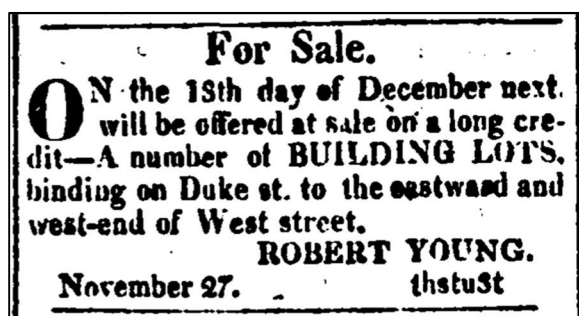


Figure 4. *Alexandria Gazette & Daily Advertiser*, December 2, 1817.

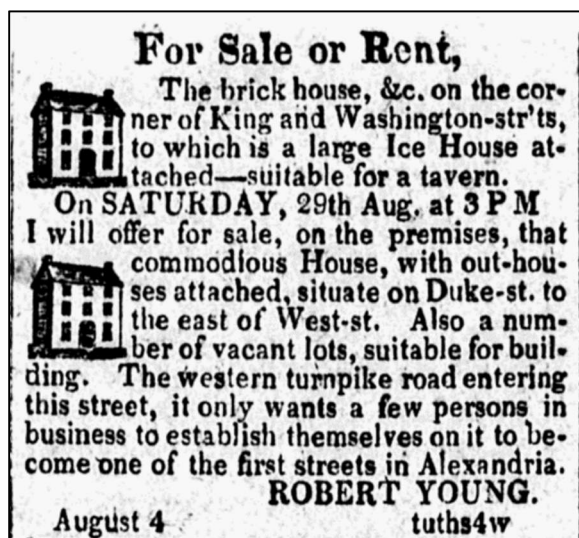


Figure 5. *Alexandria Gazette & Daily Advertiser*, August 4, 1818.

¹⁶ *Alexandria Herald*, December 5, 1817.

¹⁷ *Alexandria Gazette & Daily Advertiser*, December 5, 1817.

¹⁸ *Alexandria Gazette & Daily Advertiser*, August 4, 1818.

age, 11 to 16 years of age, and 10 or younger), and two enslaved African American females (27 to 45, and 15 to 26 years of age) were living in the same household (Figure 7).²¹

On April 20, 1820, the following advertisement appeared in the *Alexandria Gazette & Daily Advertiser* (Figure 8):

SALES AT AUCTION

Public Sale

By virtue of a deed of trust from Robert Young to the subscriber, hearing date the 22d day of May, 1817, for certain purposes therein mentioned, I shall proceed to sell at public auction, on the 20th day of May next, for cash, a three story brick DWELLING HOUSE and LOT, on Duke street, at present occupied by said Robert Young, together with sundry vacant LOTS, situated in the vicinity of the said dwelling house. The sale to commence at the dwelling house, at twelve o'clock on the day of sale. JAMES CARSON, Trustee.²²

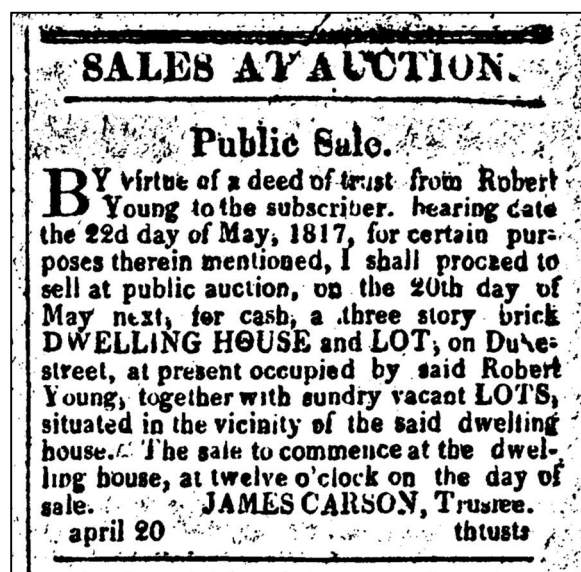


Figure 8. *Alexandria Gazette & Daily Advertiser*, April 20, 1820.

This sale was initially postponed to June 3, 1820, but it would appear that either Robert Young paid the bank what was owed and the auction did not occur.²³ The 1821 City tax assessment of Young's property on Duke between Payne and West is identical to the 1820 assessment²⁴. On July 19, 1821, a similar advertisement again appeared in the *Alexandria Gazette* (Figure 9), stating:

Public Sale

By virtue of Deed of Trust, from Robert Young, to the Subscriber for certain purposes therein mentioned, will be sold at Public AUCTION on the premises, on Monday the 20th day of August next, a number of LOTS on Duke Street, on one of which is erected a three story brick Dwelling House, & c.
Sale to commence at 3 o'clock, P.M. and the terms then and there made known.

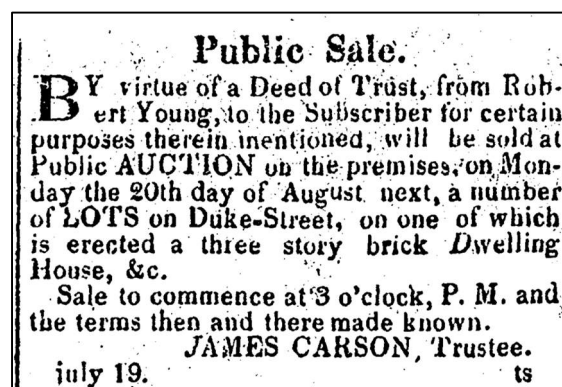


Figure 9. *Alexandria Gazette*, July 19, 1821.

²¹ 1820 US Census, Town and County of Alexandria, District of Columbia.

²² *Alexandria Gazette & Daily Advertiser*, April 20, 1820.

²³ *Alexandria Gazette*, May 29, 1820.

²⁴ 1821 Alexandria Ward IV tax list p. 9.

JAMES CARON, Trustee.²⁵

Despite the auction advertised on August 20, 1821, this advertisement does not appear to run after August 3, 1821. Then, in a deed dated August 17, 1821, three days prior to the advertised auction, Robert Young and his wife Elizabeth sell this lot (along with the two others on Duke Street west of West Street) to James Carson, trustee for the Mechanic's Bank for \$12,000.²⁶

Mechanic's Bank of Alexandria

Despite this recorded sale, the 1822 City tax assessment noted that the property is still owned by Robert Young but was again vacant.²⁷ In the 1823 assessment, the property was then listed as being co-owned by Robert Young and the Mechanic's Bank. Baden is listed as the tenant of the house on the one acre lot between Duke, Payne, and West Streets, and on the following line it is noted that Benjamin Baden lived here in 1823 with only one assessed tithable.²⁸ In June 1822, it was reported that Benjamin Baden was permitted to use the clay on Payne Street, between Prince and Duke for the purpose of making bricks.²⁹

It was not until the 1824 City tax assessment that Robert Young was no longer associated with these properties. In that year, the Mechanic's Bank was listed as the sole owner, again with Benjamin Baden as the occupant with one tithable, but also then with a single cow.³⁰ On April 16, 1823, Baden was extended permission to excavate clay for the purpose of making bricks, to last for the rest of the year.³¹ Robert Young died on October 30, 1824 and, as they were sold in 1821, these properties were not listed in his will, which only listed a single ground rent of \$88 per annum for a property on the corner of King and Patrick Streets.³²

The Mechanic's Bank was still listed as the proprietor of the property in the 1825 City tax assessment, but the lot on Duke between Payne and West was listed as two acres in size instead of one, seemingly an error on the part of the assessor. Baden is still the occupant of this property, but with two tithables in addition to a horse, a cow, and a cart.³³ The following year, in 1826, the proprietor of this property was listed as "Robt Young's Est[ate] or Mechanic's Bank", possibly indicating uncertainty on the part of the City over the ownership of the property or unresolved

²⁵ *Alexandria Gazette*, July 19, 1821.

²⁶ Alexandria D.C. Deed Book L2, p. 230; the spelling of this bank appears to be inconsistent throughout the records encountered for this study, including Mechanics, Mechanics', and Mechanic's. This final spelling is what is found on the Bank's notes so this one is used here unless included within a direct quote.

²⁷ 1822 Alexandria Ward IV tax list p. 9.

²⁸ 1823 Alexandria Ward IV tax list p. 9.

²⁹ *Alexandria Gazette & Advertiser*, June 25, 1822.

³⁰ 1824 Alexandria Ward IV tax list p. 8.

³¹ *Alexandria Herald*, April 16, 1823.

³² Artemel et al., 1987, p. 24; Alexandria Will Book 3, pp. 186-7.

³³ 1825 Alexandria Ward IV tax list p. 9.

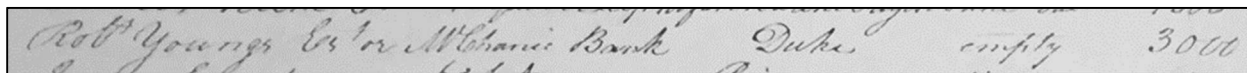


Figure 10. 1826 Ward IV tax list.

issues executing his will, although this property is not named in it. The property was also noted as being empty and the assessed value has decreased to \$3,000 (Figure 10).³⁴

Beginning August 9, 1826, Charles Chapin, Cashier for the Mechanic's Bank, placed an item in the *Alexandria Gazette* advertising for rent and immediate possession (Figure 11):

Also—That commodious three story
BRICK DWELLING HOUSE,
At the upper end of Duke street, formerly the
Residence of the late General Young.
Good tenants may obtain them at low rents, on ap-
plication at the Mechanics' Bank to
CHA. CHAPIN, Cashier.

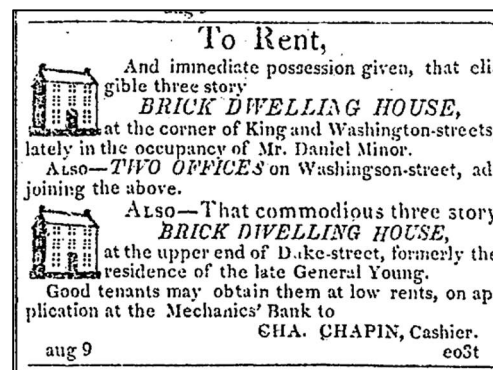


Figure 11. *Alexandria Gazette*, August 9, 1826.

Chapin's advertisement was run every few days for the rest of 1826 and ran until June 13, 1827.

In 1827, the proprietor of the property was again listed specifically as the Mechanic's Bank of Alexandria. John Weston was listed as the tenant with just one tithable.³⁵ By the time of the 1828 City tax assessment, the Mechanic's Bank still owned the property but seems to have split it between two tenants, William Ruse and Elizabeth Roxbury, each occupying one story each.³⁶

Interpretation

Until 1828, 1315 Duke Street was primarily used as a residence on the edge of town (at least when it was occupied). At this point, the property consisted of the Federal-style, three-story, brick main house and at least two, unnamed outbuildings. See Appendix B for a conjectural plan of the main structures during this period. The floorplan of this original building may have been slightly different than it is today, in that it has since been modified as apartments and offices in the late 19th and 20th centuries, but in general, it was probably similar. A fairly typical layout for the period would have been a staircase and hall along an exterior wall, opening onto two rooms opposite the hall, repeated on each floor, and this plan can be seen in contemporary structures throughout Alexandria.

³⁴ 1826 Alexandria Ward IV tax list p. 9.

³⁵ 1827 Alexandria Ward IV tax list p. 9.

³⁶ 1828 Alexandria Ward IV tax list p. 9.

The newspaper advertisements placed by Young refer to these outbuildings as “out-houses attached,” but this should not be read to imply they are either out-houses in the modern sense of exterior bathrooms or that they are physically attached to the main structure. Rather, these are likely to be detached structures or dependencies located on the same property and to be conveyed with it in which some of the functions of the residence have been externalized. While unstated in the advertisement, it is likely that this includes a detached kitchen. The five-bay-wide addition at the rear of 1315 Duke Street is a good candidate for this original, detached kitchen. Architectural evidence and photographs from the Civil War show this was originally a two-story structure with large fireplace that could have been used as a kitchen. As the third story of this wing was not added until the first decade of the 20th century, there may be additional surviving architectural evidence between the second and third floor of this former, lower roofline, and a careful comparison of the northern-most three bays of the eastern wall (on both the first and second floors) should be made to the structure seen in the photograph of the woman holding a basket (Figure 110) to determine if the structure in the photograph is the eastern wall of this original kitchen wing. It is not clear if this kitchen wing was originally physically connected to the main block, but it was not uncommon to build out buildings separately and then connect them with a passageway at a later date.³⁷ It is not clear if this rear wing was used as a kitchen throughout its use as a slave jail or if that function was moved to the low, two-story brick building setback from Payne Street.

Other structures that may be present at 1315 Duke Street while in use as a residence include a privy, a small barn, stable, or shed for the livestock present, small carriage house for the carriage listed in the tax lists, or a number of small, ancillary structures of utilitarian function. A reevaluation of the archaeological work may uncover evidence for one or more of these additional structures. Likewise, an analysis of other early 19th century residences in Alexandria may identify similar sites with known out-buildings.

³⁷ For more on the evolution of urban architecture in regards to slavery in the Chesapeake, see Chappell, Edward A., 2017, “Architecture of Urban Domestic Slavery in the Chesapeake and Jamaica” in *Slavery in the City: Architecture and Landscapes of Urban Slavery in North America*, Ellis, Clifton and Rebecca Ginsburg, eds., University of Virginia Press, Charlottesville.

FRANKLIN & ARMFIELD (1828-1837)

John Armfield and Isaac Franklin formalized their slave-trading partnership February 28, 1828³⁸ and move into 1315 Duke Street shortly thereafter. For the next nine years, operating out of this structure and another office in New Orleans, they developed a business model that would fundamentally transform the domestic slave trade. From the available evidence, their occupation of the site can be divided into two phases. In the first phase, they seem to continue an older model of the domestic slave trade, which largely operated out of taverns and used existing spaces like basements and stables to hold enslaved people before arranging for their resale. However, the growth and development of the cotton-producing regions of the Deep South in the second quarter of the 19th century created a demand for enslaved labor in those regions.³⁹ Coupled with a decline in tobacco prices and agricultural productivity in the Chesapeake, as well as a natural population growth of the enslaved population in that region, led to the conditions that would see an industrial-scale, forced relocation of enslaved African Americans until the end of the Civil War.⁴⁰ To meet this demand for enslaved labor, Franklin & Armfield rapidly adapted their business model. They organized a network of agents across the region, from the Eastern Shore of Maryland to the Blue Ridge Mountains, from Baltimore to Richmond. They made credit available to their buyers. They purchased a fleet of ships to transport enslaved people from the Chesapeake to the Deep South. They set up additional offices and complexes in New Orleans, Louisiana and Natchez, Mississippi. And, most importantly for this study, they made physical changes to the property at 1315 Duke Street specifically designed to imprison large numbers of enslaved people. One visitor in 1838, about two years after most of these changes seem to have been completed, went so far as to call the operation at 1315 Duke Street “Franklin & Armfield’s immense slave factory”, a term frequently used to describe the barracoon’s on the African coast.⁴¹

Armfield had entered the domestic slave trade in Alexandria prior to moving his operations into 1315 Duke Street with Isaac Franklin. In 1826, two years before moving into 1315 Duke Street, he advertised in the *Alexandria Gazette* (Figure 12):

Cash for Negroes.

THE subscriber wishes to purchase THIRTY-FIVE OR FORTY LIKELY NEGROES, either separately or in families, for which the highest price will be given. —Apply at Mr. Elias P. Legg’s, on St. Asaph-street, or any information addressed to me in Alexandria, through the post-office, will be attended to.

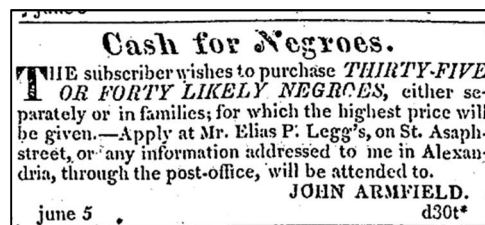


Figure 12. *Alexandria Gazette*, June 5, 1826.

³⁸ Stephenson, *Isaac Franklin, Slave Trader...*, 1938, p. 23. Cited in Artemel et al., 1987, p. 26.

³⁹ Ridgeway, Michael, *A Peculiar Business: Slave Trading in Alexandria*, 1976, p. 9.

⁴⁰ Ibid, p. 9-14.

⁴¹ McKim, J.M. *A Sketch of the Slave Trade in the District of Columbia*, 1838, p. 14.

JOHN ARMFIELD⁴²

Armfield continued to operate out of Elias P. Legg's tavern at the corner of King and St. Asaph Street in 1827, as advertised in the *Alexandria Phenix Gazette* (Figure 13).⁴³

Likewise, Franklin also appeared to have advertised in the local papers prior to joining with Armfield. As early as May 26, 1821, Franklin was in the area, advertising that he would like “to purchase 18 or 20 likely young negro boys and girls” and could be found at the bar of Joshua Tennison's hotel, formerly the Washington Hotel, located “on Pennsylvania Avenue, first house east of the President's, and one mile from the Capitol” (Figure 14).⁴⁴ While probably not placed by Isaac Franklin, between February 15, 1828 and April 7, the following advertisement, extremely similar to Armfield's of 1826, appeared in the *Alexandria Gazette* (Figure 15):

Cash for Negroes.

THE subscriber wishes to purchase 25 or 30 young negroes of both sexes, between the ages of 12 and 25 years. For information enquire at Mr. Elias P. Legg's; any letters addressed to the subscriber through the post-office at Alexandria will be promptly attended to.
S.C. FRANKLIN

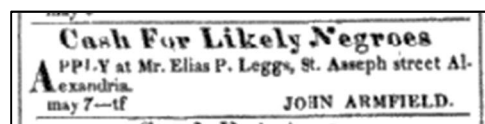


Figure 13. *Alexandria Phenix Gazette*, May 11, 1827.

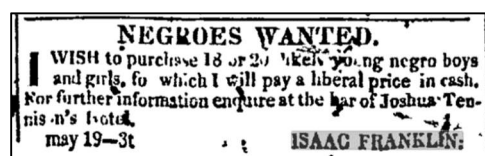


Figure 14. *Daily National Intelligencer*, May 26, 1821.

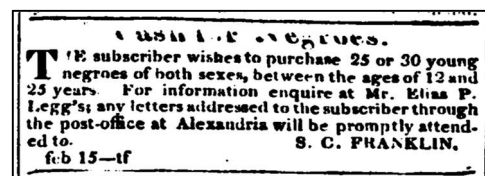


Figure 15. *Alexandria Phenix Gazette*, February 15, 1828.

This advertisement was placed by Smith C. Franklin, who, according to the will of his brother Henry M. Franklin⁴⁵, was Isaac Franklin's brother's son and Martha [formerly Franklin] Armfield's brother, which makes him Isaac Franklin's nephew and John Armfield's brother-in-law. Given their familial and business relationships, the similarities in language of these ads appear to be more than coincidental. Smith Franklin appears again in connection with Franklin & Armfield's lease and purchase of 1315 Duke Street (see more on this below). In any case, as early as May 7, 1828, Isaac Franklin and John Armfield began advertising in the local newspapers under the name Franklin & Armfield (Figure 16). The advertisement that appeared that day read:

⁴² *Alexandria Gazette*, June 5, 1826.

⁴³ *Alexandria Phenix Gazette*, May 11, 1827.

⁴⁴ *Washington Daily National Intelligencer*, May 26, 1821; *National Intelligencer and Washington Advertiser*, January 10, 1803; *Daily National Intelligencer*, May 1, 1817.

⁴⁵ Will of Henry M. Franklin, June 18, 1837, Sumner County, Tennessee Will Book Vol. II, 1823-1842, p. 223 (pp. 155-6 in typeset copy).

Cash in Market

THE subscribers will give the highest Cash Price, for 100 Like Young Negroes, of both sexes, between the ages of 8 and 25 years.

Any letters addressed to the subscribers through the Post Office at Alexandria, will be promptly attended to. For any information, enquire at Mr. Elias P. Leggs, St. Asaph street, Alexandria, D.C.

FRANKLIN & ARMFIELD.⁴⁶

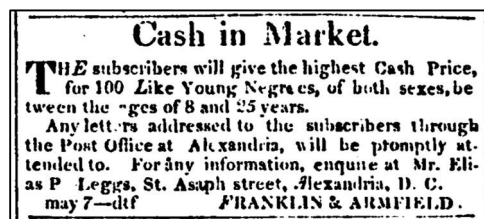


Figure 16. Alexandria Phenix Gazette, May 7, 1828.

This advertisement was repeated on May 13⁴⁷, but just two days later, on May 15th, they ran another advertisement, this time announcing their move to 1315 Duke Street (Figure 17). It read:

Cash in Market.

THE subscribers having leased for a term of years the large three story brick house on Duke street, in the town of Alexandria, D.C. formerly occupied by Gen. Young, we wish to purchase one hundred and fifty likely young negroes of both sexes between the ages of 8 and 25 years. Persons who wish to sell will do well to give us a call, as we are determined to give more than any other purchasers that are in market, or that may hereafter come into market.

Any letters addressed to the subscribers through the Post Office at Alexandria, will be promptly attended to. For information, enquire at the above described house, as we can at all times be found there.

FRANKLIN & ARMFIELD⁴⁸

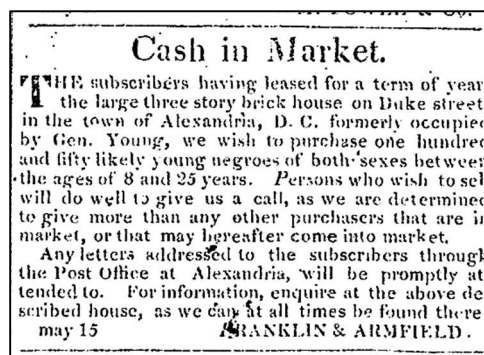


Figure 17. Alexandria Gazette, May 15, 1828.

A lease between the Mechanic's Bank and Smith Franklin and John Armfield entered into the Alexandria Deed Book in 1832 notes that their five year lease of the property on the 1300 block of Duke Street would expire on May 10, 1833, indicating that it had been signed May 10, 1828⁴⁹.

The 1829 City tax list for Ward IV still listed the Mechanic's Bank as the owner of the property at Duke, Payne, and West, but for the first time noted that the business of Franklin & Armfield was the occupant. The assessed value of the property increased back to \$3,600 and also listed at the property were five tithables. The 1829 list of tithables for the county described these five tithables as three white males over 16 years of age and two enslaved females over 16 years of age⁵⁰. Also included in the 1829 City tax assessment were four horses, four cows, and a pair of two-wheeled carriages, one assessed at \$200 and the other at \$100. Ominously, under the

⁴⁶ Alexandria Phenix Gazette, May 7, 1828.

⁴⁷ Alexandria Gazette, May 13, 1828.

⁴⁸ Alexandria Gazette, May 15, 1828.

⁴⁹ Alexandria Deed Book U2, p. 89; see more on this lease and property transaction below.

⁵⁰ 1829 Arlington [Alexandria] County Tithables list.

heading “Occupier”, the City’s tax assessor noted the property was occupied by “Franklin’s blackhole” (Figure 18).⁵¹

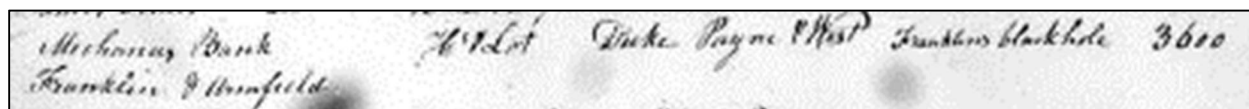


Figure 18. 1829 Ward IV Tax list, showing "Franklin's blackhole".

The \$600 increase in the assessed value of this property probably represents the construction of relatively modest changes to the main building, its outbuildings, and the property to convert it for use in the domestic slave trade. Compared to previous years when this structure was used as a dwelling, there is more livestock present, as is there an additional carriage. If their advertisements are to be believed (as well as the US Census from the following year), Franklin & Armfield had the ability to hold captive upwards of 150 enslaved persons at a time. This would have necessitated physical changes to the property, including modification of the main building and construction of additional structures. The word “blackhole”, used by the tax assessor to describe the property in 1829 conjures images of dark, subterranean basements or dungeons, known to have been used in the domestic slave trade (George Kephart was known to have used basements in this manner at his Maryland plantation (see below). Furthermore, while not conclusive, prior to 1833, there are no primary accounts describing the physical layout and arrangement of the domestic slave trade operations at 1315 Duke Street. In early 1833, a visitor writes of “a depot at Alexandria, where they [enslaved people] are penned like cattle” (see Davis below), and it is not until January of 1834 that the first detailed description of the slave pen complex is written (see Leavitt below). There is not another increase in assessed property value until the 1834 City tax assessment. During these years, Franklin & Armfield do not own the property, they are only leasing it as tenants, and therefore, may be reluctant (or unable) to make major changes to the building or the property. Taken together, this evidence makes it possible to argue that the initial physical changes to the property at 1315 Duke Street were relatively limited during these first years of Franklin & Armfield’s occupation of the property.

In 1830, the City tax assessment noted that Franklin & Armfield still occupied the 1300 block of Duke Street, and are listed as only having four tithables, six horses, four cows, and a pair of two-wheeled passenger carriages. A new column for furniture was added to the City’s tax list and the business is noted as owning \$200 of furniture. Furthermore, Franklin & Armfield are noted as “Negro Traders” and on the following line “at 100 Dollars Each”.⁵² There is some confusion here with this notation, but it appears to be the assessed value of the pair of two-wheeled passenger carriages and not an assessed fee for being engaged in the domestic slave trade. On March 20, 1830, the Alexandria City Council passed “An Act for raising a Revenue for the Year Eighteen

⁵¹ 1829 Alexandria Ward IV tax list p. 9.

⁵² 1830 Alexandria Ward IV tax list p. 9.

Hundred and Thirty”.⁵³ In it, there is detailed a relatively complicated tax structure for riding carriages, dependent on their assessed value:

On every Riding Carriage, kept either for private use or hire, with either two or four wheels, the assessed value of which shall amount to four hundred dollars or upwards, ten dollars.

On all such as may be assessed at two hundred and fifty dollars, and not exceeding four hundred dollars, seven dollars.

On all such as may be assessed at one hundred dollars, and not amounting to two hundred and fifty dollars, five dollars.

On all other Riding Carriages, the assessed value of which does not amount to one hundred dollars, four dollars.

Because of the way this tax was structured, it was necessary to assess the value of any riding carriages in addition to noting the quantity present.

The City tax code of 1830 also specifies, “On every person whose principal business is the buying and selling of Slaves, whether as Principal or Agent, fifty dollars”, although it is not indicated how many individuals at this business would be charged the \$50 tax for being engaged in the slave trade or if the notation “Negro Traders” was a single charge for the entire business. Because there was a need to assess the value of these riding carriages and the amount taxed for being engaged in the slave trade was not \$100, this notation is related to the pair of riding carriages.

The 1830 U.S. Census for this property is particularly noteworthy. Conducted on June 1, 1830, the census listed as residing here under the “family” name Armfield & Franklin, two white males between the ages of 20 and 30 and 145 enslaved people. Of these enslaved, there were 71 men (one under 10 years old, 50 between 10 and 24 years old, and 20 between 24 and 36 years old)

SCHEDULE of the whole number of Persons within the Division allotted to		by the Marshal of the District (or Territory) of	
NAME	AGE	MALES	FEMALES
Armfield & Franklin	20	1	1
Armfield & Franklin	25	1	1
Armfield & Franklin	30	1	1
Armfield & Franklin	35	1	1
Armfield & Franklin	40	1	1
Armfield & Franklin	45	1	1
Armfield & Franklin	50	1	1
Armfield & Franklin	55	1	1
Armfield & Franklin	60	1	1
Armfield & Franklin	65	1	1
Armfield & Franklin	70	1	1
Armfield & Franklin	75	1	1
Armfield & Franklin	80	1	1
Armfield & Franklin	85	1	1
Armfield & Franklin	90	1	1
Armfield & Franklin	95	1	1
Armfield & Franklin	100	1	1
Armfield & Franklin	105	1	1
Armfield & Franklin	110	1	1
Armfield & Franklin	115	1	1
Armfield & Franklin	120	1	1
Armfield & Franklin	125	1	1
Armfield & Franklin	130	1	1
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Armfield & Franklin	215	1	1
Armfield & Franklin	220	1	1
Armfield & Franklin	225	1	1
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Armfield & Franklin	410	1	1
Armfield & Franklin	415	1	1
Armfield & Franklin	420	1	1
Armfield & Franklin	425	1	1
Armfield & Franklin	430	1	1
Armfield & Franklin	435	1	1
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Armfield & Franklin	755	1	1
Armfield & Franklin	760	1	1
Armfield & Franklin	765	1	1
Armfield & Franklin	770	1	1
Armfield & Franklin	775	1	1
Armfield & Franklin	780	1	1
Armfield & Franklin	785	1	1
Armfield & Franklin	790	1	1
Armfield & Franklin	795	1	1
Armfield & Franklin	800	1	1
Armfield & Franklin	805	1	1
Armfield & Franklin	810	1	1
Armfield & Franklin	815	1	1
Armfield & Franklin	820	1	1
Armfield & Franklin	825	1	1
Armfield & Franklin	830	1	1
Armfield & Franklin	835	1	1
Armfield & Franklin	840	1	1
Armfield & Franklin	845	1	1
Armfield & Franklin	850	1	1
Armfield & Franklin	855	1	1
Armfield & Franklin	860	1	1
Armfield & Franklin	865	1	1
Armfield & Franklin	870	1	1
Armfield & Franklin	875	1	1
Armfield & Franklin	880	1	1
Armfield & Franklin	885	1	1
Armfield & Franklin	890	1	1
Armfield & Franklin	895	1	1
Armfield & Franklin	900	1	1
Armfield & Franklin	905	1	1
Armfield & Franklin	910	1	1
Armfield & Franklin	915	1	1
Armfield & Franklin	920	1	1
Armfield & Franklin	925	1	1
Armfield & Franklin	930	1	1
Armfield & Franklin	935	1	1
Armfield & Franklin	940	1	1
Armfield & Franklin	945	1	1
Armfield & Franklin	950	1	1
Armfield & Franklin	955	1	1
Armfield & Franklin	960	1	1
Armfield & Franklin	965	1	1
Armfield & Franklin	970	1	1
Armfield & Franklin	975	1	1
Armfield & Franklin	980	1	1
Armfield & Franklin	985	1	1
Armfield & Franklin	990	1	1
Armfield & Franklin	995	1	1
Armfield & Franklin	1000	1	1

Figure 19. 1830 US Census, showing the business of Armfield & Franklin and 145 enslaved persons at 1315 Duke Street.

⁵³ Appearing in the *Alexandria Gazette*, March 24, 1830.

and 74 women (four under 10 years old, 50 between 10 and 24 years old, and 20 between 24 and 36 years old) (Figure 19).⁵⁴ Neither Franklin nor Armfield were between the ages of 20 and 30 when this census was taken, so these two white males must be two of the firms' employees.

Throughout the spring of 1830 and into the summer and fall, Franklin & Armfield advertised in the *Alexandria Gazette* that they wished to purchase enslaved people, both men and women, between the ages of 12 and 25 (Figure 20).⁵⁵ They claimed to be able to pay higher prices than any other purchaser and promised prompt communication if written to at their Alexandria offices at 1315 Duke Street. Once the slave-trading firm had purchased or collected enough people, they would arrange to send them south to New Orleans by water or to Natchez, Mississippi by land.

Franklin & Armfield advertised the sailing of the packet schooner *James Monroe* to New Orleans, leaving on April 5, 1830 (no known manifest of enslaved persons onboard exists for this voyage) (Figure 21),⁵⁶ but no documented slave ships are known to have departed Alexandria during the late spring and summer of 1830, until the Brig *United States* sailed for New Orleans on October 19th with 171 enslaved people on board, more than four months after the census was taken.⁵⁷ While many people were sent south by ship, during the summer months Franklin and Armfield were known to have organized overland coffles, lines of people chained together, leaving from Alexandria and ending at the Forks of the Road slave market in Natchez, Mississippi.⁵⁸ Because they were not subject to the same kinds of regulatory oversight intended to prevent the international trafficking in enslaved people that required the production of these shipping manifests, these overland trips to the South are less well-documented than the ones made by ship. The 1830 Census probably captures the beginning of one in the Alexandria Slave Pen of Franklin & Armfield. See the accounts by Andrews and Featherstonhaugh below for a description of the preparations made for an overland coffle and an encounter with one of Armfield's overland coffles while crossing the New River in Tennessee.⁵⁹

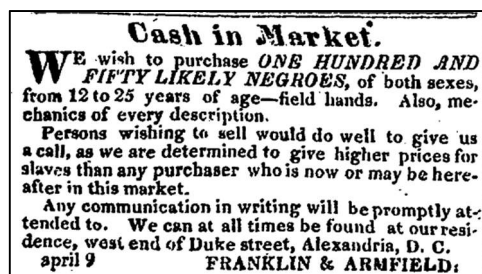


Figure 20. *Alexandria Gazette*, April 10, 1830.

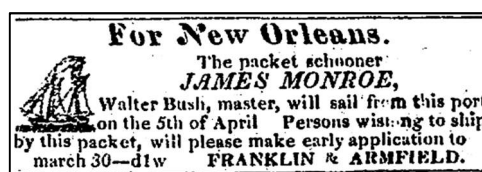


Figure 21. *Alexandria Gazette*, April 3, 1830.

⁵⁴ 1830 US Census.

⁵⁵ See for example *Alexandria Gazette*, April 10, 1830.

⁵⁶ *Alexandria Gazette*, April 3, 1830.

⁵⁷ Ship manifest, Brig *United States*, October 19, 1830.

⁵⁸ See Ridgeway, 1976, p. 3, 79-83.

⁵⁹ For a series of period descriptions of overland coffles, see *Slavery and the Internal Slave Trade in the United States of North America*, Executive Committee of the American Anti-Slavery Society, 1841, pp. 53-62.

Sometime in 1830, the Mechanic's Bank entered into an agreement with Smith Franklin and John Armfield that it would continue to lease to the firm of Franklin & Armfield the 1315 Duke Street property "in consideration of certain improvements to be made by the said Franklin & Armfield on a certain tenement & lot of ground on the north side of Duke Street, in the town of Alexandria, then & now occupied by the said Franklin & Armfield."⁶⁰ Curiously, it is not Isaac Franklin entering into this agreement with John Armfield, but Smith Franklin. The instrument lists Smith Franklin as a co-partner in the firm and differentiates "the firm of Franklin and Armfield" and the two men named in the instrument as "Franklin & Armfield". Perhaps Isaac Franklin empowered his nephew to represent him in business matters in Alexandria. The legal instrument in which this agreement is described was entered into the Alexandria deed books November 10, 1832 and notes that the agreed upon improvements had been made and that Franklin & Armfield's lease would be extended on May 10, 1833 for a period of five additional years.

The 1831 City tax assessment for this property again lists Franklin & Armfield as "Negro Dealers". Also listed again are five tithables, as well as \$300 of furniture, eight horses, four cows, and their pair of two-wheeled carriages, valued at \$100 and \$200. Inexplicably, the tax assessor lists the building on the property as having four stories, instead of three.⁶¹ This fourth story is probably an error as the building returns to three stories in the following year's tax assessment.⁶²

The 1832 City tax assessment saw the addition of a fifth cow to the property and notes beside Franklin & Armfield "at 100 Each", probably assessing the value of their carriages. Unlike previous years, the amount levied "on every person trafficking in Slaves on his own account, or as agent for others not subject to this tax" was increased to \$100 in March 1832.⁶³ While "@100 Each" matches the amount charged by the City for trafficking slaves, it is very similar to the notation from previous years before the tax was \$100, the value changes from 100 to two different numbers that are not the same as charged by the City for engaging in the domestic slave trade in future years (see 1834 for example), and there still existed the need to assess the value of riding carriages as provided by the tax code.

The following two transactions, first Franklin & Armfield supposedly purchasing the property from the Mechanic's Bank at auction and then two months later they renewed their lease with the Mechanic's Bank, are not entirely understood and should be revisited to clarify the context of this sequence. According to a deed recorded on May 6, 1835, Isaac Franklin and John Armfield purchased at public auction on October 5, 1832, "three certain lots at the head of Duke Street"

⁶⁰ Alexandria Deed Book U2, p. 89.

⁶¹ 1831 Alexandria Ward IV tax list p. 9.

⁶² 1832 Alexandria Ward IV tax list p. 10.

⁶³ "An ACT for raising a Revenue for the Year eighteen hundred and thirty-two", March 17, 1832, printed in the *Alexandria Gazette*, March 23, 1832.

from the Mechanic's Bank for \$2,500. These lots were the ones formerly belonging to Robert Young, and included the north side of the 1300 block of Duke Street as well as the northwest and southwest corners of the intersection of Duke and West Streets.⁶⁴

Then, almost two months after supposedly placing the high bid on the property at auction, as the original five year lease of the property was set to expire in a few months, on November 24, 1832 Smith Franklin and John Armfield enter into a rental agreement with the Mechanic's Bank for an additional term of five years, starting on May 10, 1833 and ending May 10, 1837. As a stipulation of this agreement, "it is further understood & agreed upon by the said parties, that no change or alteration is to be made in the premises, except such as the said Franklin & Armfield may consent to put up & execute at their own expense, & which may, on application to the parties lessors herein, may be deemed reasonable." As shown, the agreement to extend the lease by five years dates back to 1830 (prior to the purchase at auction in 1832) and perhaps Franklin & Armfield were utilizing the terms of that agreement prior to fulfilling the terms of the auction purchase, which are currently unknown.

Prior to the purchase of the property by Franklin & Armfield in October 1832, there is little evidence to suggest the property at 1315 Duke Street underwent a fundamental transformation that would convert it from the Federal-style residence of Robert Young to the jail complex photographed extensively during the Civil War. The assessed value of the property does not increase very much prior to this point in time and there are no primary accounts or visual depictions describing a jail complex at the property. Other structures known to have been used as slave jails such as George Kephart's property outside Frederick, Maryland or Alexander Grigsby's in Centerville, Virginia show little exterior modification. In the fall of 1832, the newspaper advertisements of Franklin & Armfield solicit relatively modest numbers of enslaved persons, only 150 enslaved persons compared to the 300 that Baltimore-based trafficker Austin Woolfolk was soliciting in the same issues of the newspaper or the 500 enslaved persons Franklin & Armfield begin advertising for in the spring of 1835. Furthermore, the firm had only recently purchased the Brig *Tribune* in late summer or fall of the previous year to replace the Brig *Comet*, which had wrecked on the Bahamian island of Abaco January 2, 1831, and did not yet own the Brigs *Uncas* or *Isaac Franklin*.⁶⁵ It is not clear that they owned the Brig *United States*, but they no longer advertise packet service to New Orleans aboard that ship after January 1830.⁶⁶ It would appear that the firm lacked the capacity they would later have to transport large numbers of enslaved persons to the South. The available evidence seems to suggest that the majority of the slave jail complex on the 1300 block of Duke Street as photograph extensively during the Civil War did not exist prior to the purchase of the property by Franklin & Armfield in October 1832.

⁶⁴ Alexandria, D.C. Deed Book V2, p. 260. This citation is sometimes noted as Deed Book Y2, p. 260, but that is incorrect.

⁶⁵ Ridgeway 1976, p 57-8.

⁶⁶ *Alexandria Gazette*, January 12, 1830.

If the major architectural elements frequently associated with the slave jail complex at 1315 Duke Street like the tall, separate enclosed brick yards for enslaved men and women, paved courtyards surrounded by two-story brick buildings, fences, hospitals, tailor shops, and other various buildings as described in primary source accounts from the site (see below) do not exist by early fall 1832, they are certainly built shortly thereafter. Possibly within the next 15 months and certainly by 1836, it would appear that, with the notable exception of raising the walls and enclosing the men's yard, the majority of the slave jail complex was built.

The first of many written descriptions of the slave jail at Alexandria comes from a travel account written by Stephens Davis in 1833. Sometime around January 29, 1833, Davis visits Alexandria and records the following:

"I had seen slaves in Washington, and a depot at Alexandria, where they are penned like cattle, and bought and sold, and I had repeatedly read advertisements respecting them in the papers, of which the following, from the Washington Globe of January 29, 1833, (while I was there) are samples [Davis then proceeds to cite an advertisement placed by Franklin & Armfield and James Williams (keeper of the prison of Washington County, D.C.) and five other similar advertisements appearing in newspapers around this time).⁶⁷

The 1833 City tax assessment continued to list the Mechanic's Bank as the proprietors of the property at 1315 Duke Street and Franklin & Armfield as the occupants, perhaps because Franklin & Armfield had yet to complete the terms of the sale and the deed was not recorded until 1835. The business is noted as "Slave Traders", with a pair of "@100" notations for their two carriages and are assessed for only three horses and four cows.⁶⁸

Beginning on May 9, 1833 and running into the early spring 1834, Franklin & Armfield place a new series of advertisements in the newspaper. The first one read (Figure 22):

CASH IN MARKET.
WE will pay cash for any number of LIKELY NEGROES (of both sexes) from 12 to 25 years of age, Field Hands. Also, Mechanics of every description. Apply to
R. C. Ballard & Co. Richmond, Va.
J. M. Saunders & Co. Warrenton, Va.
George Kepheart & Co. Fredericktown, Md.
James F. Purveis & Co. Baltimore.
Thomas M. Jones, Easton, Eastern Shore of Maryland, or to the subscribers at their residence in Alexandria.
Persons having likely servants to dispose of, will do well to give us a call, as we, at all times, will pay higher prices in cash than any other purchaser who is now or may hereafter come into market.

CASH IN MARKET.
WE will pay Cash for any number of likely Negroes, of both sexes, from 12 to 25 years of age, Field Hands. Also, Mechanics of every description. Apply to
R. C. Ballard & Co. Richmond, Va.
J. M. Saunders & Co. Warrenton, Va.
George Kepheart & Co. Fredericktown, Md.
James F. Purveis & Co. Baltimore.
Thomas M. Jones, Easton, Eastern Shore of Md.
Or, to the subscribers, at their residence in Alexandria.
Persons having likely servants to dispose of, will do well to give us a call, as we at all times will pay higher prices in cash than any other purchaser who is now or may hereafter come into market.
All communications promptly attended to.
may 9—dtf **FRANKLIN & ARMFIELD.**

Figure 22. Washington Daily National Intelligencer, May 9, 1833

⁶⁷ Davis, Stephens, *Notes of a tour in America, in 1832 and 1833*, 1833.

⁶⁸ 1833 Alexandria Ward IV tax list p. 9.

All communications promptly attended to.
FRANKLIN & ARMFIELD.⁶⁹

Some versions of this advertisement, like the one that ran on March 29, 1834 in the *Alexandria Gazette* (Figure 23), would remove Jones' name and add one or more of the following agents:

John Ware, Port Tobacco, Md.
William Hooper, Annapolis, Maryland
A. Grimm, Fredericksburg, Virginia.⁷⁰

While very few primary business records survive from the firms that operated out of 1315 Duke Street (with the notable exceptions of the papers of Rice C. Ballard, a partial ledger in the 1846 case *Kephart v. Bruin*, and the abstracted contents of thirteen letters recovered from 1315 Duke Street in 1861 and published by Conway), advertisements like these help reconstruct the activities and employees of the businesses. In June 1834, John Armfield advertises that he is looking for a pair of “first-rate...Bay Horses, of large size, young, and well broken to harness”, presumably to take on an upcoming overland trip. He notes that anyone with such a pair should contact him in Alexandria or contact Birch & Jones at Lloyd's Hotel in Washington.⁷¹ Frederic Bancroft argues that between this connection and the fact that many of Birch & Jones' advertisements run with the same dates and printing instructions, Birch also appears to be an agent of Franklin & Armfield. It is not immediately clear which Birch (James or William, see more below) is referred to in this advertisement, but it would appear to be James H. Birch as he places advertisements in the local newspaper later in 1834 noting he “can at all times be found at Isaac Beers's Tavern, a few doors below Lloyds' Tavern” in Washington.⁷² A year later, in a slightly different advertisement, he notes that he can be found “at the MECHANIC'S HALL, now kept by B.O. Sheckle [Benjamin O. Sheckells], and formerly kept by Isaac Beers, on 7th street, a few doors below Lloyd's Tavern, opposite the Centre Market.”⁷³ James H. Birch appears to get out of the slave trading business sometime in early 1841, posting his last known advertisement February 2, 1841,⁷⁴ and opens the United States Hotel on Pennsylvania Avenue between 3rd and 4th Streets in Washington D.C. with Thompson Tyler in October 1844.⁷⁵

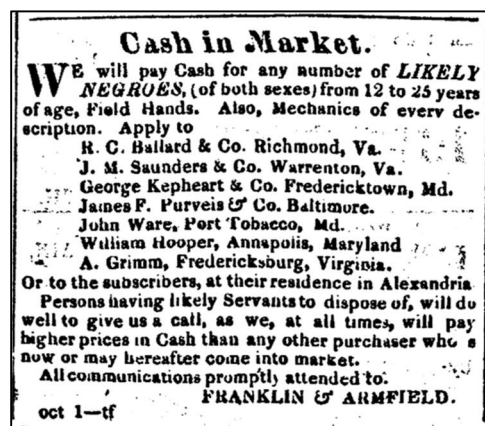


Figure 23. *Alexandria Gazette*, March 29, 1834.

⁶⁹ *Washington Daily National Intelligencer*, May 9, 1833.

⁷⁰ *Alexandria Gazette*, March 29, 1834.

⁷¹ *Washington Daily Globe*, June 7, 1834.

⁷² *Washington Daily Globe*, December 31, 1834.

⁷³ *Washington Daily Globe*, December 4, 1835.

⁷⁴ *Washington Daily National Intelligencer*, February 2, 1841.

⁷⁵ *Whig Standard*, October 17, 1844.

While some of these partnerships with Franklin & Armfield predate these advertisements (Ballard and Alsop partnered with Franklin & Armfield in 1831⁷⁶), this advertisement that lists the firms agents, from Richmond to Baltimore, from the mountains to the Eastern Shore, seems to represent a new way of organizing the domestic slave trade that is markedly different than the first quarter of the 19th century and its publication corresponds to the start of a two or three year period where Franklin & Armfield make significant investment to their property at 1315 Duke Street.⁷⁷

The 1834 Cohen & Company *A Full Directory for Washington City, Georgetown, and Alexandria* (Figure 24), placed the reversely-named Armfield & Franklin (as the firm is named in the 1830 US Census) on “Duke near Fayette street”⁷⁸ Fayette Street is one street east of Payne Street, and for some reason is frequently used in relation to the slave jail at 1315 Duke Street, for example, several times by Kephart, once in a proposed 1853 property division⁷⁹ and once in an 1858 letter to Walker R. Millan notifying him that he has sold the property and Walker needs to vacate the premises,⁸⁰ and frequently in City tax lists.⁸¹ Unlike many of the merchants, tradesmen, and businesses listed in the directory, Franklin & Armfield do not have an occupation listed.

This was also the first year that Franklin & Armfield are listed as the proprietors of the property on the north side of Duke Street, between Payne and West and not just occupants. The assessed value of the property has increased to \$4,600 and they are listed as having \$400 of furniture. Only three tithables are recorded as being at this property, along with two horses, three cows, and a pair of riding carriages, one

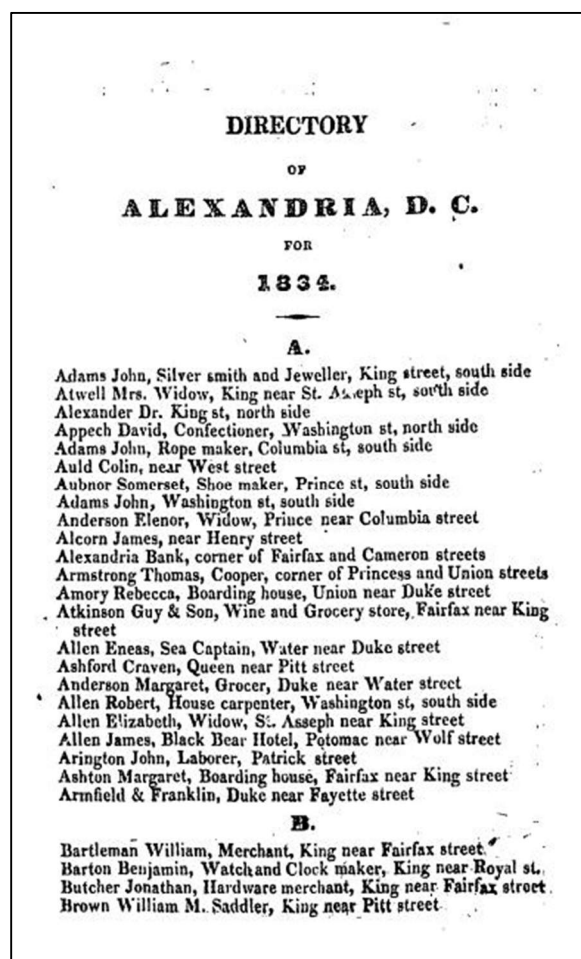


Figure 24. *A Full Directory for Washington City, Georgetown, and Alexandria*, Cohen & Company, 1834.

⁷⁶ Yagyu, Tomoko, *Slave Traders and Planters in the Expanding South*, 2006, p. 144.

⁷⁷ Bancroft, Frederic, *Slave-Trading in the Old South*, 1931, p. 59.

⁷⁸ E.A. Cohen & Company, 1834, *A Full Directory for Washington City, Georgetown, and Alexandria*.

⁷⁹ *Alexandria Gazette*, December 23, 1853.

⁸⁰ *Millan v. Kephart*, October Term, 1867, Report of Cases Decided in the Supreme Court of Appeals of Virginia.

Peachy R. Grattan. Volume XVI. pp. 523-44.

⁸¹ See 1837, 1838, and 1840 City tax lists.

assessed at \$150 and the other at \$250. There is an additional notation in the column for “Carts + Drays”, but it appears to also read “150” and “250” and looks like there was an attempt to erase or remove these figures, so these may be the two riding carriages entered into the wrong field.⁸²

While not conclusive evidence, the increase in the assessed value of the property by \$1,000 (and the increase of \$2,400 between 1835 and 1836) represents a significant increase in the value of the property and probably signifies the construction of additional buildings or architectural elements designed to adapt the property to use in the domestic slave trade. Prior to this increase in the assessed value of the property, there is no recorded account documenting the architectural elements most associated with the slave pen complex at 1315 Duke Street. Furthermore, it should be noted that three of the best primary accounts of the site were written in the 18 months between January 1834 and July 1835 (see Leavitt, Abdy, and Andrews below). While unstated by these authors, one could argue that the new construction assessed in the 1834 City tax list represented a dramatic change in the scale of the slave jail architecture compared to what previously stood at the site, and this change, in part, is what attracted the attention of northern abolitionists.

Additional research into the abolition movement during this period may reveal these visits to be a part of a larger, national strategy on the part of anti-slavery activists.

Because of the proximity to the nation’s capital and the ease of access it afforded to visitors from the North, as well as the legal status of Alexandria, D.C. under the jurisdiction of the federal Congress, Franklin & Armfield’s domestic slave trading establishment attracted the attention of abolitionists and anti-slavery advocates nationwide. Some of the best physical descriptions of the property and the structures comprising the slave jail complex at 1315 Duke Street come from accounts written by these visitors, and Armfield and his employees were more than willing to show them the property.

On February 1, 1834, the Revered Joshua Leavitt published the first of several of these accounts as a letter in the *New York Evangelist*.⁸³ The letter, running under the title “THE AMERICAN SLAVE TRADE”, is too long to reproduce in its entirety here, so only sections relevant to the physical building and lot are cited below. Leavitt dated his letter January 23, 1834 and in it he states that he has “just returned from a scene...[he] had not expected ever to witness”, indicating that his visit was on or near this date.

He continues:

We accordingly proceeded to the outskirts of the city, until we came to a handsome, three story, brick house, *very* handsomely painted, with green blinds. It had a large yard, perhaps 300 feet square, enclosed by a close board fence, neatly whitewashed, and almost filled with various small buildings. Over the door was the sign, FRANKLIN & ARMFIELD. We knocked, and were introduced to the office, where was a very gentlemanly person, who was one of the principals of the concern. The other partner resides at New Orleans.

⁸² 1834 Alexandria Ward IV tax list p. 10.

⁸³ *New York Evangelist*, February 1, 1834.

From this passage, it would appear that Leavitt met with John Armfield himself and was given a lengthy tour of the property and overview of their business. Leavitt relays that Armfield discussed the business of the domestic slave trade at length, including estimates of the number of slaves shipped from the District of Columbia in the previous year (about 1000) and the predictions that number would rise in 1834 as a result of the increase in the price of cotton in the south as well as the estimate that his firm would ship at least 1100 or 1200 that year. Armfield also discussed their use of their two brigs to ship enslaved people to New Orleans. Leavitt's estimate of a yard measuring 300 feet square and enclosed by a close board fence is an estimate that seems on the high end. The property here on the north side of the 1300 block of Duke Street measures 246 feet 10 inches between Payne and West Streets and only 176 feet 7 inches to a point midway between Duke and Prince Street, an area approximately only half of the estimated 300 feet square.

The tour continued:

He then politely invited us to go out and see the slaves. We were first taken into a paved yard 40 or 50 feet square, with a very high brick wall, and about half of it covered with a roof. The wall was whitewashed, and the pavement perfectly clean. A pump in the centre furnished an ample supply of water. In the covered part was a long table set with tin plates, each containing an allowance of bread and boiled meat, apparently wholesome in quality, and sufficient in quantity for persons confined to a space so limited, without labor. This yard is appropriated to the men, the two sexes being *entirely* separated, except at their meals. He ordered the men to be called out from the cellar where they sleep, and they soon came up, to the number, I should say, of 50 or 60, and ranged themselves irregularly before us....

From another contemporaneous account (see Andrews below), the men's yard is to the left (or west) of the site. Leavitt estimates this yard, enclosed by a high brick wall, to be 40 or 50 feet square. The three Civil War-era maps that show this space (Figures 117, 118, and 119) show similar measurements at approximately 47' x 47', 48' x 46', and 51' x 49', all right around the upper limit of his estimate. During archaeological testing, the lower sections of this brick wall were encountered (Feature 101 and 116) and measured 52' x 52' square. A line of postholes running east/west (Features 109, 110, 115, and 120) and spaced approximately six feet apart roughly divide this space in half and may have supported the roof covering about half of the yard (Figure 25). The Civil War-era photographs of this space do not show it to be paved, nor was brick paving recovered during archaeological testing. A well, presumably the source of water for the pump, was encountered in this yard space (Feature 118), but toward the southwest corner, not the center. Feature 117 also appears to be a large, circular feature.

While they were standing, he ordered the girls to be called out, when a door opened and about 50 women and small children came in, and immediately ranged themselves at the table. They were all clothed decently, in coarse but apparently comfortable garments. Some three or four had children so young, that they brought them in their arms....

From this passage, there appears to be a door that leads into this space from which the women, usually kept in a separate space, have access. Leavitt does not say that the women entered from the same door they came through, but "a door", as if it were a different door. The Civil War-era

photographs of the interior of the men's yard only show one door leading into this space, located to the rear of the main block of the house in the passageway between the main block and the original kitchen wing, at about where the window is presently in front of the men's restroom. Leavitt continues:

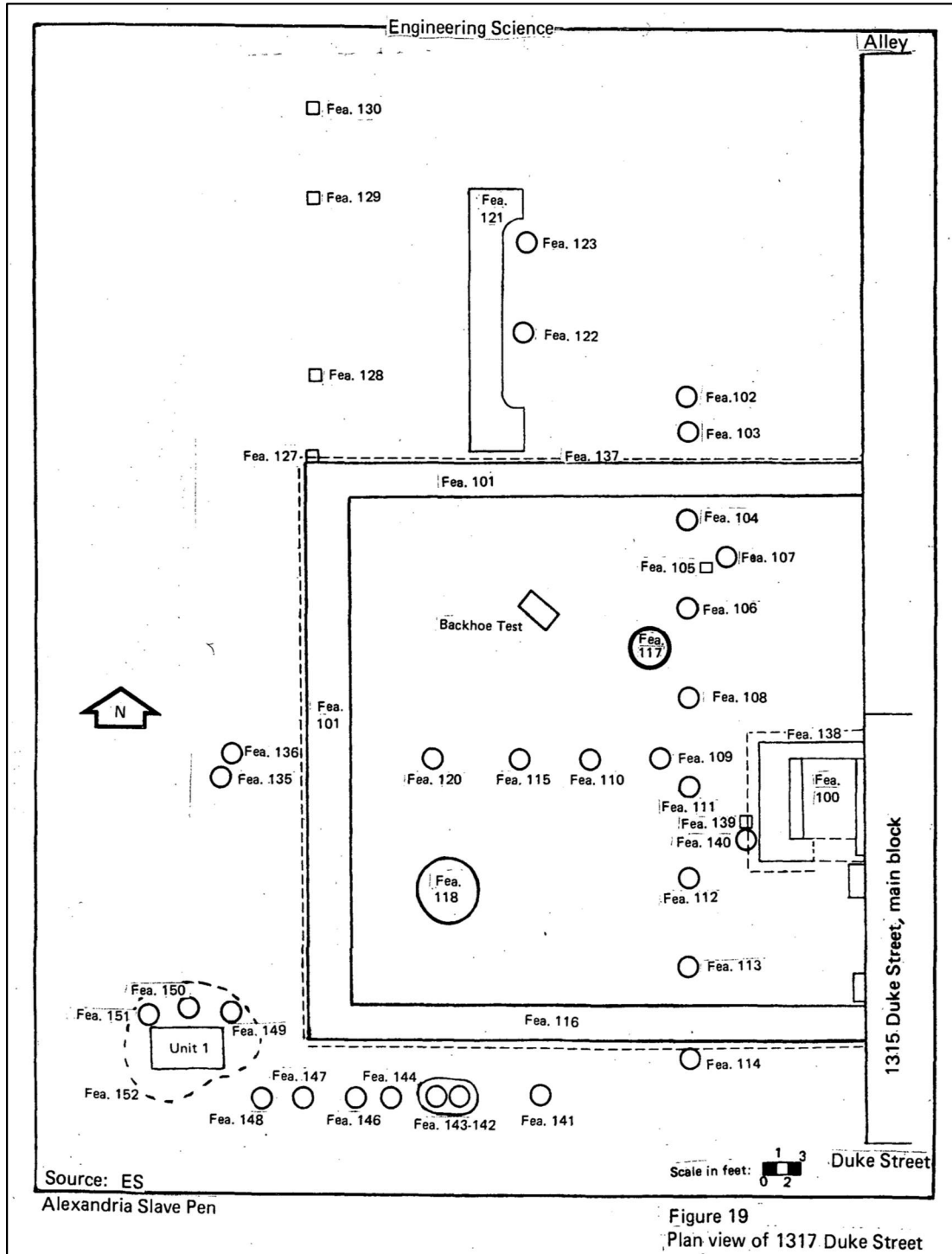


Figure 25. Archaeological Testing in the Men's Yard, Engineering Science archaeology report, 1987.

From the yard, we descended to the cellar in which they sleep. It was clean, dry, and well aired, with a fire burning briskly in the fire place. There was nothing particularly noticeable about it, but the strong iron grated door, which closed the entrance; and two rings, made of round iron, about three-fourths of an inch thick, fastened in the floor as far apart as a man's length. I did not ask what they were for. The proprietor said he was very careful to keep them clean in their persons as well as their rooms; and if any man came up on Monday morning without a clean shirt, he whipped him.

The use of the verb “descended” and the description of the space as “cellar” would indicate that Leavitt and Armfield entered a space below ground, the same one from which the 50 or 60 men just came up into the yard. The only known space below ground on this parcel is the basement space under the main block of 1315 Duke Street. Neither the original kitchen wing nor the passageway between the two structures are known to have basements. While not clear if it existed during Leavitt's visit in 1834, the Civil War-era photographs showing the low, two-story building setback from Payne Street show no evidence of a basement space under this structure, either. Furthermore, there is currently no hearth located in the basement of the main block of 1315 Duke Street. The bases of the twin chimneys on the east side of the residence are visible in the basement but are structural support arches with no flue. It is possible these arches are later additions or a vent or flue would have directed smoke from a fire here. It is also possible Leavitt is describing an oven or stove, but it is not clear why he would use the word “fire place”, unless he means it literally as a place for a fire.

Leavitt makes it seem as if they enter this space directly from the yard. Features 100 and 138 represent an arched brick chamber which would have connected to the basement under the main block of 1315 Duke Street through a door, now sealed. Leavitt notes a fireplace here in the cellar, but the flues of the two chimneys on the east side of the main block do not presently reach the basement. Rather, the chimney bases are visible but with arched supports.

We next went into the woman's chamber, and thence into the hospital. The latter was well warmed, with a stove. There were only two sick. One was an old woman, that had been brought there to be sold, but she was so sickly he would not buy her. She appeared to be in pain. The other was a young woman, of quite light complexion, and rather intelligent features, who had a young infant lying by her on the pillow. There were beds in the hospital, spread on the floor. Our next visit was to the cook-room, which made part of a long, two story brick building. That building, he said, was occupied by those whom he could trust to go abroad. He said he often bought those in the neighborhood, who had good characters, and could be trusted to go at large into the town. In the cook-room we saw a little boy and girl, five or six years old, who were better dressed than the others. Their complexions were quite light, their features bright and beautiful, and their clothes had an air of neatness and taste, such as *free* mothers love to impart to their little ones. He said the mother of these had been with him some time.... We returned to the office, and having declined the polite offer of a glass of wine, or brandy and water, and thanked the proprietor for his attentions, we took our leave.

Leavitt does not describe a similar women's yard as would future visitors to the slave pen complex, only noting a “chamber” assigned to them. It is not clear what this chamber was, if it is

similar to the enclosed men's yard, or where it was on the property. Likewise, it is also not clear where on the site was the hospital seen by Leavitt. He does describe the cook-room as being in part of a long, two story brick building. Both the original kitchen wing of the 1812/3 house and the building set back from Payne Street fit the description of a "long, two story brick building", and it's not clear which he is describing here or if both exist by his visit in early 1834.

Leavitt mentions that Armfield noted that one of his two brigs, the *Tribune*, was in port and Leavitt continues his letter with a description of this vessel, the coastwise slave trade, some specific cases of hardship faced by enslaved people in the domestic slave trade, and notes the arbitrary distinction between the domestic and international slave trades. Leavitt's account is the earliest, and one of the most detailed descriptions of the slave pen complex at 1315 Duke Street. However, absent from his account is a similar enclosed yard space for women enslaved here, and it is not clear from his description if there is one or two two-story buildings when he visits, or where some of the other spaces are, like the hospital.

Several months after Leavitt's visit, sometime on or around April 25, 1834, English abolitionist Edward Strutt Abdy also visits the Franklin & Armfield headquarters on Duke Street. He publishes his account in 1835 in his three-volume *Journal of a Residence and Tour in the United States of North America: From April, 1833 to October 1834*.⁸⁴ After departing Washington, D.C. (having first met President Andrew Jackson) and touring Mount Vernon, Abdy stops in Alexandria before departing for Warrenton, Virginia and a continuation of his American tour. He writes under the page heading "ARMFIELD'S REPOSITORY":

On our return to Alexandria, we called at Armfield's establishment; where he keeps the slaves he has purchased for sale. He himself was out. Two of his men, however, were standing at the door; and as my guide was familiarly acquainted with them, we were admitted without difficulty. We were ushered into a well-furnished room, and invited to take wine, some bottles of which were standing on a side-board, for the accommodation, doubtless, of purchasers. I declined: my companion was less scrupulous. We then went over the establishment; the delay that had occurred in the parlor, having given time to prepare it for our inspection.

Like Leavitt, Abdy was invited into an office or parlor space, presumably on the first floor of the main block of 1315 Duke Street and offered wine: Abdy at the start of his tour, Leavitt at the conclusion. He continues:

The sexes are separated by a passage, into which the iron gratings of their doors look. These last are doubly locked, and strongly secured. The yards, which are sufficiently spacious, are surrounded by high walls. Everything looked clean and in good order. There were but three men, and four or five women, with as many children, one of whom was nearly white,--a circumstance that elicited some coarse jokes from my companions, in the hearing of these poor unfortunate creatures. Both departments were well provided with fires; the room destined to the inmates of each having a stove, round which, as it was a very cold day, they were collected. I was assured they were well fed,--an assertion that will readily obtain credit from every one who considers that it is the interest of the seller to keep his "cattle" in good condition; and, as a "sulky

⁸⁴ Abdy, Edward Strutt, *Journal of a Residence and Tour in the United States of North America: From April, 1833 to October 1834*, 1835. pp 179-80.

one” is not likely to find a buyer, everything would be done to keep them in good humor. The owner of this pandemonium is said to be very wealthy; having acquired nearly half a million of dollars in the trade. He bears a good character, and is considered a charitable man.

If the enclosed women’s yard to the east did not yet exist in January when Leavitt toured the property, it appears to have been built by April by Abdy’s visit. He notes the men’s yard and women’s yard are separated by a passage and locked, iron doors. From this description, the passage here appears to be between the rear of the main block of the 1812/3 house and its kitchen wing, but it is not clear if the passage is a built wood or masonry structure connecting the two, or an open, unenclosed space between them. In order for the men’s yard to have an eastern wall, this passage would have been enclosed on at least three sides (the northern side would have been the southern wall of the original kitchen wing and the southern wall would have been the northern wall of the original 1812/3 house). Abdy’s description of iron-grated doors (plural) suggests a similar wall and door must have been present to separate the women’s yard from the passage, enclosing this passage on four sides. It cannot be determined from this description if it was covered. In the center of these yard spaces, he notes the presence of a stove. Civil War-era photographs show vent pipes or flues extending above the center of these spaces. Abdy continues:

The slave-traders at Washington pay 400 dollars to the corporation of the city for a license to carry on their business.

I asked the man who attended us, whether we had seen the whole establishment; having heard a great deal of a dungeon, where the refractory are confined, and where (as I have been informed by a lady who had visited the place, and was unable to proceed from the horror she felt at the description given her of the thumb-screws, and other instruments of coercion) a very different scene was to be witnessed. I was told that there was no room of the kind. It was not to be expected that I should be allowed to visit such a place; to deny the existence of which would be the natural consequence of having it. I found the price of a slave had fallen considerably; the pressure of the times having affected this sort of commodity as well as ever other.

Abdy noted the cost of a slave trading license in the City of Washington at \$400. The Common Council of Alexandria increased the tax on people engaged in the domestic slave trade from \$50 to \$100 in 1832. It is not clear if this is in addition to or in place of the \$400 District of Columbia fee noted by others. He also inquired about the presence of a dungeon, of which he had been told, to which the response from employee of Franklin & Armfield was that no such dungeon existed. Perhaps this “dungeon” which Abdy had heard rumors of was the “clean, dry, and well aired” cellar used by the enslaved to sleep which Leavitt had been shown but of which Abdy makes no mention. This is not to say that the rumors were incorrect, but that a “clean, dry, and well aired” cellar could also be “a dungeon, where the refractory are confined, and where...a very different scene was to be witnessed”.

Abdy does not meet with Armfield while in Alexandria, but does later encounter one of his agents in a hotel in Warrenton, Virginia, probably J.M. Saunders, who is known to be one of Franklin & Armfield’s agents and is advertised as working out of Warrenton (see Chapter XIX of Abdy’s narrative).

Several months later, in the late summer of 1834, after Abdy misses Armfield in Alexandria, British-American geologist George William Featherstonhaugh runs into him twice, once on September 6th, 1834 with a coffle of slaves on the banks of the New River far outside Knoxville, Tennessee, and again sometime before September 17th in a stagecoach between Blountsville and Nashville by way of Knoxville (but not before also running into President Andrew Jackson, this time at Campbell's Station). Featherstonhaugh (traditionally pronounced FAN-shaw)⁸⁵ publishes an account of his 1834-5 journey as *Excursion through the Slave States* in 1844.⁸⁶ He describes the sight of the coffle attempting to cross the New River as “a singular spectacle, the most striking one of the kind I have ever witnessed.” Accompanying this group of slave traders and enslaved people were nine wagons and single-horse carriages, at least some of which appear in the Alexandria tax lists.

Featherstonhaugh's book also contains an illustration of this scene by the New River, reproduced twice, once as the title page to Volume I of the John Murray edition and once in the narrative (Figure 26). It shows Armfield and three of his employees (one on horseback) in the foreground, and a fourth employee on horseback in the background, overseeing the coffle crossing the New River. It is unknown if this engraving was produced for the book from source material provided by Featherstonhaugh or if it is an invention of the engraver.

Again, while not directly relevant to 1315 Duke Street as these two meetings occurred in Tennessee, this primary account is important in that it highlights an aspect of the domestic slave trade Franklin & Armfield were engaged in and for which activities and spaces at 1315 Duke Street would have supported. Featherstonhaugh also provides one of the best physical descriptions of Armfield, writing:

...the white man opposite to him [Armfield's servant], a queer tall animal about forty years old, with dark black hair cut round as if he were a Methodist preacher, immense black whiskers, a physiognomy not without one or two tolerable

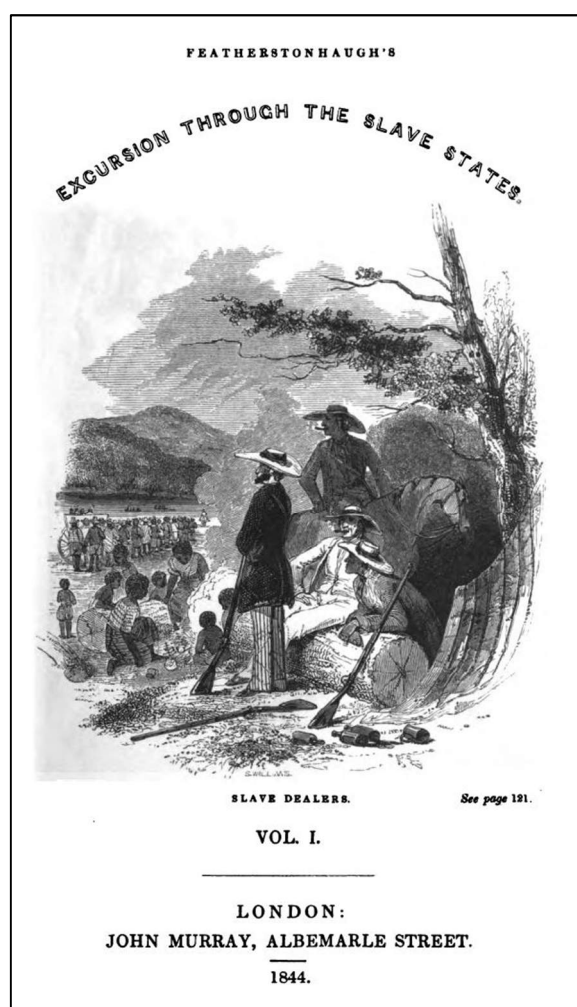


Figure 26. Title page from *Excursion through the Slave States*, 1844 showing a slave coffle attempting to cross the New River, as well as Armfield and his employees.

⁸⁵ Longman Pronunciation Dictionary.

⁸⁶ Featherstonhaugh, George William, *Excursion through the Slave States*, 1844.

features, but singularly sharp, and not a little piratical and repulsive; all this was set off with a huge broad-brimmed white hat, adorned with a black crape that covered it almost to the top of the crown. His clothes also were black, so that it was evident he intended people should see he was in mourning.

Featherstonhaugh also observes that Armfield was armed with a dirk (long dagger) and a pistol, and found him “vulgar and revolting, and totally without education”.

Also of note, in a footnote, the author tells of an incident that happened in Washington, D.C. prior to embarking on his journey wherein an enslaved person named Manuel held by “the principal hotel-keeper in the place, a person called G***** [Gadsby]” was taken to a slave depot to be transported and sold in the South. Featherstonhaugh is pressed to secure Manuel’s freedom but cannot before leaving the city. He also describes the interior of a slave jail (described as “a large brick edifice in the suburbs”, probably Robey’s or Neal’s in Washington (or another one further from the city) and not Franklin & Armfield’s located 8 miles to the south in Alexandria. Upon his return, he learned that Manuel was indeed not taken and sold in New Orleans, largely because of the publicity he had brought to the case.

In the 1835 Alexandria City tax assessment, Franklin & Armfield were again assessed for a house and lot at Duke, Payne, and West, valued at \$4,600. Like the previous year, they were recorded with \$400 in furniture and three tithables. They had four horses, two cows, and a pair of riding carriages, valued at \$250 and \$150, and the assessment notes they were Slave Dealers.⁸⁷

On the morning of July 24, 1835, Franklin & Armfield’s office on Duke Street received another visitor, abolitionist and educator Professor Ethan Allen Andrews. Andrews writes about his experience at 1315 Duke Street in a letter, published in 1836 as a series of letters addressed to the Executive Committee of the American Union for the Relief and Improvement of the Colored Race, titled *Slavery and the Domestic Slave Trade in the United States*.⁸⁸ Because of his extensive description of the property, most of his letter is reproduced here. He writes:

The establishment to which I have alluded is situated in a retired quarter in the southern part of the city. It is easily distinguished as you approach it, by the high, white-washed wall surrounding the yards, and giving to it the appearance of a penitentiary. The dwelling-house is of brick, three stories high, and opening directly upon the street. Over the front door is the name of the firm, FRANKLIN & ARMFIELD. It was mid-day when I arrived. The day was excessively warm, and the door and windows were thrown wide open to admit the air. On inquiring at the door for Mr. Armfield, he came forward in a few minutes from the yard in the rear of the building, and invited me into his parlor.

Like Leavitt and Abdy before him, Andrews was invited into the office or parlor. He notes the yards (plural) and the distinctive, high, white-washed wall surrounding them that would define the exterior of the slave jail complex at 1315 Duke Street. Andrews explains the purpose of his visit to Armfield and asks to “be allowed to see his establishment.” Armfield agrees to the request and the tour began:

⁸⁷ 1835 City of Alexandria tax assessment, p. 9.

⁸⁸ Andrews, Ethan Allen, *Slavery and the Domestic Slave Trade in the United States*, 1836, pp. 135-143.

Calling an assistant or clerk, he directed him to accompany me to every part of the establishment. We passed out at the back door of the dwelling-house, and entered a spacious yard nearly surrounded with neatly white-washed two story buildings, devoted to the use of the slaves. Turning to the left, we came to a strong grated door of iron, opening into a spacious yard, surrounded by a high, white-washed wall. One side of this yard was roofed, but the principal part was open to the air. Along the covered side extended a table, at which the slaves had recently taken their dinner, which, judging from what remained, had been wholesome and abundant. In this yard, only the men and boys were confined. The gate was secured by strong padlocks and bolts; but before entering we had a full view of the yard, and everything in it, through the grated door. The slaves, fifty or sixty in number, were standing or moving about in groups, some amusing themselves with rude sports, and others engaged in conversation, which was often interrupted by loud laughter, in all the varied tones peculiar to the negroes.

From the main block of the original house, Andrews enters directly into a yard space, surrounded by two-story buildings. It is not quite clear, but this is either the passage described by Abdy between the main block of the original house and the original kitchen wing (enclosed on all sides but open above) or another yard space immediately to the north and east of the main block, separate from the enclosed women's yard. The presence of multiple two-story buildings suggests that in addition to the original kitchen wing, at least one other, possibly the low, two-story set back from Payne Street, had been constructed by this point. He notes that he turns to the left (the west, if he is exiting the rear of the main block) and sees a grated iron door opening onto a yard surrounded by high walls, used to confine the men and boys. He describes a similar half-roof and table as Leavitt.

While opening the gate, my conductor directed the slaves to form themselves into a line, and they accordingly arranged themselves, in single file, upon three sides of the yard. They were in general young men, apparently from eighteen to thirty years old, but among them were a few boys whose age did not exceed ten or fifteen years. They were all—except one or two, who had just been admitted, and whose purchase was not yet completed—neatly and comfortably dressed, and, in general, they looked cheerful and contented. As my conductor, however, was expatiating on their happy condition, when compared with that in which they had lived before they came to this place—a discourse apparently intended for the joint benefit of the slaves and their northern visitor [sic]—I observed a young man, of an interesting and intelligent countenance, who looked earnestly at me, and as often as the keeper turned away his face, he shook his head, and seemed desirous of having me understand, that he did not feel any such happiness as was described, and that he dissented from the representation made of his condition. I would have given much to hear his tale, but in my situation that was impossible. Still, in imagination, I see his countenance, anxiously and fearfully turning from the keeper to me, with an expression which seemed to say, like the ghost in Hamlet, “I could a tale unfold.”

After a short time, spent in walking around this yard, and examining the appearance of the slaves, we “passed out by the iron gate,” and crossing over to the right, we came to a similar one, which admitted us into a yard like that which we had just left. Here we found the female slaves, amounting to thirty or forty. These, too, were well dressed, and everything about them had a neat and comfortable appearance, *for a prison*. The inmates of this apartment were of about the same ages as those who occupied the yard which I had just left. There was but one mother with an infant; and my guide informed me, that they did not like to purchase women with young children, as they were less saleable than others, in the market to which they sent their slaves....The women, in general, looked contented and happy, but I observed a few who seemed to have been weeping.

Andrews and his escort left the men's yard, crossed the passage separating the two, and came to a similar door and yard, this one used to confine the women.

Near the yard in which the women were confined, was the kitchen, where the food of the slaves was prepared. Here everything appeared neat and clean, and the arrangements for cooking resembled those which we usually see in penitentiaries. From the kitchen we went to the tailor's shop, where were stored great quantities of new clothing, ready for the negroes when they set off upon their long journey to the south. These clothes appeared to be well made, and of good materials; and in the female wardrobe considerable taste was displayed. Each negro, at his departure, is furnished with two entire suits from the shop. These he does not wear upon the road, but puts them on when he arrives at the market. In the rear of the yard, is a long building, two stories high, in which the slaves pass the night. Their blankets were then lying in the sun at the doors and windows, which were grated like those of ordinary prisons. In a corner of the yard, a building was pointed out to me as the hospital; but such was the health of the slaves at this time, that the building was unoccupied.

Andrews sees a kitchen that “appeared neat and clean” and resembled that of a penitentiary. Importantly, the kitchen is described here as being a separate building than the “long building, two stories high, in which the slaves pass the night”. The long, dormitory building is noted as being “in the rear of the yard” while the kitchen is described as being “near” it. From the 1836 broadside illustration as well as the Civil War-era photographs and maps, it would appear that the southern wall of the low, two-story building set back from Payne Street abuts the northern wall of the women's yard while the original kitchen wing is separated from the enclosed women's yard by a separate yard space. Given this description and that the rear wing was already in use as a kitchen and the building setback from Payne Street appears as three repeating blocks and almost barrack-like in appearance, it would seem that it is more likely cooking and food preparation occurred in the original kitchen wing behind the main block of the original house and the enslaved slept in the structure setback from Payne Street. This explanation, however, does not account for how men confined in the men's yard could get to this sleeping space. In addition to these two structures, Andrews notes a tailor's shop and a hospital, but does not describe either structure. He continues:

Passing out at a back gate, we entered another spacious yard, in which four or five tents were spread, and the large wagons, which were to accompany the next expedition, were stationed.

Here, after leaving through a back gate (presumably in the brick wall to the north), Andrews describes another yard. Having already exited through a gate, this may be a more traditional yard space, one not enclosed by a high brick wall, but perhaps still enclosed by a board fence. Andrews and his escort circle back and return to where they started:

Having examined everything, so far as the excessive heat would permit, we returned to the parlor. Everywhere, as I passed along, I observed the most studied attention paid to cleanliness, continually reminding me of the penitentiary, which I had visited yesterday at Washington. The fences and walls of the houses, both internally and externally, were neatly white-washed, and there was also the same apparatus of high walls, and bolts, and bars, to secure the prisoners....

In the parlor, I again met Mr. Armfield, who, during my absence, had been negotiating for the purchase of a slave, and had just concluded a bargain. Here I was again treated with great politeness, and refreshments of various kinds were offered me.

The number of slaves, now in the establishment, is about one hundred. They are commonly sent by water from this city to New Orleans. Brigs of the first class, built expressly for this trade, are employed to transport them. The average number, sent at each shipment, does not much exceed one hundred and fifty, and they ship a cargo once in two months. Besides these, they send a considerable number over land, and those which I saw were to set off in this way in a few days. A train of wagons, with the provisions, tents, and other necessities, accompanies the expedition, and at night they all encamp. Their place of destination is Natchez, where Mr. Franklin resides, for the purpose of disposing of them on their arrival. Those which are sent by water, after landing at New Orleans, are sent up the rivers by steamboats to the general depot at Natchez, where they are exposed for sale.

As it is an object of the first importance, that the slaves should arrive at their place of destination “in good order and well-conditioned,” every indulgence is shown to them, which is consistent with their security, and their good appearance in the market. It is true that they are often chained at night, while at the depot at Alexandria, lest they should overpower their masters, as not more than three or four white men frequently have charge of a hundred and fifty slaves. Upon their march, also, they are usually chained together in pairs, to prevent their escape; and sometimes, when greater precaution is judged necessary, they are all attached to a long chain passing between them. Their guards and conductors are, of course, well armed.

After resting myself a few minutes, I took leave of Mr. Armfield and of his establishment, and returned to my lodgings in the city, ruminating, as I went, upon the countless evils, which “man’s inhumanity to man,” has occasioned in this world of sin and misery.

As a whole, Andrews’ account is probably the single best description of this property, not just during Franklin & Armfield’s tenure here, but throughout its use in the domestic slave trade.

Sometime before November 1st, 1834 and September 1835, self-professed northerner, Joseph [sometimes given as Jonathan] Holt Ingraham tours the new American South-West and publishes his experiences as *The South-West. By A Yankee*.⁸⁹ While not directly relevant to this history of 1315 Duke Street, in Chapter XLII, he discusses slavery in the region, including the domestic slave trade. While he neither visits nor describes the property at 1315 Duke Street, he provides an account of the New Orleans end of the slave trade, the coastwise slave trade, the Natchez market, and slave traders and it is worth consulting as a primary account that provides contextualizes some of the practices of the domestic slave trade within the period.

The specific terms under which Franklin & Armfield purchased the property at 1315 Duke Street at auction in October 1832 are not recorded, but the deed from the Mechanic’s Bank to them is entered into the Alexandria deed books on May 6, 1835.⁹⁰

The 1836 City tax assessment noted that Franklin & Armfield are Slave Dealers and shows the value of their property at Payne, Duke, and West Streets has increased to \$7,000. They are also

⁸⁹ Ingraham, Joseph [Jonathan?] Holt, *The South-West. By A Yankee*, 1835.

⁹⁰ Alexandria County Deed Book, V2, p. 260.

assessed for only \$150 of furniture, just two tithables present, five horses, two cows, and only one cart. They only have one riding carriage in the 1836 list, assessed at \$150.⁹¹ The assessment also notes that John Armfield is now also occupying a two-story house and lot several blocks away on Patrick and Prince Streets valued at \$4,000 and owned by Joseph Janney. This building no longer exists and was on the half block on the north side of Prince Street between Patrick and Henry, currently occupied by the Virginia Tech School of Architecture in the building built as the Lee School for Girls building, which was commissioned in 1908 and opened in 1909.⁹² In 1836, Armfield is assessed for \$1000 of furniture and two tithables, and a single riding carriage worth \$600 at this parcel.⁹³

This increase of \$2,400 in the assessed value of the property represents the second significant increase under Franklin & Armfield. Again, while not conclusive, this increase possibly represents the construction of the remainder of the slave jail complex infrastructure at 1315 Duke Street.

The same year that E. A. Andrew's letters are published, the American Anti-Slavery Society prints an anti-slavery broadside titled, "SLAVE MARKET OF AMERICA" (Figure 27).⁹⁴ The subject of the broadside is specifically slavery and the domestic slave trade in the District of Columbia. It contains nine wood-engravings, consisting of eight illustrations and a map of Washington City showing the locations of several prisons there. Of particular relevance to this study is the illustration of Franklin & Armfield's Slave Prison in the lower right corner (Figure 28). The caption paraphrases Leavitt's 1834 account cited above. Much of this caption is purported to be a direct quote from Leavitt, but the specific phrasing differs from the account published in the *Evangelist* and the source is apparently not that specific letter. It reads:

FRANKLIN & ARMFIELD'S SLAVE PRISON

This establishment is in Alexandria. It is a handsome three story brick house, neatly painted with green blinds, and the sign, FRANKLIN & ARMFIELD over the door. It has attached to it a large yard, perhaps 300 feet square, enclosed by a high close board fence neatly whitewashed, and filled with various small buildings. Mr. Leavitt visited it in 1834. One of the partners lives in New-Orleans, and the other in Alexandria. The latter, says Mr. L. "politely invited us to go and see the Slaves. We were first taken out into a paved yard, 40 or 50 feet square, with a very high brick wall and about half of it covered with a roof. This yard is appropriated to the men. He ordered the men to be called out from the cellar where they sleep, and they soon came up, to the number of 50 or 60, and ranged themselves irregularly before us. While we were standing, he ordered the girls to be called out, when the door opened, and about 50 women and small children came in. They were all clothed decently in coarse but apparently comfortable garments. Some three or four had children so young that they brought them in their arms; and I thought I saw in the faces of *these mothers* some indication of irrepressible feeling. It seemed to me that they hugged their little ones

⁹¹ 1836 Alexandria Ward IV tax list p. 10.

⁹² Out of the Attic, June 2, 2011, <https://alextimes.com/2011/06/out-of-the-attic-designed-to-teach-girl/>.

⁹³ Ibid, p. 3.

⁹⁴ American Anti-Slavery Society, *Slave Market of America*, 1836.

more closely, and that a cold perspiration stood on their foreheads, and I thought I saw tears too. There were in all about 28 children under 10 years of age.”

The Standing advertisement of this house in the Washington papers is as follows:--

“CASH FOR 400 NEGROES.”

“Including both sexes, from 12 to 25 years of age. Persons having likely servants to dispose of, will find it to their interest to give us a call, as we will give higher prices in cash than any other purchaser who is now, or may hereafter come into this market.”

“FRANKLIN & ARMFIELD”

The illustration shows the Franklin & Armfield office at 1315 Duke Street as well as the slave prison complex surrounding it. The view is from Duke Street, approximately with its intersection with Payne Street, looking to the northwest. Shown is the main house, either the original two-story kitchen wing to the rear of the main block or the long two-story building seen set back from Payne Street in many of the Civil War-era photos, a partially covered yard enclosed by a high wall to the east (described elsewhere as the women’s yard), and low one-story walls or close fences enclosing spaces on both the east and west sides of the house. Also shown is a tall fence near the property line to the west, possibly still under construction, and regularly placed linear

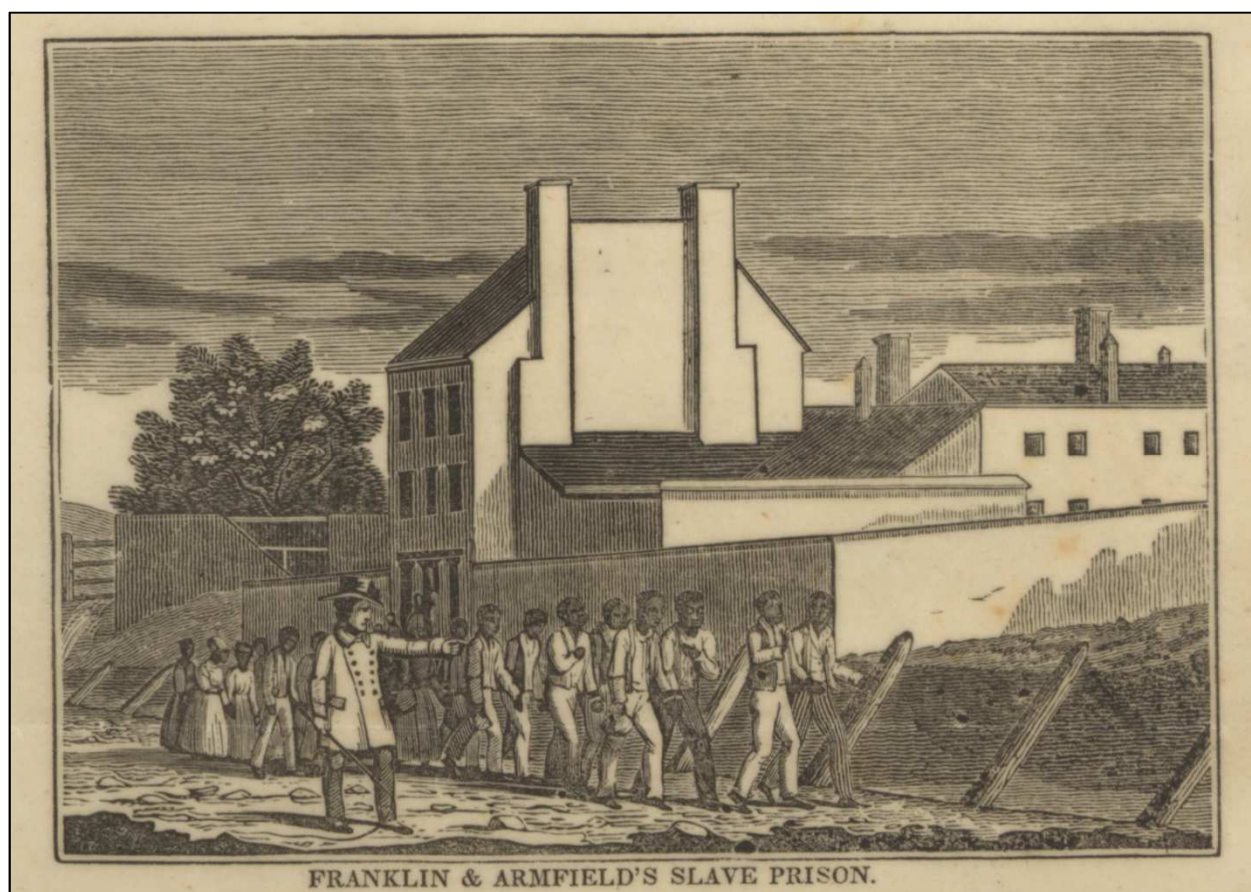


Figure 28. Franklin & Armfield's Slave Prison, American Anti-Slavery Society, 1836.

features along the side of Duke Street that look like logs. Overall, this view is similar to a Civil War-era photograph taken from the southeast corner of the intersection of Payne and Duke Streets.

There is some uncertainty here in the depiction of the walls of the complex. This view shows both a high brick wall surrounding the enclosed women's yard and another, shorter wall that terminates just below the top of the first-floor window and door openings. This first wall appears as it does in many of the Civil War-era photographs but this second, lower wall does not. There is no indication that this lower wall is constructed of a different material than the higher wall or the other brick structures. Archaeologists encountered a row of seven, approximately evenly spaced post holes in front of the men's yard that they suggest may be the remains of this wooden perimeter wall or fence. There were no excavations conducted in a similar location in front of the women's yard because 1301-1311 Duke Street were built there in 1870. If this 1836 engraving does show a shorter, wooden wall or fence surrounding the property, another illustration drawn on May 24, 1861, the day the Union Army liberated the slave jail complex, shows a similar feature (Figure 77). A claim for damages to the property submitted following the Civil War includes a line for \$250 for "Fences".

Of note in this illustration of the slave jail complex is that the wall surrounding these two yards are of equal height, which is not the case in any of the Civil War-era photographs. In these later photographs of the exterior of the building, there is visible a step-back in the then-higher exterior wall of the men's yard at approximately the same height as the top of the women's yard. Furthermore, in the photograph of the interior of the men's yard, the whitewashing ends before the top of the brick wall and there appear to be joist holes in the brick courses immediately above the end of the white washing. This wall is the northern or rear wall of this enclosed space and this evidence suggests that the walls on both yards were initially the same height, as is depicted here, but suggests the wall surrounding the men's yard was reworked to add height and a fully enclosed roof sometime between 1836 and the Civil War. Perhaps an escape attempt, like the one briefly mentioned by Joseph Sturge when he describes his 1841 visit to the site (see below), necessitated this rework or an additional covered space was needed to house the increased number of enslaved people Franklin & Armfield were holding here.

The purpose of the slanted wood timber posts depicted along the edge of Duke Street is not clear in this depiction. Their location puts them within the Duke Street right-of-way and unlikely to be improvements made to the property at 1315 Duke Street. They bear a passing resemblance to military fortifications such as *cheval de fries* or *abatis*, but used as a prison structure, these do not make a lot of sense as one can simply walk between them and there is already a series of walls or fences surrounding the complex. Two possible interpretations are that the artist is depicting Duke Street as sunken here and these wood logs are laid along the slope at the edge of the road, or these wooden logs are a kind of corduroy sidewalk. Both a Civil War-era photograph taken from the top of the roundhouse looking to the northwest and the sketch of the slave pen by Merrick show a considerable embankment or slope on the north side of the 1400 or 1500 block

of Duke Street, although all other known depictions of the 1300 block of Duke Street show relatively flat terrain.

Also of note in this depiction are the rooflines attached to the east side of the original 1812/3 structure at 1315 Duke Street. There are two different architectural features depicted here. While we can only see the rooflines, the primary accounts of these spaces indicate they are partially enclosed yards. One feature is a lean to or shed roof largely between the two chimneys of the 1812/3 house and sloping away from the main block into the enclosed yard, and the other a shed roof at the back of the yard, running parallel to Duke Street, and also sloping into the enclosed yard. This first feature is located where the alley along the east side of the house is currently and is visible in several Civil War-era photographs of the building, however, it is partially obscured by trees. Evidence of it should be visible in the brickwork of the eastern wall of the structure and should be identified if present. Also visible on the exterior of both chimney stacks in the present are a series of bricked-in ghost openings topped by rounded brick arches that appear to be located behind each of the fireplaces on the first, second, and third floors. This would seem to indicate that these were either formerly working fireplaces in the rooms shown in this shed addition here that were then bricked-in when the addition was removed following the Civil War or were originally built as visible outlines on the exterior of the chimney when the house was originally built in 1812/3 with the intention that they could be easily opened in the future if an addition was ever built to the east of the original wing. As seen in the later photographs, the top of this shed roof meets the chimney and east wall of the house at approximately the same height as the top half of the second floor window, enclosing the rear fireboxes on the first and second stories (but not the third), and while the 1836 illustration places the top of this roof between the second and third floors, generally agrees with this point.

The lean to or shed roof along the rear of the yard does not appear as long as it does in later photographs, but the rear of it appears to abut the long, two-story building located behind it in a similar fashion. While similar in appearance to the original kitchen wing of the original 1812/3 structure, the structure on the right side of this image appears to be the long, two-story brick building set back from Payne Street seen in Civil War-era photographs. Given the locations of the two large chimneys visible here (especially the one on the left clearly shown behind this structure), the windows depicted as paired instead of evenly spaced, and the way the lean to roof meets the southern face of this structure, this is more likely to be the building set back from Payne Street. The original 1812/3 kitchen wing may not be visible in this view.

The relative stability in the assessed value of the property at between \$3,000 and 4,000 prior to 1828 while it was in use as a residence, and the increases in assessed value in the mid-1830s from \$3,600 in 1833 to \$4,600 the following year and to \$7,000 in 1836 before remaining relatively unchanged until at least until the 1850s, suggests that this period (1833-1836) saw the construction of most of the slave jail complex infrastructure that is described by visitors to the site and seen in the Civil War-era photographs.

Some architectural changes would have been necessary to convert the original 1812/3 residence of Robert Young into the headquarters of Franklin & Armfield, but it would seem that most of the architectural changes that converted this residence into the notorious slave pen complex that was extensively photographed during the Civil War seem to have been added in the mid-1830s. The detailed written descriptions of the property such as can be found in Andrews', Abdy's, and Leavitt's accounts, date to this period and generally describe a slave jail complex as pictured here in the 1836 broadside and not the residence left by Robert Young. See Appendix B for a conjectural plan of the slave jail complex circa 1836 following this phase of construction.

To the left of the illustration of the Franklin & Armfield Slave Prison is an illustration captioned, "View of a Section of Alexandria, with a Slave Ship Receiving her Cargo of Slaves" (Figure 29). Again, drawing from Leavitt's account, the text below the image reads:

Franklin and Armfield alone shipped to New-Orleans in the year 1834, according to their own statement, not less than 1000 Slaves. They own brigs of about 160 to 200 tons burthen, running regularly every thirty days, during the trading season to New-Orleans, and carrying about one Slave to the ton. Armfield thus advertises in 1836.

"ALEXANDRIA AND NEW-ORELANS PACKETS."

"Brig TRIBUNE Samuel C. Brush, master, will sail as above on the first of January; brig ISAAC FRANKLIN, Wm. Smith, master on the 15th of January; brig UNCAS, Nath. Boush, master, on the 1st of February. They will continue to leave this port on the 1st and 15th of each month throughout the shipping season. They are all vessels of the first class, commanded by experienced and accommodating officers, will at all times go up the Mississippi by steam, and every exertion used to promote the interest of shippers and comfort of passengers. Shippers may prevent disappointment by having their bills of lading ready the day previous to sailing, as they will go promptly at the time.

Servants, that are intended to be shipped, will at any time be received for *safe keeping* at 25 cents per day.

29th Dec. tf. JOHN ARMFIELD, Alexandria."

In January, 1834, J. Leavitt, Editor of the New-York Evangelist, visited the "Tribune," then in port and preparing to sail with a cargo of human beings the next week. He thus describes it: "The hold is appropriated to the Slaves and is divided into two apartments. The after hold will carry about 80 women, and the other about 100 men. On either side were two platforms running the whole length, one raised a few inches, and the other about half way up to the deck. They were about 5 1-2 or 6 feet deep. On them they lie, as close as they can stow away."

This view is of the Alexandria waterfront, from the Potomac River looking west toward the town. The caption explains that this depicts "a slave ship receiving her cargo of slaves"; however, it seems that the slave ship here is the one in the foreground on the right side of the image. This ship is not docked at one of the piers but is at anchor in the river and it would appear

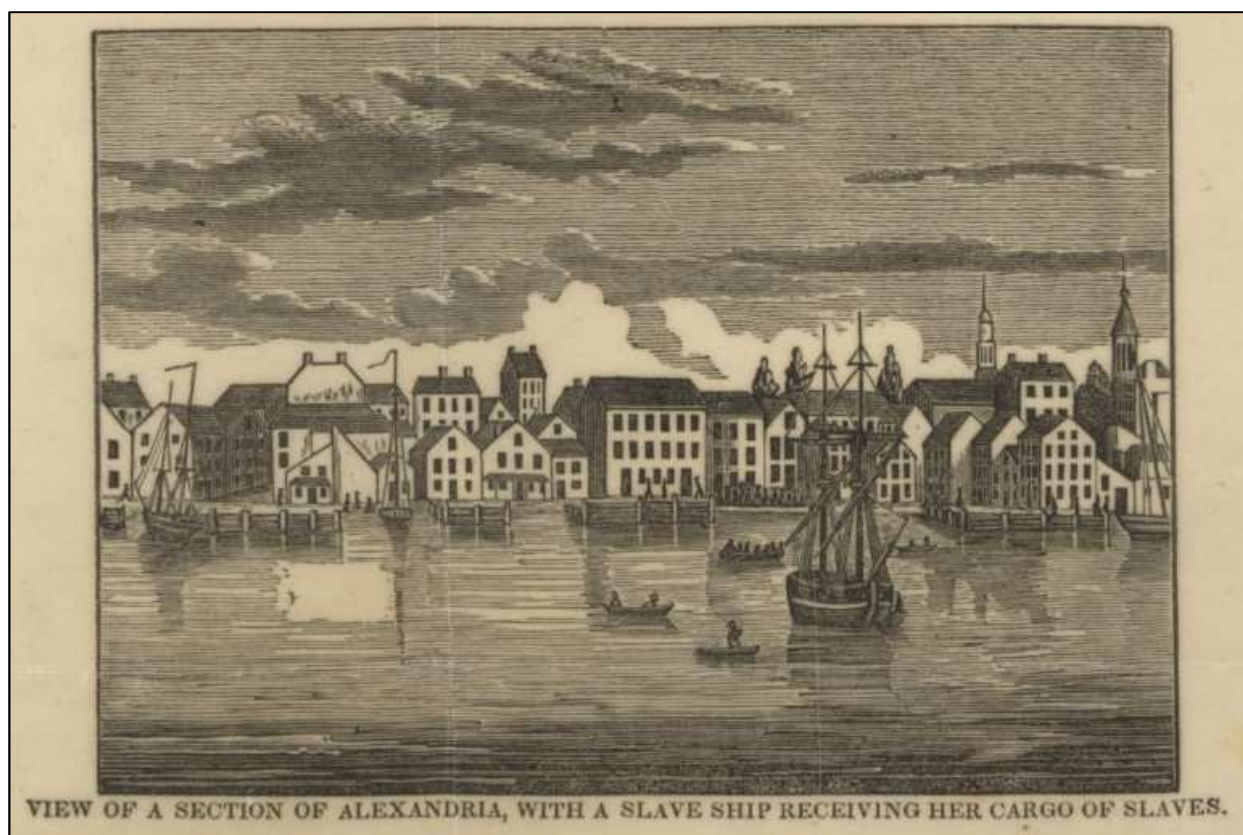


Figure 29. *View of a Section of Alexandria, with a Slave Ship Receiving her Cargo of Slaves, 1836.*

that enslaved people are being rowed out to the anchored ship. Perhaps this is to help prevent those being forcibly transported from being able to escape by being able to access the adjacent pier, essentially using the ship as a floating prison. On shore appears to be a line of enslaved people waiting to be rowed out to the ship.

The ship seen here is two-masted, possibly a brig. The sails are furled here, although the yards for the mainsail and foresail are at an angle. Comparing the detail of the ship shown here with the descriptions of the ships known to have been used by Franklin & Armfield, this could be the *Tribute*, *Uncas*, or *Isaac Franklin*, although there is nothing positively identifying this vessel as one of those three. All three are described in ship registers/enrollments from New Orleans as



Figure 30. *Detail from Alexandria, Virginia from the Maryland side of the Potomac, Alfred Waud, 1861, showing from Prince (left) to King (right) Streets.*

being one-decked, two-masted, and square sterned, all were between 79' 6" and 89' 5" in length, 22' 6" and 23' 10" wide, and 9' 11" and 10' 4" deep. The *Isaac Franklin* was a little larger at 189 8/95 tons than either the *Tribune* (161 11/95 tons) or the *Uncas* (155 1/95 tons). The *Tribune* is listed as having a decorative billethead on the bow of the ship, the *Uncas* as a scrollhead, and the *Isaac Franklin* a man bust head, perhaps of Isaac Franklin himself, but this feature is not readily visible in this image.⁹⁵

The depiction of Alexandria's waterfront in the broadside does not appear to be a direct one-to-one representation of the waterfront at any point in time; however, there are enough similarities that make it recognizable. The steeple of Christ Church on Cameron Street with its rounded dome is recognizable on the skyline to the right of the slave ship. The steeple on the right side of the image with the spire and round ball, also on Cameron Street appears to be part of City Hall, on N. Royal Street, near Cameron Street. The present building was built after the 1871 fire, but according to the National Register Nomination Form, the clock tower is supposed to be a replica of the earlier 1817 market steeple, attributed to Benjamin Latrobe.⁹⁶ The only obvious street opening that appears along the waterfront here is on the left of the image. Comparing this waterfront view with the panorama taken from Pioneer Mills⁹⁷ and the Alfred Waud drawing of the Alexandria waterfront from Maryland (Figure 30) as best as possible, this appears to be Prince Street and low, irregular buildings on the north side seem to be replaced by more uniform-appearing warehouses by the Civil War. Fitzgerald's warehouse at the corner of Union and King is probably the large building partially obscured by the masts of the ship in the foreground. It has two smaller warehouses between it and the waterfront and a possible opening for King Street may be on the right of the image. Several newspaper advertisements place the slave ships of Franklin & Armfield along this section of the waterfront, utilizing Irwin's wharf⁹⁸, Fowle's wharf⁹⁹, and Janney's wharf.¹⁰⁰

Potentially of relevance to this study, whether intentionally drawn by the artist to link this view of the waterfront and the activities related to the domestic slave trade taking place there to the slave jail complex of Franklin & Armfield on the other side of the City, or simply a different building, there is a building with a roofline similar to the distinctive roofline of 1315 Duke Street visible up the road on the north side of the street on the left. Comparing this waterfront view with others, this opening on the left is probably Prince Street and not Duke Street, making it less likely the artist intended this structure to be 1315 Duke Street.

⁹⁵ Ship registers and enrollments of New Orleans, Louisiana.

⁹⁶ Alexandria City Hall, National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form.

⁹⁷ See "View from Pioneer Mil, looking up the wharf", Andrew J. Russell, May 1865, <https://www.loc.gov/item/2005684447/>.

⁹⁸ *Alexandria Gazette*, October 31, 1832, November 1, 1838, October 2, 1840.

⁹⁹ *Alexandria Gazette*, February 7, 1840, February 19, 1840.

¹⁰⁰ *Alexandria Gazette*, October 2, 1840.

Also depicted on this broadside and of relevance to the architecture of enslavement and confinement in Alexandria is the leftmost illustration in the center row titled “Jail in Alexandria” (Figure 31). The text below this illustration reads:

FACTS.

In 1826 Congress appropriated out of the public treasury \$5000 “for the purpose of altering and repairing the jail in the city of Washington” and \$10,000 to build “a county jail for the city and county of Alexandria.”

The text also discusses the registration of free negroes, but given this context, the fact that the slave jail at 1315 Duke Street is already included on this broadside, and its position on the broadside under “Public Prisons in the District”, this illustration probably shows the Alexandria, DC county jail, located at St. Asaph and Princess Streets. It also generally matches the layout of the site as captured in this 1919 aerial photograph.¹⁰¹

That being said, the three chimney, three bay structure in the center are not dissimilar to the kitchen wing off the rear of 1315 Duke, the small gable barely visible over the wall to the left could be the infirmary or hospital described in the archaeology site report (Artemel et al., 1987) and the lower roof on the right could be the passageway between the kitchen and the house. Taken without the above context, this image could very well be slave pen complex at 1315 Duke Street, viewed from the northwest looking southeast at the rear (northern) and side (western) walls of the complex. This view would be similar to views of the slave pen complex from Shuter’s Hill (Figure 106) or to a drawing by Robert Knox Sneden (Figure 99; Sneden may also be drawing a different structure with a number of similarities to the slave jail complex at 1315 Duke Street). Given the similarities between the slave jail complex at 1315 Duke Street and



Figure 31. Jail in Alexandria, American Anti-Slavery Society, 1836.



Figure 32. Alexandria Jail, St. Asaph and Princess Streets looking east, 1919.

¹⁰¹ Alexandria, Virginia. Airplane view of Central and Water Front Section, <https://www.loc.gov/item/2016884327/>.

other slave pens, municipal jails, penitentiaries, and other structures of confinement that were built throughout the mid-nineteenth century, a comparative architectural study of these structures would be worthwhile.

Franklin & Armfield began to wrap up their business affairs in late 1836. They sent the brig *Isaac Franklin* to New Orleans with their final shipment of enslaved people November 15, 1836 (Figure 33),¹⁰² having already sold the brigs *Tribune* and *Uncas* to Washington DC-based slave trader William H. Williams (Figure 34).¹⁰³

The final newspaper advertisement they ran under both of their names was published on November 23, 1836, a week after the *Isaac Franklin* had sailed, and was typical of their previous advertisements (Figure 35). It read:

CASH FOR 500 NEGROES,
INCLUDING both sexes from 12 to 25 years
of age. Persons having likely servants
to dispose of, will find it to their interest to
give us a call, as we will give higher prices in
cash than any other purchaser who is now or
may hereafter come into this market.
FRANKLIN & ARMFIELD.¹⁰⁴

The *Isaac Franklin* arrived in New Orleans on December 5, 1836 with 255 enslaved people on board.¹⁰⁵

Even after the *Isaac Franklin* arrived in New Orleans, John Armfield was running advertisements in the local newspapers. As late as December 12, 1836, Armfield ran this advertisement under his own name (Figure 36):

FOR NEW ORELANS,
On the 15th instant, the packet brig
ISAAC FRANKLIN, WILLIAM SMITH,

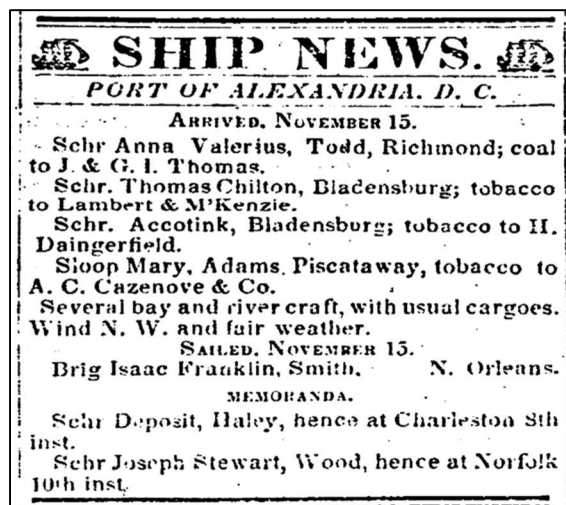


Figure 33. *Alexandria Gazette*, November 16, 1836.

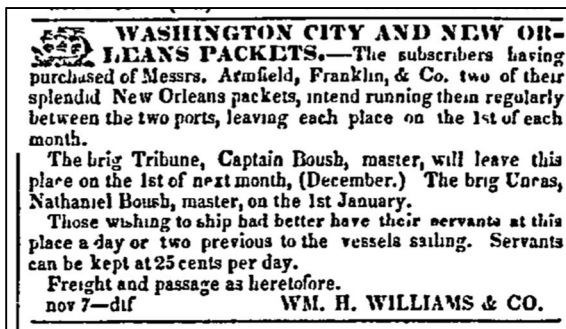


Figure 34. *Daily National Intelligencer*, November 7, 1836.

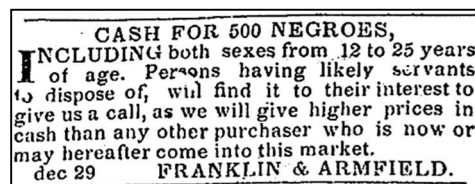


Figure 35. *Alexandria Gazette*, November 23, 1836.

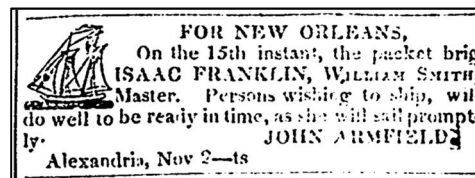


Figure 36. *Washington Globe*, December 12, 1836.

¹⁰² *Alexandria Gazette*, November 16, 1836.

¹⁰³ *Washington Daily National Intelligencer*, November 7, 1836.

¹⁰⁴ *Alexandria Gazette*, November 23, 1836.

¹⁰⁵ *New York Commercial Advertiser*, December 16, 1836.

Master. Persons wishing to ship will
do well to be ready in time, as she will sail promptly.
JOHN ARMFIELD¹⁰⁶

The *Isaac Franklin* returned to the Chesapeake on December 23, 1836,¹⁰⁷ but was caught up in ice off the Potomac River on December 27th,¹⁰⁸ and did not arrive back in port in Alexandria until February 11, 1837, when the newspaper announced it was returning from New Orleans to John Armfield (but not Isaac Franklin or Franklin & Armfield) (Figure 37).¹⁰⁹

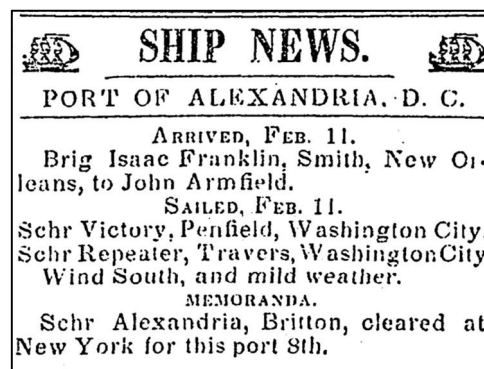


Figure 37. Alexandria Gazette, February 13, 1837.

¹⁰⁶ *Washington Globe*, December 12, 1836.

¹⁰⁷ *American and Commercial Daily Advertiser*, December 27, 1836.

¹⁰⁸ *Boston Courier*, January 2, 1837.

¹⁰⁹ *Alexandria Gazette*, February 13, 1837.

GEORGE KEPHART & CO., ET AL. (1837-1859)

Less than a week after the *Isaac Franklin* arrived back in port for John Armfield on February 11, 1837, former Franklin & Armfield agent George Kephart placed an advertisement in the *Alexandria Gazette* (Figure 38), writing:

FOR NEW-ORLEANS

On Tuesday the 21st instant, the
packet brig ISAAC FRANKLIN,
under the command of her former cap-
tain, William Smith. For freight or pas-
sage, apply to the captain on board or to
GEO. KEPHART,
Duke st. Alexandria¹¹⁰

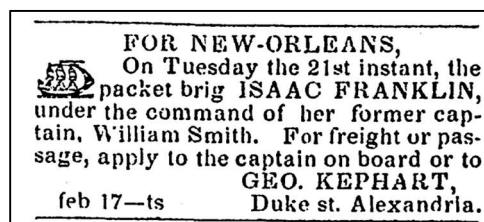


Figure 38. *Alexandria Gazette*, February 17, 1837.

By mid-February, not only does Kephart seem to be the new owner of the *Isaac Franklin* after its final voyage under Franklin & Armfield, but he also seems to be continuing their business out of their property on Duke Street. Furthermore, before the end of February, Kephart listed his residence and farm in Frederick County Maryland for sale, placing the following advertisement in the *Daily Globe* in Washington, D.C., which ran until March 11, 1837:

PUBLIC SALE.—I will sell at public sale,
on Monday the 13th day of March next, be-
tween the hours of 1 and 1 o'clock, on the premi-
ses, the Farm, on which I now reside, containing
about 275 acres....

Kephart's advertisement continues to describe his property in detail, and includes a new dwelling house, outhouses such as a corn house and carriage house, garden, yard, farmland, orchard, running sources of water, woodland, fencing, and a barn. This property is in Frederick County, Maryland, near Noland's Ferry, and is within a mile of the C&O Canal. Kephart also advertises another parcel within half a mile of his residence and notes that it's "in a bad state of cultivation" and another wood lot within two and a half miles of his residence. Kephart concludes his advertisement by noting, "N.B.—Servants will be taken in payment either in part or the whole." He also notes that the new dwelling house is "completely finished to the garret, with a basement story for servants".¹¹¹ Reading between the lines here, it would appear that Kephart, the slave trader, may have been using this basement to confine enslaved people on his property prior to trafficking them for Franklin & Armfield.

Fred Fowler, who was born in Frederick County, Maryland and was formerly enslaved, told historian Frederic Bancroft, "Did you ever hear of a trader named George Kephart? Ever'body in

¹¹⁰ *Alexandria Gazette*, February 17, 1837.

¹¹¹ *Washington Daily Globe*, February 25, 1837.

Frederick knowed Kephart, an' was *afeerd* of 'im, too. When it was reported that he was about, they trembled. At different times, two years apart, he bought my uncle Lloyd Steward and my aunt Margaret Stewart. He was supposed to have sent 'em to Georgia, but they was nevah heerd from."¹¹²

Kephart's residence and farm must not have sold at auction on March 13, 1837, because Kephart is listed as residing at it in both the 1840 and 1850 US Censuses and he attempted to list it for sale again in 1851 (Figure 64). On March 14, 1837, the day after the advertised auction, Kephart begins running a new advertisement in the *Alexandria Gazette* (Figure 39). It stated:

CASH FOR NEGROES.

I WILL give the highest cash price for Likely Negroes, from 10 to 15 years of age. Myself or Agent can, at all times, be found at the establishment formerly owned by Armfield, Franklin & Co., at the west end of Duke street.

GEO. KEPHART.¹¹³

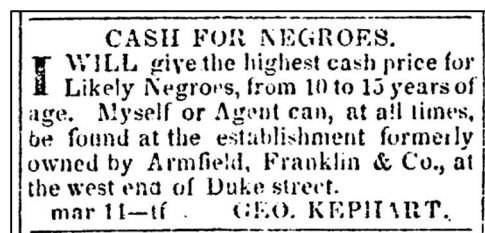


Figure 39. *Alexandria Gazette*, March 14, 1837.

If his location was vague before, by mid-March, Kephart has made it clear that he is working out of 1315 Duke Street and is continuing to operate in Alexandria as a slave trader using his connection to Franklin & Armfield, the “establishment” here perhaps meaning both the physical building and his connection to their former business. The 1837 City tax assessment lists George Kephart as the owner of a “Negro Prison” assessed at \$7,000, but curiously, it places this establishment on Duke, but not between Payne and West, but between Payne and Fayette. This is repeated in 1838. In 1839, the tax assessment places Kephart's property on “do [Prince] do [Duke] ~~do~~ [do here is crossed out, but it is under Fayette above] + West”. In 1840, the notation is a little unclear, but is at either Duke and West or Fayette, Duke, and West. By 1842, this confusion disappears and in the following years Kephart is noted as being on Duke and West, Payne and West (under a series of Duke Street entries), or on Duke, Payne, and West. No evidence exists to suggest Kephart ever owned property on Duke Street between Fayette and Payne and this conflation of Payne and Fayette is also seen in the 1834 City Directory¹¹⁴, a proposed 1853 property division by Kephart¹¹⁵, and in a letter to Kephart's tenant Walker R. Millan notifying him of the end of his lease¹¹⁶. Perhaps the source of this confusion is a house on Duke between Fayette and Payne, at one point owned by Kephart's agent and bookkeeper, Robert N. Windsor, which is shown in several city tax lists as being rented to Kephart. If they are using this structure one block east of the slave pen complex on the 1300 block of Duke Street as

¹¹² Bancroft, *Slave-Trading*, 1931, p. 64-5.

¹¹³ *Alexandria Gazette*, March 14, 1837.

¹¹⁴ E.A. Cohen & Company, 1834, *A Full Directory for Washington City, Georgetown, and Alexandria*.

¹¹⁵ *Alexandria Gazette*, December 23, 1853.

¹¹⁶ *Millan v. Kephart*, October Term, 1867, Report of Cases Decided in the Supreme Court of Appeals of Virginia. Peachy R. Grattan. Volume XVI. pp. 523-44.

a residence, office, or guest house of sorts, this could explain why their business is sometimes listed as far east as Fayette Street.

In the 1837 tax assessment, Kephart is listed as a Slave Dealer and also has \$200 of furniture, no tithables, two horses, and two cows. Under the column for Loaf Bread Bakers, the assessment notes “1 \$150” and “1 Gig \$150”, but these almost certainly belong in the next column for Riding Carriages.¹¹⁷ While the property is assessed at the same value as before, the absence of any tithables, the decrease in the number of horses and cows (not to mention the reduction of two-thirds of the fleet of ships available to Kephart) would seem to indicate that Kephart was operating his slave trading business from 1315 Duke Street in a reduced capacity as compared to his predecessors.

Furthermore, despite closing down the firm of Franklin & Armfield, John Armfield is still in Alexandria. The 1837 City tax assessment lists Armfield’s residence on Prince and Patrick and still lists him as a Slave dealer. He is now listed as the proprietor of this house and lot, now assessed at \$10,000, with \$1,000 of furniture, four tithables, four horses, and a single riding carriage worth \$500 (Figure 40).¹¹⁸

Geo Kephart	2 1/2 Lots	Paym Duke St	Light Negro Prison	7000	200	3	Slave Dealer
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Figure 40. Alexandria Ward IV tax assessment, 1837.

Sometime before February 14, 1838, another author connected to the abolitionist movement visits the slave jail at 1315 Duke Street. The Reverend J. M. McKim’s account is first published on March 1, 1838 in the *Emancipator*¹¹⁹ and republished in *A Sketch of the Slave Trade in the District of Columbia*.¹²⁰ His account describes the slave pen complex as belonging to Franklin & Armfield even though they have dissolved their partnership by this point and George Kephart is running his business there. Perhaps McKim’s visit predated February 1837 when Kephart took over operations at 1315 Duke Street or perhaps the reputation of Franklin & Armfield in abolitionist circles lasted beyond their tenure at the site. McKim primarily describes his visit to [William H.] Williams’ slave jail in Washington, but also includes this description of 1315 Duke Street in a letter dated February 14, 1838 to Joshua Leavitt:

During my stay at Washington, I visited also Franklin & Armfield’s immense slave factory—conversed with its keeper—saw its 50 or 60 wretched prisoners—scanned its high walls, its bars and bolts—heard the keeper tell how kind they were to their prisoners, how mild southern slavery was, and how badly the Marylanders treated their ‘n*****,’—of course how much better the condition was of those who were brought up in Maryland, and brought there—heard from him how they never separated families, &c. &c. Heard him, too, contradict himself and unsay all he had said, when examined and cross-questioned. But as

¹¹⁷ 1837 Alexandria Ward IV tax list p. 9.

¹¹⁸ Ibid, p. 3.

¹¹⁹ *Emancipator*, March 1, 1838.

¹²⁰ McKim, J.M. *A Sketch of the Slave Trade in the District of Columbia*, 1838.

you have visited this establishment yourself, and as my letter is already too long, I forbear going any further into detail.

As briefly mentioned above, in the 1838 city tax assessment Kephart's property is placed at Payne, Duke, and Fayette, and the value of the property is still listed at \$7,000 and his furniture at \$200. Also missing from this year's assessment but present on others are any indication that Kephart is a slave trader or his property is used as a slave jail or the number of stories of the building. There is one tithable at the property, one horse, two cows, one cart & dray, and two riding carriages, one barouche assessed at \$150 and one buggy assessed at \$100.¹²¹ Kephart is also listed as an occupant of a two-story house valued at \$2,500 at Prince and Henry belonging to James McGuire. Here, Kephart is assessed for \$680 of furniture. Like Kephart, Armfield is not listed as a Slave dealer on this tax list.¹²²

The 1839 City tax list is nearly identical to the one from 1838, with the major differences being the property is at "do [Prince] do [Duke] ~~do~~ [do here is crossed out, but it is under Fayette above] + West", the building is noted as having three stories again, and the barouche and buggy labels are gone from the two riding carriages that are listed.¹²³ On May 29, 1839, Kephart began running a new advertisement in the *Alexandria Gazette* (Figure 41). It stated:

NEGROES WANTED.

CASH and the highest market prices will be paid for any number of likely young negroes of both sexes, &c. All communications addressed to me, at the old establishment of Armfield, Franklin & Co., west end of Duke street, Alexandria, D.C., will meet with prompt attention.

GEORGE KEPHART¹²⁴

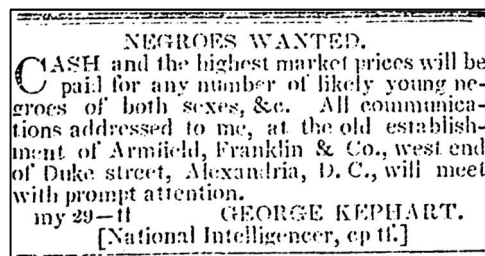


Figure 41. *Alexandria Gazette*, May 29, 1839.

By the time of the 1840 City tax assessment, George Kephart is no longer listed as the occupant of James McGuire's house on Prince Street. McGuire's new tenant is listed as Robert Windsor.¹²⁵ This appears to be the same Robert Windsor named as a tenant of George Kephart at 1315 Duke Street in 1844 and 1846 (in 1843 and 1845, the tenant at 1315 Duke Street under Kephart is listed as Richard Windsor; it is not clear if this is a mistake or if Robert and Richard Windsor are both tenants or agents for Kephart during this period, either concurrently or consecutively). Kephart is still listed as a Slave dealer and the proprietor of the property on Duke and West (there is a notation in the column that may describe it as being at Fayette, Duke, and

¹²¹ 1838 Alexandria Ward IV tax list p. 9.

¹²² Ibid, p. 3.

¹²³ 1839 Alexandria Ward IV tax list p. 9.

¹²⁴ *Alexandria Gazette*, May 20, 1839.

¹²⁵ 1840 Alexandria Ward IV tax list p. 3.

West, which is two blocks, not one) and there are no additional tenants listed. Kephart is also assessed for a second tithable, a second horse, and only one riding carriage, a barouche.

In the 1840 US Census returns for Alexandria, D.C., George Kephart and his household appear on the final page of a section labeled “A Part of Alexandria City West of Washington Street”, consistent with 1315 Duke Street’s location on the edge of town, although very few names on this page correspond with names located near Kephart in the 1840 City Tax assessment. Listed here are four white males under the age of 5, one white male 30 to 40 years of age, two white males between 40 and 50 years of age (one of whom is George Kephart), one white female between the ages of 5 and 10, two white females between the ages of 30 and 40, one enslaved male under the age of 10, two enslaved males between 10 and 24 years of age, one enslaved female between 10 and 24 years of age, and one enslaved female between 24 and 36 years of age (Figure 42).¹²⁶ Also in 1840, there is a Geo. Kephart listed in Frederick, Maryland.¹²⁷ According to the 1850 US Census, also for Frederick, Maryland, Kephart has a son also named George, but he would have only been 3 years old when the 1840 Census was taken. It is possible Kephart is keeping two residences, one in Frederick (his house and farm appear not to have sold at auction in 1837), and one in Alexandria either on Prince near Patrick or Henry or at 1315 Duke Street.

Figure 42. 1840 US Census, showing George Kephart in Alexandria.

In the summer of 1840, American poet and abolitionist John G. [Greenleaf] Whittier visited “the great Slave-Prison formerly known as Franklin & Armfield’s”, the Alexandria county jail, and William H. Williams’ slave jail in Washington D.C. Several years later, prompted by a letter he read in the *Albany Patriot*, he recounted what he saw in Alexandria, writing:

In Alexandria, at the great Slave-Prison formerly known as Franklin & Armfield’s, there were about fifty slaves. They were enclosed by high strong walls, with grated iron doors. Among them was a poor woman who had escaped twelve years before from slavery, and who had married a free man. She had been hunted

¹²⁶ 1840 US Census, Alexandria County, District of Columbia.

¹²⁷ 1840 US Census, Buckeystown District, Frederick, Maryland.

out by some of those human blood hounds, who are in the detestable occupation of slave-catchers, separated from her husband, and with her child had been sold to the speculators for the New-Orleans market. Another woman whose looks and manner were expressive of deep anguish had, with her nine children been sold away from her husband—an everlasting separation! But, her sorrows had but just begun. Long ere this she and her children have probably been re-sold, scattered and divided, and are now toiling in hopeless bereavement, or buried like brutes, without a tear or Christian rite, on the banks of the Mississippi!

From this horrible *market house of human flesh*, we were informed that from 1500 to 2000 slaves are sometimes sent to the South in a single year.¹²⁸

Whittier's experiences in these Alexandria and Washington prisons must have shaped his views on slavery and, while not explicitly linked to these jails, imagery from them can be identified in some of his poems, most notably "Lines, Suggested by a visit to the City of Washington, in the 12th month of 1845", where he includes the stanzas:

*From this glittering lie my vision
Takes a broader, sadder range,
Full before me have arisen
Other pictures dark and strange;
From the parlor to the prison must the scene and witness change*

*Hark! The heavy gate is swinging
On its hinges, harsh and slow;
One pale prison lamp is flinging
On a fearful group below
Such a light as leaves to terror whatsoe'er it does not show.*

*Pitying God!—Is that a WOMAN
On whose wrist the shackles clash?
Is that shriek she utters human,
Underneath the stinging lash?
Are they MEN whose eyes of madness from that sad procession flash?*

*Still the dance goes gayly onward!
What is it to Wealth and Pride
That without the stars are looking
On a scene which earth should hide?
That the SLAVE-SHIP lies in waiting, rocking on Potomac's tide!¹²⁹*

Sometime between June 3, 1841 and June 5, 1841, Kephart's establishment on Duke Street is visited by British abolitionist Joseph Sturge. His tour of the United States for the committee of

¹²⁸ Appearing in *Voices of Freedom*, November 16, 1843 and *Emancipator and Republican*, November 23, 1843.

¹²⁹ Whittier, John Greenleaf, "Lines, Suggested by a visit to the City of Washington, in the 12th month of 1845", 1845.

the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society was published the following year as *A Visit to the United States in 1841*.¹³⁰ Sturge writes:

In the afternoon, I proceeded, by a steam packet, with one of my friends, to Alexandria, about six miles distant, on the other side of the Potomac. A merchant, to whom I had an introduction, kindly accompanied us to a slave-trading establishment there, which is considered the principal one in the District. The proprietor was absent; but the person in charge, a stout, middle-aged man, with a good-natured countenance, that little indicated his employment, readily consented to show us over the establishment. On passing behind the house, we looked through a grated iron door, into a square court or yard, with very high walls, in which were about fifty slaves. Some of the younger ones were dancing to a fiddle, an affecting proof, in their situation, of the degradation caused by slavery. There were others, who seemed a pretty to silent dejection....

Our guide told us that they sometimes sent from tis house from fifteen hundred to two thousand slaves to the South in a year, and that they occasionally had three hundred to four hundred at once in their possession. That the trade was not now so brisk, but that prices were rising. The return and profits of this traffic appear to be entirely regulated by the fluctuations in the value of the cotton. Woman are worth one-third less than men. But one instance of complete escape ever occurred from these premises, though some of the slaves were occasionally trusted out in the fields. He showed us the substantial clothing, shoes, &c. with which the slaves were supplied when sent to the South; a practice, I fear, enforced more by the cupidity of the buyers, than the humanity of the seller. Our informant stated, in answer to inquiries, that by the general testimony of the slaves purchased, they were treated better by the planters than was the case ten years ago. He also admitted the evils of the system, and said, with apparent sincerity, he wished it was put an end to.

Sturge also drew upon his experience in Kephart's slave jail and sent the following to every Senator and Congressional Representative as part of a letter titled "To the Abolitionists of the United States". He wrote:

The same day we visited one of the well-known slave-trading establishments at Alexandria. On passing to it we were shewn the costly mansion of its late proprietor, who has lately retired on a large property acquired by the sale of native born Americans. In an open enclosure, with high walls which it is impossible to scale, with a strong iron-barred door, and in which we were told that there were sometimes from three to four hundred persons crowded, we saw about fifty slaves. Amongst the number thus incarcerated was a woman with nine children, who had been cruelly separated from their husband and father, and would probably be shortly sent to New Orleans, where they would never be likely to see him again, and where the mother may be for ever severed from every one of her children, and each of them sold to a separate master.

In his letter, Sturge reports that he saw about fifty enslaved persons while at the slave jail complex. This is a figure roughly consistent with other primary accounts, but he also provides for the first time an estimate of 300-400 for the upper end of the number of persons who could be confined there at a time. Sturge also visited the county jail in Alexandria, meeting with a youth who was being held on suspicion of being a slave and who did not have documentation to prove his status as a free person of color.

¹³⁰ Sturge, Joseph. *A Visit to the United States in 1841, 1842*.

The 1842 City tax assessment lists Kephart's house and lot at Duke and West Streets. There is only one tithable listed here and a single cow. There are no horses or riding carriages.¹³¹ A possible interpretation is that this tax list was compiled while Kephart was away conveying a coffle of slaves to Natchez, taking the carts and horses with him, leaving a single employee at 1315 Duke Street.

On August 8, 1842, the copartnership of Kephart & Co is dissolved and Kephart places the following notice in the *Alexandria Gazette* several days later (Figure 43):

NOTICE.
RICHMOND, 8th August, 1842.
THE Copartnership of George Kephart &
Co. is this day, by consent, dissolved.
GEORGE KEPHART,
TAIT & BAUDAR¹³²

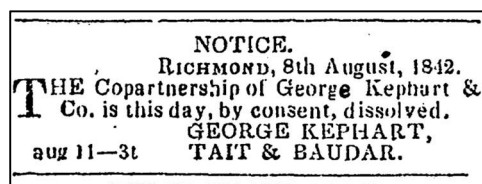


Figure 43. *Alexandria Gazette*, August 11, 1842.

This advertisement links Kephart in business to two other slave traders, Bacon Tait in Richmond (perhaps replacing Rice Ballard of that city), and [Thomas] Baudar (or Boudar or Boudor¹³³) of New Orleans. Kephart appears to have replicated the same basic business structure as employed by Franklin & Armfield, if perhaps on a smaller scale. This advertisement also names Kephart's business as "George Kephart & Co.", and this general structure (Kephart partnering with other slave traders for fixed periods of years) is replicated several times in the following years.

The 1843 City tax assessment listed George Kephart with ½ square of property (1 acre) on Duke, Payne, and West. It noted that he is a slave dealer, but no other furniture, livestock, vehicles, or tithables are assessed to him. Directly under Kephart are listed Jacob Riaser as a single tithable and Richard Windsor also as a single tithable.¹³⁴ From the context and order of the list, it would appear that these two men are occupants of 1315 Duke Street and are agents or employees of Kephart. Jacob Riaser also appears in George Kephart's household in the 1850 US Census for the Buckystown District, Frederick, Maryland and Richard Windsor may be related to Robert N. Windsor, who occupied the house owned by James McGuire immediately after Kephart seems to move out prior to the 1840 tax assessment and would be listed at 1315 Duke Street in 1844 and 1846. While not made explicit in the tax lists, the implication is that these men are in business with Kephart as his partners or employees.

On June 17, 1843, Kephart placed a new advertisement in the *Alexandria Gazette* (Figure 44). It read:

¹³¹ 1842 Alexandria Ward IV tax list p. 9. The City tax list for Ward IV for the year 1841 appears to be missing.

¹³² *Alexandria Gazette*, August 11, 1842.

¹³³ See Conway's "Mysteries of a Shamble" and Bancroft 1931 (p. 92, 277, and 314).

¹³⁴ 1843 Alexandria Ward IV tax list p. 7.

NEGROES WANTED.—I wish to purchase a lot of likely young Negroes for the south, as early as possible, and will pay the highest market price. Call at the *old establishment*, west end of Duke street, or direct to me by mail to this place, when all all communications will be promptly attended to. Bear in mind, all former agents, are not doing business for me. During my absence, all letters will be attended to by some person kept at the house, with full power to act for me.

GEORGE KEPHART.¹³⁵

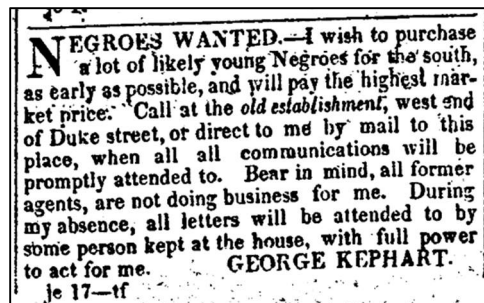


Figure 44. Alexandria Gazette, June 17, 1843.

This emphasis by Kephart on “the *old establishment*” (italics in original) and the disavowal of his former agents suggests there had been some tension in the business, perhaps as a result of the dissolution of the partnership in August of the previous year or the unpaid debt incurred by Bruin July 20, 1842 that would soon result in legal action by Kephart.¹³⁶ It would seem evident that the need to describe his place of business as the *old establishment* meant there was some new establishment in the area that would possibly be confusing to his customers and the need to state that his former agents are not working for him (and are on their own) would suggest it is these former agents who have set up the new establishment that are causing the confusion. This confusion appears to have come into the present as the Northern Virginia Urban League-era museum exhibit erroneously lists Bruin & Hill as the occupants of 1315 Duke Street between 1845 and 1852.

On August 3, 1843, less than two months after Kephart’s advertisement distancing himself from all of his former agents appeared in the local paper, Joseph Bruin, formerly one of Kephart’s agents¹³⁷ and Thomas Jones (formerly an agent of Franklin & Armfield in Easton, Maryland, see above) begin advertising for under the name Bruin & Jones (Figure 45). It is not known if Jones was also an agent for Kephart prior to partnering with Bruin. They wrote:

CASH FOR NEGROES.—We wish to purchase from fifty to seventy-five likely young Negroes of both sexes, for whom we will pay the highest market prices. Persons having such to dispose of will do well to give us a call before they sell. One of us can be seen at all times at our residence, West End, Alexandria. All letters addressed to use through the Alexandria Post office, will be promptly attended to.

BRUIN & JONES.¹³⁸

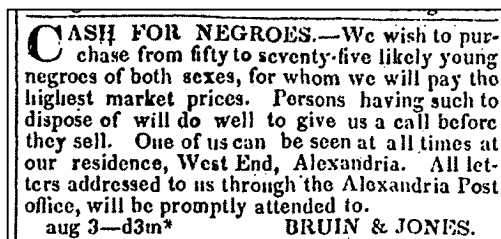


Figure 45. Alexandria Gazette, August 3, 1843.

¹³⁵ Alexandria Gazette, June 17, 1843.

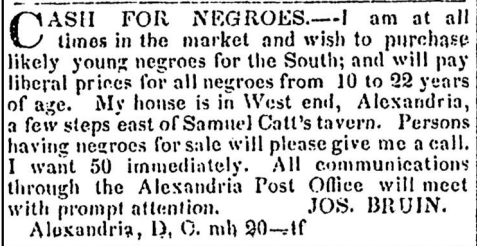
¹³⁶ Kephart v. Bruin, 1842.

¹³⁷ See Kephart v. Bruin, 1846.

¹³⁸ Alexandria Gazette, August 3, 1843.

Joseph Bruin acquires the deed to the property at 1707 Duke Street, now known as the Joseph Bruin slave jail, on March 11, 1844 for \$1500 from the heirs of John Longden.¹³⁹ Because this property is outside the City limits, it does not appear on the Alexandria City tax lists. Then nine days later on March 20, 1844, Bruin places the following advertisement, further clarifying where he can be found to conduct business (Figure 46):

CASH FOR NEGROES.—I am at all times in the market and wish to purchase likely young negroes for the South; and will pay liberal prices for all negroes from 10 to 22 years of age. My house is in West end, Alexandria, a few steps east of Samuel Catt's tavern. Persons having negroes for sale will please give me a call. I want 50 immediately. All communications will meet with prompt attention. JOS BRUIN.¹⁴⁰

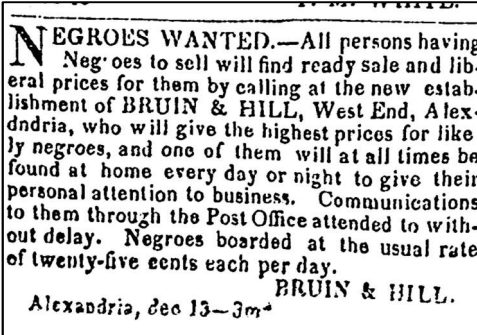


CASH FOR NEGROES.—I am at all times in the market and wish to purchase likely young negroes for the South; and will pay liberal prices for all negroes from 10 to 22 years of age. My house is in West end, Alexandria, a few steps east of Samuel Catt's tavern. Persons having negroes for sale will please give me a call. I want 50 immediately. All communications through the Alexandria Post Office will meet with prompt attention. JOS. BRUIN. Alexandria, D. C. mh 20-1844

Figure 46. *Alexandria Gazette*, March 20, 1844.

A second, nearly identical advertisement can be found on the following page of the same newspaper, only with the words “I” replaced by “We”, “My” by “Our”, “me” by “us”, and “Jos. Bruin” with “Bruin & Jones”.¹⁴¹ It’s not clear why Bruin placed nearly identical advertisements in this newspaper, once under his own name and once with the name of partnership with Thomas Jones. The tavern of Samuel Catt was located just west of the intersection of Duke Street and Diagonal Road.¹⁴² Two weeks later, on April 4, 1844, Bruin and Jones dissolve their copartnership by mutual consent,¹⁴³ and sometime prior to December 13, 1845, Bruin goes into business with Henry P. Hill. On that date, they place an advertisement in the *Alexandria Gazette*, stating (Figure 47):

NEGROES WANTED.—All persons having Negroes to sell will find ready sale and liberal prices for them by calling at the new establishment of BRUIN & HILL, West End, Alexandria, who will give the highest prices for likely negroes, and one of them will at all times be found at home every day or night to give their personal attention to business. Communications to them through the Post Office attended to without delay. Negroes boarded at the usual rate of twenty-five cents each per day. BRUIN & HILL.¹⁴⁴



NEGROES WANTED.—All persons having Negroes to sell will find ready sale and liberal prices for them by calling at the new establishment of BRUIN & HILL, West End, Alexandria, who will give the highest prices for likely negroes, and one of them will at all times be found at home every day or night to give their personal attention to business. Communications to them through the Post Office attended to without delay. Negroes boarded at the usual rate of twenty-five cents each per day. BRUIN & HILL. Alexandria, Dec 13-37

Figure 47. *Alexandria Gazette*, December 13, 1845.

¹³⁹ Fairfax Deed Book K3, p.151.

¹⁴⁰ *Alexandria Gazette*, March 20, 1844.

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁴² Schweigert, Kurt P. *West End*, 1998.

¹⁴³ *Alexandria Gazette*, April 4, 1844.

¹⁴⁴ *Alexandria Gazette*, December 13, 1845.

Here, it is unclear if “the new establishment” refers to the business partnership or the physical structure on the property at 1707 Duke Street. On June 19, 1846, Bruin & Hill place a new advertisement in the *Alexandria Gazette* and further refine the location of their business (Figure 48):

NEGROES WANTED.—We will pay the highest prices for likely YOUNG NEGROES, and persons wishing to sell will find it to their interest to call on us either by letter or personally at our house, a short distance West of the bridge, at the head of Duke street, where one of us may be found at all times. Mr. James H. Simpson, of Fairfax County, Virginia, is our only agent.

BRUIN & HILL.¹⁴⁵

The bridge referred to here is the bridge over Hooff’s Run, located approximately between the 1500 and 1600 blocks of Duke Street. They place similar advertisements on January 2, 1847, locating themselves, “...our house, in West-End, a little east of Samuel Catt’s Tavern, and near the Stone Bridge...” (Figure 49)¹⁴⁶ and January 27, 1847, stating, “...at our establishment at the head of Duke street, Alexandria—a few paces west of the Bridge” (Figure 50).¹⁴⁷

To be clear, Bruin (along with Jones and Hill and Simpson) were not operating out of 1315 Duke Street, except perhaps as agents for Franklin & Armfield or Kephart, never did. The claim that Bruin is connected to 1315 Duke Street is made in the NVUL-era museum material at 1315 Duke Street and is also made obliquely in the archaeology site report prepared by Artemel et al. in 1987. The authors write, “One of Kephart’s infamous agents was Joseph Bruin” and cite page 91 of Frederic Bancroft’s 1931 *Slave-Trading in the Old South*. However, on this page, Bancroft does not write that Bruin and Kephart were business partners, only that

NEGROES WANTED.—We will pay the highest prices for likely YOUNG NEGROES, and persons wishing to sell will find it to their interest to call on us either by letter or personally at our house, a short distance West of the bridge, at the head of Duke street, where one of us may be found at all times. Mr. James H. Simpson, of Fairfax County, Virginia, is our only agent. je 19—3m* BRUIN & HILL.

Figure 48. *Alexandria Gazette* June 19, 1846.

NEGROES WANTED.—We wish to purchase any number of NEGROES, from 10 to 30 years of age, for which we will pay the very highest market price. Those having likely negroes for sale, will find a ready sale for them, by calling at our house, in West-End, a little east of Samuel Catt’s Tavern, and near the Stone Bridge, where one of us can be found at all times. Mechanics are in demand. BRUIN & HILL. P. S.—We can afford to pay more for negroes at our house than we can pay in the country, and will do it. [ort 5—eo3m*] B. & H.

Figure 49. *Alexandria Gazette*, January 2, 1847.

NEGROES WANTED.—We wish to purchase LIKELY YOUNG NEGROES, between the ages of 12 and 30 years. We do not intend to insult the understanding of sensible men by any contemptible boasting, and therefore content ourselves with a publication of the simple fact that we are anxious to buy negroes of both sexes, of the above description, at liberal prices, and will most certainly pay for all that we shall purchase. Those who wish to sell their negroes are earnestly requested to call at our establishment at the head of Duke street, Alexandria—a few paces west of the Bridge. A sign over the door, BRUIN & HILL. jan 27—d3m*

Figure 50. *Alexandria Gazette*, January 27, 1847.

¹⁴⁵ *Alexandria Gazette*, June 19, 1846.

¹⁴⁶ *Alexandria Gazette*, January 2, 1847.

¹⁴⁷ *Alexandria Gazette*, January 27, 1847.

Bruin and Kephart were both active in the Alexandria and Washington markets. Kephart's deposition in his 1846 lawsuit against Bruin make it clear that Bruin was working as his agent, primarily in counties to the west of Alexandria, but no evidence has been uncovered to suggest Bruin was working in 1315 Duke Street, let alone that he operated his own business at 1315 Duke Street.

Returning to the property at 1315 Duke Street, the 1844 City tax list is identical to the 1843 City tax list, except Jacob Riaser is now spelled Jacob Raiser and Richard Windsor is now Robert Windsor.¹⁴⁸ The former is probably a misspelling while the latter is either a different person or a case where the tax assessor wrote the wrong name for the person, as both Robert and Richard Windsor are known to be living in Alexandria during this period. In 1845, the City tax list places only Richard Windsor with a single tithable under George Kephart, who himself is listed as the occupant of 1315 Duke Street.¹⁴⁹

On March 12, 1846, Isaac and Adelsia Franklin and John and Martha Armfield sell their Alexandria property on Duke Street to George Kephart, who has been operating his domestic slave trading business from there for almost a decade. The three lots conveyed to Kephart for \$9,000 is the same property purchased at auction by Franklin & Armfield from the Mechanic's Bank October 5, 1832, and consisted of the parcel on the north side of Duke Street between Payne and West that contained the slave jail complex, and the two parcels west of West Street on both sides of Duke.¹⁵⁰

In 1846, the City tax assessment lists the proprietor of the ½ square at Payne, Duke and West Streets as Kephart & Harbin, who are listed as Slave Dealers. Horatio G. Harbin appears to be Kephart's business partner until their copartnership expires by contract on May 1, 1848.¹⁵¹ The assessed value of the property has decreased by \$500 to \$6,500. Listed directly under them is Robert N. Windsor, again with a single tithable.¹⁵²

For the first half of the 19th century, 1315 Duke Street fell within the boundaries of the District of Columbia, with the boundary line running diagonally through the southern part of Alexandria only about two blocks to the south and a little more than three to the west. After years of petitioning the State and Federal legislatures, retrocession of Alexandria passed Congress and a local referendum in September 1846. The State of Virginia formally accepted the return of Alexandria March 13, 1847.

The 1847 City tax assessment again lists Kephart & Harbin as the proprietors of the house and lot on Payne, Duke, and West Streets valued at \$6,500. They are noted as Slave Dealers but

¹⁴⁸ 1844 Alexandria Ward IV tax list p. 7.

¹⁴⁹ 1845 Alexandria Ward IV tax list p. 7.

¹⁵⁰ Alexandria County Deed Book G3, pp.328-31.

¹⁵¹ *Alexandria Gazette*, April 14, 1848.

¹⁵² 1846 Alexandria Ward IV tax list p. 8.

assessed for no other property this year. Robert N. Windsor is again listed under them, but not explicitly noted as a tenant. Kephart is also assessed for a lot on Payne and Prince (presumably on the other half of the block), with three valuations of \$125, \$175, and \$450, totaling \$750.

The 1847 City Land Book¹⁵³ lists George Kephart & Harbin as the owners of the house and lot at Duke, Payne, and West Streets. Curiously, it only values the land at \$800 and the improvements on the land at \$1,700, for a total value of ground and improvement of \$2,500, well short of the \$6,500 value assessed in 1846 and the \$7,000 value assessed in 1848. Their personal property not listed in the land book must account for this difference.

Kephart & Harbin have a dog license issued for their business for the quarter ending September 1, 1847. It cost them \$2.50.¹⁵⁴ On October 23, 1847 H.G. Harbin places a notice in the *Alexandria Gazette*, notifying the public that Robert N. Windsor is no longer an agent of Kephart & Harbin (Figure 51), confirming that Windsor (and by extension Jacob Raiser or Riaseer) was working as an agent for Kephart.¹⁵⁵

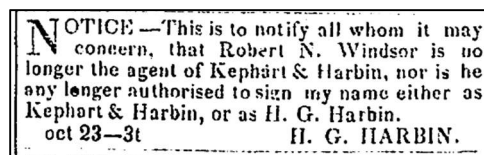


Figure 51. *Alexandria Gazette*, October 23, 1847.

The 1848 City tax assessment is confusing. Kephart & Harbin are listed as the proprietors of a house and one full square on Payne, Duke, and West Streets. Immediately to the right of this is a notation that says “1/2 Sq. to Geo. Kephart”. This house and land (whether the full square or half square is not clear) is valued at \$7,000, the house is noted as being three stories tall, and they are identified as Slave Dealers. The legal boundaries of the property at 1315 Duke Street is only ever known to consist of half a square of land (one acre, between Payne and West on Duke Street, extending halfway between Duke and Prince). It is unknown what the tax assessor is trying to convey here. Literally, it would appear to say the business of Kephart & Harbin own the full block, Payne to West, Duke to Prince and the occupant on half of that block is George Kephart. This assessment of one full square to Kephart or his business is repeated in 1849 and 1850. Beneath Kephart & Harbin is listed Robert B. Brashears (Brashear) as a single tithable. As with Windsor and Raiser or Riaseer in the early part of the decade, it would seem that Brashear is working as an employee or agent of Kephart & Harbin. Furthermore, several lines above Kephart & Harbin, Robert Windsor, no longer their agent, appears to own a two-story house and lot one block to the east on Duke and Fayette valued at \$1200 and under “Occupant” is listed “House to G. Kephart”. Perhaps Kephart has a residence or office here that is separate from 1315 Duke

¹⁵³ Two similar sets of documents exist that detail early property in the City of Alexandria. The first of these, the Tax Books, are used extensively in this study. These generally record the overall value of any houses and lots as well as other taxable items as per the City tax code. The second set of documents are the Land Books. These record the value of the lot and buildings separately. Additional research can should identify the slave jail complex property in these land books and add to this study.

¹⁵⁴ *Alexandria Gazette*, September 4, 1847.

¹⁵⁵ *Alexandria Gazette*, October, 23, 1847.

Street.¹⁵⁶ This house on Duke between Fayette and Payne may also be the source of the confusion about whether the slave jail complex is between Payne and West, Fayette and Payne, or Fayette and West. Kephart could be renting this structure one block to the east and using it as a part of his business, explaining these notations. A Civil War-era photograph taken from the Orange & Alexandria Railroad roundhouse shows this structure as a burned-out ruin, having caught fire in October 1862 (Figure 88).¹⁵⁷

The copartnership between Kephart and Harbin expired by contract May 1, 1848. Two weeks prior to that date, they announced in the local paper that they would be selling the property of the partnership on May 1 (Figure 52). The write:

PUBLIC SALE OF VALUABLE PROPERTY.—Whereas, the copartnership existing between George Kephart and Horatio G. Harbin, expires by contract *on the 1st day of May, 1848*, the following property will be offered at public sale on that day, on the premises, to wit: the ESTABLISHMENT, now in their possession, formerly the property of Franklin & Armfield, in the town of Alexandria, commencing on Payne street, running west on Duke street to West street, containing a half square of ground, with all the buildings and tenements on the same, which are extensive and commodious. TERMS:—One half cash, the remainder in one and two years, with interest from date. Deed retained until the property is paid for. ALSO, at the same time, TWO BUGGYS AND HARNESS, with all the HOUSEHOLD AND KITCHEN FURNITURE, belonging to the establishment, on a credit of ninety days, secured by well endorsed negotiable paper. ALSO, will be sold at the same time, NEGRO WOMAN JANE, for cash.

KEPHART & HARBIN.¹⁵⁸


PUBLIC SALE OF VALUABLE PROPERTY.—Whereas, the copartnership existing between George Kephart and Horatio G. Harbin, expires by contract *on the 1st day of May, 1848*, the following property will be offered at public sale on that day, on the premises, to wit: the  ESTABLISHMENT, now in their possession, formerly the property of Franklin & Armfield, in the town of Alexandria, commencing on Payne street, running west on Duke street to West street, containing a half square of ground, with all the buildings and tenements on the same, which are extensive and commodious. TERMS:—One half cash, the remainder in one and two years, with interest from date. Deed retained until the property is paid for. ALSO, at the same time, TWO BUGGYS AND HARNESS, with all the HOUSEHOLD AND KITCHEN FURNITURE, belonging to the establishment, on a credit of ninety days, secured by well endorsed negotiable paper. ALSO, will be sold at the same time, NEGRO WOMAN JANE, for cash. ap 14—eots KEPHART & HARBIN.

Figure 52. Alexandria Gazette, April 14, 1848.

It is unknown who, if anyone, purchases the property at public sale on May 1, 1848, as the deed was to be retained by Kephart until the terms of the sale were completed in 1850, two years later. In the 1849 City Tax list, George Kephart, now without Horatio Harbin, is listed as the owner of a house and one square of land valued at \$7,000 between Prince, Duke, West, and Payne. This explicitly describes the property one full block or square. Under this entry is again R.B. Brashier,

¹⁵⁶ 1848 Alexandria Ward IV tax list p. 9.

¹⁵⁷ Alexandria Gazette, October 21, 1862.

¹⁵⁸ Alexandria Gazette, April 14, 1848.

who is assessed one tithable, one cow, and is labeled as a Slave Dealer. Again, several lines above 1315 Duke Street is a house and lot owned by Robert Windsor on Fayette and Duke with the notation, “House to Kephart”. This two-story house is valued at \$1,500 and has \$100 of furniture.¹⁵⁹

By March 2, 1849, Robert Brashear is advertising in the *Alexandria Gazette* that he is operating out of 1315 Duke Street (Figure 53):

NEGROES WANTED.—The subscriber wishes to purchase a lot of likely Young Negroes, of both sexes, for a gentleman in the South. Persons having such property to dispose of, will find it to their interest to give me a call at the old stand of Kephart’s, upper end of Duke Street, Alexandria, Va. All communications addressed to me will be promptly attended to.

ROBT. B. BRASHEAR.¹⁶⁰

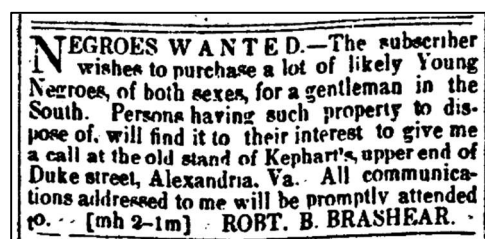


Figure 53. *Alexandria Gazette*, March 2, 1849.

This advertisement only runs for about a month until April 5, 1849 and no other advertisements placed by Brashear linking him to 1315 Duke Street can be found after this date. According to the terms of the announced 1848 sale of the property by Kephart & Harbin, the final payment was to be due May 1, 1850. It appears that this did not happen as Kephart appears to retain the deed to the property. Either Kephart purchased the property himself singularly from Kephart & Harbin or it was purchased by somebody like Robert Brashear who defaulted on the terms of the sale and did not take possession of the deed to the property, resulting in it staying with Kephart. Beginning on September 3, 1850 and running until March 27, 1851, Brashear places advertisements in the *Alexandria Gazette*, informing potential customers that correspondence should be addressed to him at Salem, in Fauquier County, Virginia,¹⁶¹ and then from October 29, 1851 to January 27, 1852, he places similar advertisements noting he can be reached at Middleburg, in Loudoun County, Virginia.¹⁶² There is no evidence to suggest Brashear is operating out of 1315 Duke Street after early April, 1849.

On June 23, 1849, an advertisement was placed in the *Alexandria Gazette* by Benjamin O. Sheckell, announcing (Figure 54):

¹⁵⁹ 1849 Alexandria Ward IV tax list p. 9.

¹⁶⁰ *Alexandria Gazette*, March 2, 1849.

¹⁶¹ *Alexandria Gazette*, September 3, 1850, March 27, 1851.

¹⁶² *Alexandria Gazette*, October 28, 1851, January 27, 1852.

SALE THIS DAY—At 12 o'clock, M.
 PUBLIC SALE OF VALUABLE NEGROES.
 On Saturday next, the 23rd instant, at 12 o'clock. Will be sold at public auction, at Kephart's formerly Armfield's private jail, in Alexandria, Va., a lot of likely Negroes, consisting of six men, two boys, three girls, two women, and two children. Terms, cash.
 For information apply to B.O. Shekells, or W. Lenox and Peter Vonnessin. Executors of J. P. Gannon, deceased. Washington.

SALE THIS DAY—At 12 o'clock, M.
 PUBLIC SALE OF VALUABLE NEGROES.
 On Saturday next, the 23^d instant, at 12 o'clock, will be sold at public auction, at Kephart's, formerly Armfield's private jail, in Alexandria, Va., a lot of likely Negroes, consisting of six men, two boys, three girls, two women, and two children. Terms, cash.
 For information apply to B. O. Shekells, or W. Lenox and Peter Vonnessin. Executors of J. P. Gannon, deceased. Washington, Je 22—2t

Figure 54. Alexandria Gazette, June 23, 1849.

This advertisement is different than the advertisements typically placed by Franklin & Armfield or by Kephart soliciting large numbers of enslaved individuals to traffick to New Orleans or Natchez. Rather, it appears that Shekell is handling the sale of enslaved individuals held by the estate of a local resident. The infrastructure already in place at 1315 Duke Street related to the long-distance domestic slave trade and the architecture of confinement made it well-suited to these sorts of smaller, more local transactions.

The 1850 City tax list again shows Kephart with a house and one square of land between Prince, West, and Payne and it identifies himself as the occupant. He is assessed for a single horse and a single cow and he is identified as a Slave Dealer. On the line below, presumably as an occupant of 1315 Duke Street, is only written “Martin”.¹⁶³

The 1850 US Census returns for Alexandria list a Cornelius Martin: a 19-year-old male born in Virginia (Figure 55). Above him in the same household is James G. Cobb, a 60-year-old male, also from Virginia. The writing next to Cobb is extremely hard to make out, but under “Occupation”, it appears to read, “Agent for G [or maybe Geo.] Kephart”. Then, listed as the occupation for Martin, it appears to continue “Dealers in Slaves”, and then below that it says “ditto”, indicating that Martin and Cobb share the same occupation. Martin and Cobb appear to be unrelated but living in the same household. Listed in the household immediately before Cobb and Martin is Robert N. Windsor, owner of a house on Duke Street, one block east of the slave jail complex at 1315 Duke Street, making it likely that this entry in the Census is for 1315 Duke Street and that these two agents for Kephart are residing there.¹⁶⁴

21	53	70	James G Cobb	60	M	Agent for G Kephart	free
22			Cornelius Martin	19	M	Dealers in Slaves	ditto

Figure 55. 1850 US Census, showing James Cobb and Cornelius Martin, Agents for G. Kephart.

¹⁶³ 1850 Alexandria Ward IV tax list p. 9.

¹⁶⁴ 1850 US Census, Alexandria, Alexandria, Virginia.

One year prior, in 1849, Martin was involved in a physical altercation on Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington, D.C. that resulted in a near-fatal stabbing (Figure 56). Testimony in the case recounts a group of African American men recognizing Martin and his occupation and saying within earshot of him, “He [Martin] is one of Seckell’s [Benjamin O. Sheckell] pimps” and “Damn a man that will buy and sell a negro”.

This started a fight that resulted in Martin being stabbed, nearly to death, and Samuel Adams, a free African American, sentenced to two years in a federal penitentiary.¹⁶⁵ This connects Martin to first Sheckells in 1849 and then Kephart in 1850. While not made explicit, Sheckells and Kephart probably enter into some kind of business arrangement by May or June 1849 and in a copartnership by at least May 1, 1850 (see below).

An altercation occurred on Pennsylvania avenue, Washington, near Jackson Hall, on Tuesday night, between a white man named Cornelius Martin and four negroes, named Samuel Adams, Lloyd Douglass, David Johnson, and Henry Pleasants, which resulted in the infliction of a severe, if not mortal, wound upon Martin by negro Adams, by stabbing him with a knife. Three of the assailants have been arrested.

Figure 56. *Alexandria Gazette*, October 26, 1849.

The 1850 Census also lists George Kephart, not in Alexandria, but again in the Buckeystown district in Frederick County, Maryland. He is listed as being 55 years old in 1850, which places his year of birth in 1795, and his occupation is Farmer. He owns \$10,000 of real estate and there is a check under the column for “married within the year”. Also listed in this household are his wife, Margaret A. Kephart, a 39 year old female, and their children, Barbary V. (age 16, female), George F. M. (age 14, male), William F. (age 13, male), Jasper C. (age 11, male), Jerome H. (age 11, male), Martha E. (age 7, female), and John E. (age 5, male). Also listed in this household is another Barbary (age 50, female), Jacob Raisor (age 68, male, no occupation, born in Virginia, and previously seen on City tax lists as residing at 1315 Duke Street, probably as an employee of Kephart), George Bradley (age 22, male, school teacher from New York), James Belt (age 29, male, physician from Virginia), and George W. Whaley (age 21, male, overseer).¹⁶⁶

The 1850 US Census was also the first federal census to include a separate schedule for the enslaved inhabitants of the United States. George Kephart, despite not being listed as residing in Alexandria, is listed twice in the Alexandria returns, first as the holder of 40 enslaved people (Figure 58), and a second time several pages later as the holder of nine enslaved people (Figure 57). It is not clear if these two groups of enslaved people are together on the same property or if

¹⁶⁵ *Alexandria Gazette*, October 26, 1849, *Washington Sun*, October 25, 1849; *Daily National Intelligencer*, December 28, 1849.

¹⁶⁶ 1850 US Census, Buckeystown District, Frederick, Maryland.

NAMES OF SLAVE OWNERS.	Number of Slaves.	DESCRIPTION.				Fugitives from the State.	Deaf & dumb, blind, insane, or idiotic.
		Age.	Sex.	Colour.	Number manumitted.		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1 <i>Robt Windsor</i>	1	24	F	B			
2 <i>Geo Kephart</i>	1	23	M				
3	1	26	F				
4	1	1					
5	1	22	M				
6	1	15	F				
7	1	22	M				
8	1	25					
9	1	21					
10	1	19	F				
11	1	28					
12	1	3					
13	1	2	M				
14	1	12					
15	1	6	M				
16	1	2					
17	1	18					
18	1	38	F				
19	1	17					
20	1	19	M				
21	1	26	B				
22	1	9	M				
23	1	7					
24	1	5	F				
25	1	3					
26	1	5					
27	1	11					
28	1	19	M				
29	1	10					
30	1	14	F				
31	1	18	M				
32	1	12	M				
33	1	19	M				
34	1	28	F				
35	1	10	M				
36	1	6	F				
37	1	2					
38	1	12					
39	1	3					
40	1	2	M				

Figure 58. 1850 US Census, showing 40 people enslaved by George Kephart in Alexandria, possibly at 1315 Duke Street.

NAMES OF SLAVE OWNERS.	Number of Slaves.	DESCRIPTION.				Fugitives from the State.	Deaf & dumb, blind, insane, or idiotic.
		Age.	Sex.	Colour.	Number manumitted.		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1 <i>Geo Kephart</i>	1	30	F	B			
2	1	6					
3	1	3					
4	1	6					
5	1	17					
6	1	16					
7	1	13	F				
8	1	22					
9	1	20	M				

Figure 57. 1850 US Census, showing 9 additional people enslaved by George Kephart in Alexandria.

one group is at 1315 Duke Street and the other perhaps at his office or residence in town on Duke and Fayette. Given his business and his lack of agricultural lands in

Alexandria, at least some of these people are almost certainly being held at 1315 Duke Street, awaiting transportation to either New Orleans or Natchez. On the line immediately above Kephart's first listing of 40 enslaved people, Robert Windsor is listed as holding one enslaved person in Alexandria, again possibly suggesting that this entry is the one associated with 1315 Duke Street.¹⁶⁷ Kephart also shows up a third time in the enslaved census, holding 17 additional people at his farm in Buckeystown in Frederick County, Maryland.¹⁶⁸

As a part of a group of legislation that became known as the Compromise of 1850, Congress passed on September 20, 1850 *An Act To Suppress The Slave Trade In The District Of Columbia*. This law made it illegal starting January 1, 1851 "to bring into the District of Columbia any slave whatever, for the purpose of being sold, or for the purpose of being placed in depot, to be subsequently transferred to any other state or place to be sold as merchandise." The effect of this was to effectively end the domestic slave trade passing through the District of Columbia. While the Retrocession of Alexandria several years prior meant that this law did not apply to the slave trading businesses operating out of 1315 Duke Street (or to

¹⁶⁷ 1850 US Census, Schedule 2, Alexandria, Alexandria, Virginia.

¹⁶⁸ 1850 US Census, Schedule 2, Buckeystown District, Frederick, Maryland.

1707 Duke Street), it also meant that Alexandria was the closest city to absorb those businesses and the market formerly operating out of the District of Columbia.

For example, on December 11, 1850, just weeks before the above act was to take effect, a Washington, D.C. slave trader named Edward Home leased a portion of the property belonging to Lucien Peyton located near the Virginia House hotel on the south side of the 1500 block of King Street. Home is recorded in the 1850 Census as a “slave dealer”, and on the same page are also recorded John C. and Hatch Cook, also both “slave dealers” who appear to have moved their businesses to Alexandria.¹⁶⁹ Home purchases this property from Peyton the following year (1851), constructs a slave jail of his own on the property, and begins placing advertisements in the *Alexandria Gazette* (Figure 59):

NEGROES WANTED.---The subscriber, late of Washington City, has built him a Jail, in West End, Alexandria, near the Hotel kept by Mr. Wm. Scarce, and is prepared to buy NEGROES, for which he will give Richmond prices. Also, NEGROES taken to board at 25 cents per day. Persons wishing to make sale will please call on, or address the subscriber, who will be prompt in his attention.
Edward Home.¹⁷⁰

NEGROES WANTED.---The subscriber, late of Washington City, has built him a Jail, in West End, Alexandria, near the Hotel kept by Mr. Wm. Scarce, and is prepared to buy NEGROES, for which he will give Richmond prices. Also, NEGROES taken to board at 25 cents per day. Persons wishing to make sale will please call on, or address the subscriber, who will be prompt in his attention.
Jan 23--dly EDWARD HOME.

Figure 59. *Alexandria Gazette*, January 23, 1851.

Perhaps unable to make his new slave jail profitable, Home’s property is listed for sale at auction later that same year (Figure 60):

AUCTION SALES
A RARE CHANCE—A JAIL AT AUCTION.—The undersigned, will offer for sale, on the premises, at public auction, (if not sold privately before,) *on Saturday, the first day of November, at 11 o’clock, if fair, if not at the same hour the next fair day*, that very desirable property at the upper end of King street, immediately west of the Virginia House. The lot is upwards of 100 feet front on King street, running back about 170 feet. The improvements consist of a story and a half FRAME DWELLING, containing seven rooms, a BRICK negro Jail immediately in the rear, recently built of the best material, and covered with slate. This building is forty feet square. The Stable, Buggy

¹⁶⁹ Mullen, John P. et al., 2009, *Archaeological Evaluation of the King Street Properties in Alexandria, Virginia: Phase I/II Archaeological Investigations and Phase III Data Recovery of Site 44AX0202*.

¹⁷⁰ *Alexandria Gazette*, January 23, 1851.

House, and other buildings are of wood, new and in good order—There is, also, a pump of fine water in the yard; the garden is large and in a good state of cultivation. To any one engaged or wishing to engage in the purchase of slaves for the Southern market, this property possesses superior advantages, being situated near the principal entrances to the town, a few hundred yards from the Depot of the Orange and Alexandria Rail Road, and without the limits of the Corporation.

The above property will be shown, or any information given by letter, to any one desirous of purchasing, by Mr. E. HOME, who now occupies the premises.

I am authorized to say that the purchaser can get a permanent and punctual tenant at \$250 per year. S. J. McCORMICK,
Auctioneer.¹⁷¹

The proximity of Home's slave jail to the slave jail complex at 1315 Duke Street, its competition with the businesses operating there, and the fact that much of the site was excavated in 2006 (registered site 44AX202) makes discussion of this property relevant to the property history of 1315 Duke Street.

The 1851 City tax list notes Kephart owns one square on Prince, Duke, and West Streets, with a three-story structure, valued again at \$7,000, but he is not assessed for anything else in this year. There is also a ditto mark notation that indicates that the property is also bordered by Payne Street as well (which it is known to be) or that R. N. Windsor is listed under the Occupant field as an agent of this property (which he is for two other properties on this page, one of them belonging to Kephart). Listed directly beneath Kephart as a tenant is James G. Cobb, assessed for only a single tithable.¹⁷²

AUCTION SALES.

A RARE CHANCE—A JAIL AT AUCTION.—The undersigned, will offer for sale, on the premises, at public auction, (if not sold privately before,) on *Saturday, the first day of November, at 11 o'clock, if fair, if not at the same hour the next fair day,* that very desirable property at the upper end of King street, immediately west of the Virginia House. The lot is upwards of 100 feet front on King street, running back about 170 feet. The improvements consist of a story and a half **FRAGILE DWELLING**, containing seven rooms, a **BRICK** negro Jail immediately in the rear, recently built of the best material, and covered with slate. This building is forty feet square. The Stable, Buggy House, and other buildings are of wood, new and in good order—There is, also, a pump of fine water in the yard; the garden is large and in a good state of cultivation. To any one engaged or wishing to engage in the purchase of slaves for the Southern market, this property possesses superior advantages, being situated near the principal entrances to the town, a few hundred yards from the Depot of the Orange and Alexandria Rail Road, and without the limits of the Corporation.

The above property will be shown, or any information given by letter, to any one desirous of purchasing, by Mr. E. HOME, who now occupies the premises.

I am authorized to say that the purchaser can get a permanent and punctual tenant at \$250 per year. S. J. McCORMICK,
aug 22—2awts Auctioneer.

Figure 60. Alexandria Gazette, August 25, 1851.

¹⁷¹ Alexandria Gazette, August 25, 1851.

¹⁷² 1851 Alexandria Ward IV tax list p. 9.

Starting in the Spring of 1851, George Kephart again appears to try to remove himself from the daily business of the slave trade. On April 21 or 24, 1851, Kephart buys Belmont, the former Loudoun County plantation residence of Ludwell Lee from the estate of Margaret Mercer.¹⁷³ The property at Belmont consisted of a large, brick mansion house, “remarkably well planned, and well built”, and about six hundred acres of land (Figure 61).¹⁷⁴ Today, Belmont is operated as a country club, golf course, and event venue. Kephart is memorialized there with a billiard room named in his honor.



Figure 61. Belmont, Virginia Department of Historic Resources listing, 053-0106.

On May 3, 1851, a notice appeared in the *Alexandria Gazette* announcing that two days prior, on May 1, 1851, the co-partnership between B. O. [Benjamin Owen] Sheckell and George Kephart known as B. O. Sheckell's & Co or Sheckell's and Kephart, had expired and all with claims or indebted should present or pay them without delay (Figure 62).¹⁷⁵ Given the partnership between Kephart and Harbin expired on May 1, 1848, that the property was put up for auction on that date with terms due May 1, 1850 but that Kephart eventually retained ownership of the property, Robert Brashear seems to have left the property by April 1849, and Sheckell appears to be operating here in some capacity by June 1849, it would seem that the partnership of Sheckell and Kephart was formed in 1849, possibly May 1, and almost certainly by May 1, 1850.

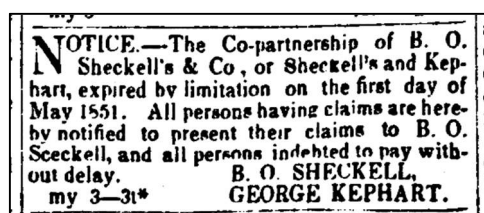


Figure 62. *Alexandria Gazette*, May 3, 1851.

Kephart then goes into the lumber business with Ulam W. Barker under the name Kephart & Barker. Kephart purchases a lot on Water Street between Princess and Oronoco on May 29, 1851.¹⁷⁶ Together, they open a lumber yard sometime in or before September 1851 on this property, or expand it to include the corner of Princess and Union Streets, near the Fish Wharf on the waterfront.¹⁷⁷ Almost all of Kephart's advertisements in the newspaper during this period are for this business with Barker and not related to the domestic slave trade (see for example Figure 63).



Figure 63. *Alexandria Gazette*, March 30, 1852, Advertisement typical of Kephart & Barker's lumber business.

¹⁷³ The *Alexandria Gazette*, April 28, 1851 reports this date as April 21 while the deeds are dated April 24, 1851.

¹⁷⁴ *Washington Daily National Intelligencer*, January 2, 1850.

¹⁷⁵ *Alexandria Gazette*, May 3, 1851.

¹⁷⁶ *Alexandria Gazette*, May 30, 1851.

¹⁷⁷ *Alexandria Gazette*, September 12, 1851; *Alexandria Gazette*, March 3, 1852.

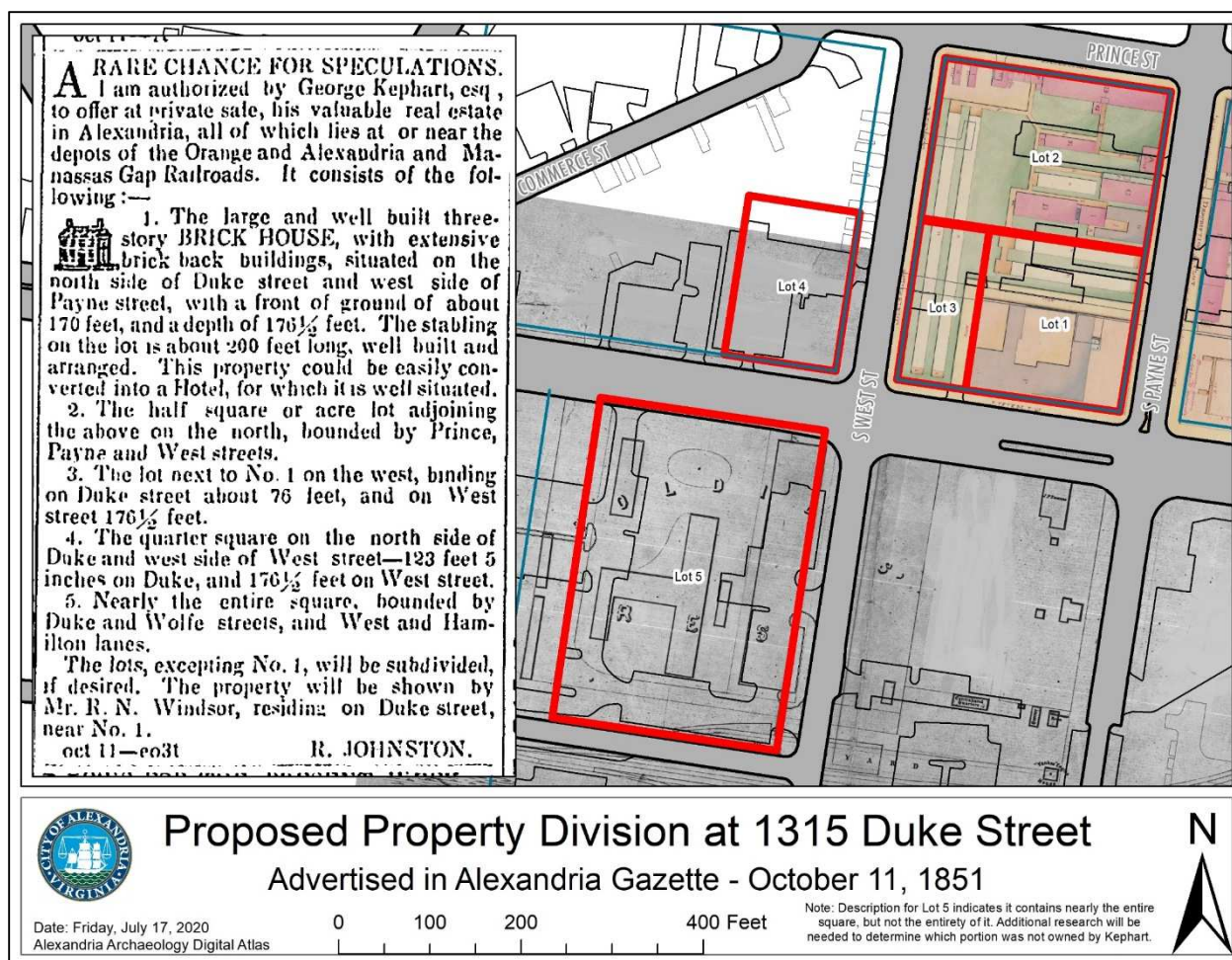


Figure 64. Proposed Property Division at 1315 Duke Street, as described in the Alexandria Gazette, October 11, 1851.

Shortly after Kephart & Barker begin advertising their lumber business in the *Alexandria Gazette*, the following advertisement was placed by an R. Johnston on October 11, 1851, offering Kephart’s Duke Street property for sale (see Figure 64 for advertisement and parcel map):

A RARE CHANCE FOR SPECULATIONS.

I am authorized by George Kephart, esq, to offer at private sale, his valuable real estate in Alexandria, all of which lies at or near the depots of the Orange and Alexandria and Manassas Gap Railroads. It consists of the following:--

1. The large and well built three-story BRICK HOUSE, with extensive brick back buildings, situated on the north side of Duke street and west side of Payne street, with a front of ground of about 170 feet, and a depth of 176 ½ feet. The stabling on the lot is about 200 feet long, well built and

arranged. This property could be easily converted into a Hotel, for which it is well situated.

2. The half square or acre lot adjoining the above on the north, bounded by Prince, Payne and West streets.

3. The lot next to No. 1 on the west, binding on Duke Street about 76 feet, and on West street 176 ½ feet.

4. The quarter square on the north side of Duke and west side of West street—123 feet 5 inches on Duke, and 176 ½ feet on West street.

5. Nearly the entire square, bounded by Duke and Wolfe streets, and West and Hamilton lanes.

The lots, excepting No. 1, will be subdivided, if desired. The property will be shown by Mr. R. N. Windsor, residing on Duke street, near No. 1.

R. JOHNSTON.¹⁷⁸

The above map shows the proposed property divisions on top of two Civil War-era maps that show the slave jail complex as it stood a decade later during the war. While the complex underwent some changes during its use as a military prison (see below), it would appear that the majority of the slave jail complex is confined within the proposed lot 1. It is not clear if or how Kephart received title to proposed lot 2, the other half of this square or block that the City tax assessment sometimes attributes to Kephart. An argument can be made that either no slave jail complex structures stood on proposed lot 3, or if there were structures there, they were of a character or use that made them separable from the slave jail complex on proposed lot 1. It is not known for what Kephart was using proposed lots 4 and 5. Despite advertising the boundaries of proposed lot 5 as comprising nearly the entire square, as conveyed to Kephart by Isaac Franklin and John Armfield in 1846, the boundaries of this lot are only half as wide and extend from the southwest corner of the intersection of Duke Street and West Lane, west only half the length of the square between West and Hamilton Lanes. It is also not clear why Kephart advertises this proposed lot as comprising “nearly the entire square” if he only held title to the eastern half of it.

The 1852 City tax list notes that George Kephart as the owner one square of ground between Duke, Prince, Payne, and West Streets. The assessed value of the property increased by \$400 to \$7,400. Under Kephart is listed Cook & Sheckles and they are assessed for the three-story structure on the property. Beneath Cook & Sheckles on the tax list and apparently at the same location is listed Wm [William] Boswell and in parentheses it is noted that he is “Dead” and a single tithable (presumably William Boswell) is crossed out. It is not immediately clear who

¹⁷⁸ *Alexandria Gazette*, October 11, 1851

William Boswell was. There was a William Boswell who was a merchant in the firm Wm. Boswell & Co. based out of Port Tobacco, Maryland, but it does not appear that this Boswell dies in 1852.¹⁷⁹

Furthermore, on May 8, 1852, perhaps after the expiration of whatever partnership Kephart may have formed following the dissolution of the one with Sheckells on May 1, 1851 (which may or may not have been renewed), he again places advertisements in the *Alexandria Gazette* offering his Frederick farm for sale. He describes his house as “a large two story HOUSE, containing 11 rooms, with basement below, with all necessary out buildings.”¹⁸⁰

While apparently unannounced at the time, three years later on March 5, 1855, in a notice in the *Alexandria Gazette* that he has rented 1315 Duke Street to Walker J. [R.?] Millan, Kephart informs the public, “I quit the business [the domestic slave trade] in June, 1852, and since that date have had no interest with any person or persons in the business.”¹⁸¹ As discussed below, it is not immediately clear what prompted Kephart to place this advertisement, but the evidence suggests it was still being used as a slave jail through at least part of this period, if not by Kephart himself then by his tenants.

In 1853, the City tax list places George Kephart on the block between Duke, Payne, Prince, and West Streets and values his property at \$7,600. Cook & Sheckles are again listed as the tenants at the site and under them is listed a John Doll who is also assessed for a single tithable and a single horse. Additional research is required to further identify John Doll.¹⁸²

In December 1853, Kephart again tries to sell his slave jail and the property at 1315 Duke Street when the following advertisement appears in the *Alexandria Gazette* proposing to subdivide and sell his property on Duke Street (see Figure 65 for advertisement and parcel map). Auctioneer George White writes:

VALUABLE PROPERTY AT AUCTION.

Will be sold on the premises, on *Wednesday, the 28th instant, at 12 o'clock*, the following valuable Lots of Ground, in the city of Alexandria, viz:

Lot No. 1. That valuable two-story brick DWELLING HOUSE and LOT of GROUND, situated at the upper end of Duke Street between West and Fayette streets, belonging to Mr. George Kephart, in front on Duke street, 122 feet and running back 100 feet to a 15 feet [foot?] alley and court of 46 feet, together with all the extensive stables and out houses, fine pump of

¹⁷⁹ 1852 Alexandria Ward IV tax list p. 10.

¹⁸⁰ *Alexandria Gazette*, May 8, 1852.

¹⁸¹ *Alexandria Gazette*, March 5, 1855.

¹⁸² 1853 Alexandria Ward IV tax list p. 11.

water in the yard, &c., &c., with several brick walls attached, estimated to contain at least 150,000 brick. This property affords a rare chance to any one wanting a comfortable residence, or from its proximity to the Orange and Alexandria Railroad Depot, it might readily be converted into a valuable Tavern. Also at the same time and place the following valuable lots, viz:

Lot No 2. At the intersection of West and Duke streets, in front on Duke 20 feet, and running back on West 100 feet to a 15 feet [foot?] alley.

Nos. 3, 4, and 5, east of No. 2, each fronting on Duke street 19 feet, and in depth the same as No. 2, and to same alley.

No 6. At the intersection of Duke and Fayette streets, in front on Duke 24 feet, and running back 100 feet to the aforesaid alley.

No. 7 west of No. 6 and of the same dimensions.

Nos. 8, 9, and 10, each fronting on east side of West street 20 feet 7 inches, and running back 100 feet to a court 46 feet 11 inches wide.

Nos. 11, 12, and 13 on Fayette street, of same dimensions as 8, 9, and 10, and running back to same court.

Nos. 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, and 19, each 22 feet in front on Duke street, and to the westward of West street, running back 100 feet to a 15 feet [foot?] alley.

Nos. 20, 21 and 22 each in front on West street 21 feet and running back 100 feet to a court 23 feet 5 inches wide.

No. 23 adjoining No. 22 on the north, in front on West street 21 feet, and running back 123 feet 5 inches to the centre of the square.

Terms of Sale.—One fourth of the purchase money will be required in hand, the residue in three equal annual payments at one, two and three years, for notes bearing interest, secured by a lien on the premises.

GEO WHITE, Auctioneer.¹⁸³

¹⁸³ *Alexandria Gazette*, December 12, 1853.

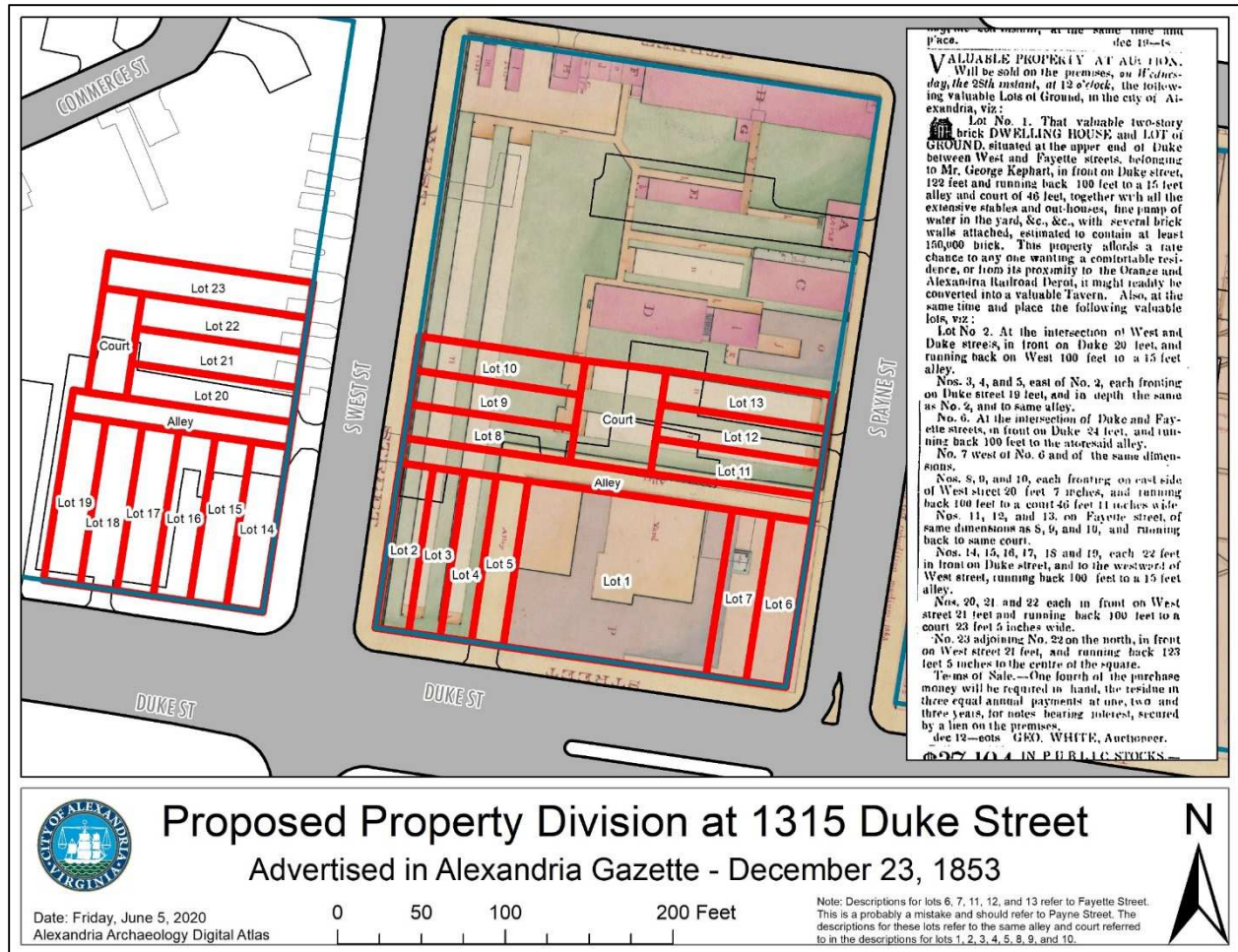


Figure 65. Proposed Property Division at 1315 Duke Street, as described in the Alexandria Gazette, December 23, 1853.

Here again (but unlike the October 11, 1851 proposed subdivision), Kephart uses Fayette Street, one street to the east of the property as the eastern boundary of his property instead of Payne Street, both in the description of proposed Lots 1, 6, 7, 11, 12, and 13. If one takes Kephart literally when he says Fayette instead of Payne, there are large sections of property unaccounted for on the block bounded by Duke, Payne, and West. If one assumes he means Payne instead of Fayette, one is able to account for all of the property on this one-acre parcel. While the advertisement lists the dwelling house as only two stories (listed as three stories in 1851), the emphasis on the brick walls and estimated 150,000 bricks they contain suggest this is indeed the slave jail property at 1315 Duke Street and not another property on Fayette. The property on the southwest corner of the intersection of Duke Street and West Lane (described previously in the 1851 proposed subdivision as lot 5) is not included here in this proposed property subdivision, nor is the northern half of the block bounded by Duke, Prince, Payne, and West (described previously in the 1851 proposed subdivision as lot 2).

George White was apparently unable to sell Kephart's property at auction, because he placed the following advertisement in the *Alexandria Gazette* on December 29, 1853, the day following the auction (Figure 66):

VALUABLE DWELLING HOUSE
AND LOTS AT PRIVATE SALE.—

The property belonging to Mr. George Kephart, on Duke Street, advertised for auction yesterday, not having been disposed of, is now for private sale, with several other LOTS.

Terms liberal and made known, by application to.
GEO. WHITE¹⁸⁴

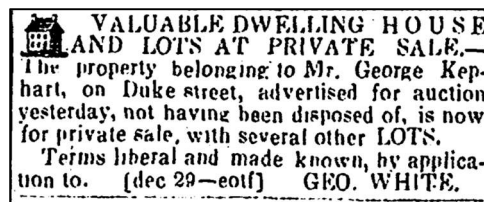


Figure 66. *Alexandria Gazette*, December 29, 1853.

Despite his efforts, Kephart would not sell this property at 1315 Duke Street until 1858 and until then appears to be renting it to a series of slave trading businesses, at least some of which he was a partner (see below).

While not very illustrative but worth mentioning as being one of only two known pre-Civil War depictions of the structure, 1315 Duke Street appears on the 1853 Bird's Eye View of the City of Alexandria drawn by Edward Sachse and printed by James T. Palmatary (Figure 67).¹⁸⁵ Drawn from a vantage point above the intersection of Washington and Pendleton Streets and looking south, this illustration shows a multi-story brick building with the same distinctive double chimney arrangement, with the same orientation as 1315 Duke Street, and along one of the roads out of town to the west. While not definitively 1315 Duke Street, this building here is a good candidate.

The 1854 Alexandria City tax list notes George Kephart has a house and half of a square of land on "Duke near & Payne". The assessed value of the property increased to \$8,000. Below Kephart is Rudolph Masey with a lot on Payne assessed at \$650. Masey's name is crossed out and in the margin is an illegible notation that may indicate the name of the person being assessed for this \$650 lot. Below Masey's crossed out name is Rudolph Masey again, this time not crossed out but faintly (perhaps scratched out or erased). This entry is also for a lot, but on Duke and Payne and is valued at \$820. Below this second Masey entry is listed James S. Hallowell, assessed for a large lot on Duke valued at \$1,800. Hallowell's entry in the tax list is also crossed out with a single line and beside it in the margin is another illegible entry that may indicate the person to whom this tax was assessed. Below Hallowell's crossed out entry is listed Cook & Sheckels who

¹⁸⁴ *Alexandria Gazette*, December 29, 1853.

¹⁸⁵ Palmatary, View of Alexandria, VA, 1853; see

<https://www.alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/historic/info/attic/2016/Attic20161006Palmatary.pdf>.

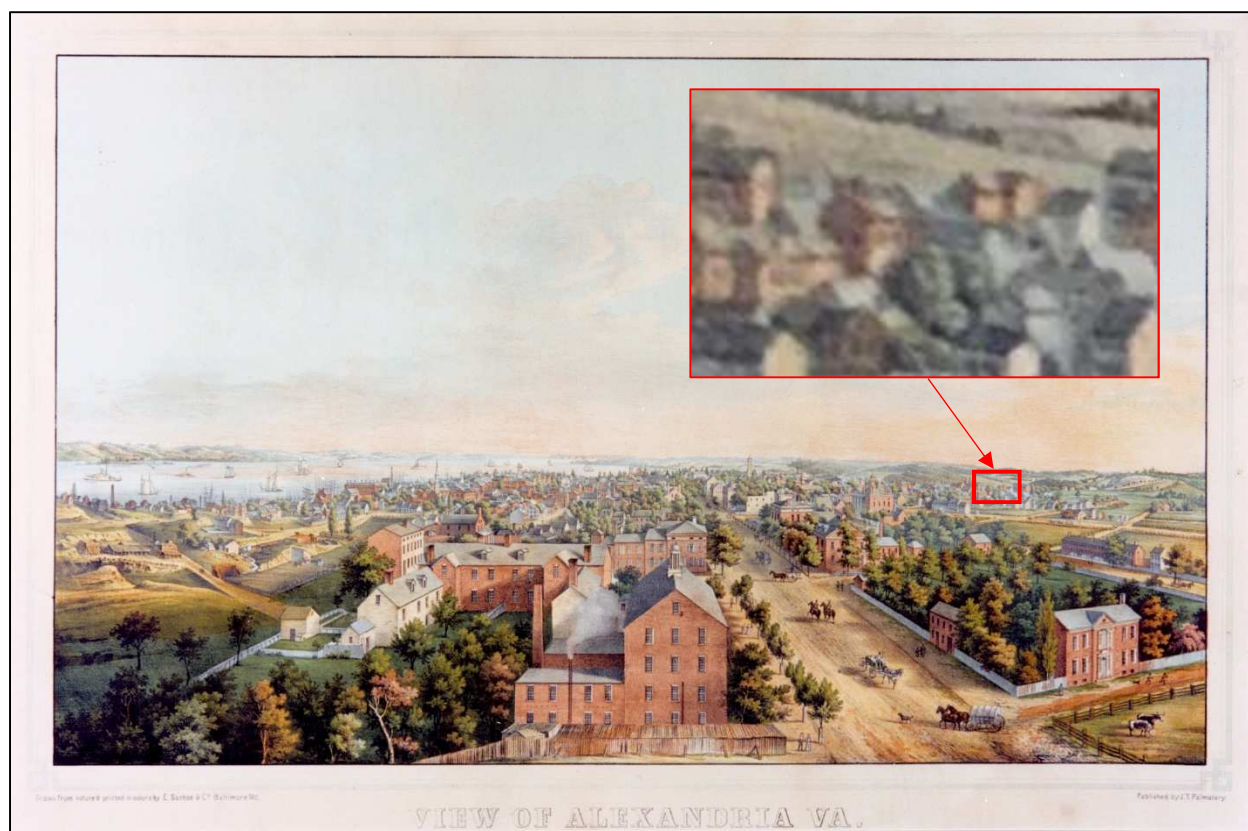


Figure 67. View of Alexandria, VA. Drawn by Edward Sachse, printed by James T. Palmatary, 1853.

are assessed for the three story building on the property, a single cow, and are noted as Slave Dealers.¹⁸⁶

At some point after his partnership with George Kephart ended May 1, 1851, Benjamin O. Sheckells either returns to, or is still in, 1315 Duke Street. On June 7, 1855 Kephart sues Sheckells and John C. Cook (soon to be of Price, Birch & Co., of which Kephart will also be a partner, see below), operating under the firm Sheckells & Cook, over \$225 “of rent due me [Kephart] for House & Lot on Duke Street Alexa. Va. to 1st February 1855” and “interest in the above from the 1st of February 1855”. Also named in the suit along with defendants Sheckells and Cook is John Price (not to be confused with Charles M. Price, who would be a partner in the firm Price, Birch & Co. with John C. Cook formed several years later) and with Kephart is one James English. On May 29, 1856, the court rules in favor of Kephart. An enslaved African American woman named Rebecca was also put up as bond in the case. The way Kephart’s complaint is written, it appears that the payment was due on February 1, 1855 for the period ending on that date, and after not being paid on February 1, began accruing interest.¹⁸⁷ The suit

¹⁸⁶ 1854 Alexandria Ward IV tax list p. 11.

¹⁸⁷ *Kephart v. Sheckells and Cook*, Chancery Case, Arlington Co., 013_1856_002.

does not describe the start date or the length of the lease for which the rent was overdue, but it is not unreasonable to assume a period of at least one year going back to February 1, 1854.

Given that Sheckells and Cook and Price are all known to be engaged in the domestic slave trade, there are no other known tenants at 1315 Duke Street after the May 1, 1851 dissolution of the partnership between Sheckells and Kephart, and the content of the notice that appears in the newspaper one month later on March 5, 1855 (Figure 68), it seems reasonable to assume that the property rented by Kephart to Sheckells & Cook was the slave jail complex at 1315 Duke Street and not one of his other properties on Duke Street to the west of West Street.

A month after the period for which Sheckells and Cook owed Kephart rent ended, on March 5, 1855, Kephart places a notice in the newspaper (Figure 68). It read:

NOTICE.—I have rented my house and premises on West Duke street, to Mr. W. J. [R.] Millan, who will give his attention to the Trade, as I quit the business in June, 1852, and since that date have had no interest with any person or persons in the business. The property is for sale. Any person wishing to purchase will call on Mr. Millan for terms, &c.

GEORGE KEPHART¹⁸⁸

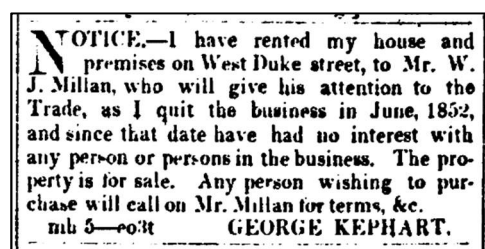


Figure 68. *Alexandria Gazette*, March 5, 1855.

Here, Kephart names Walker J. Millan (elsewhere, his middle initial is given as R.) as the new tenant of his property. He specifically mentions that Millan will be engaged in “the Trade” and reminds the public that he had quit it almost three years earlier in June 1852 and has not had “interest” with anybody engaged in the domestic slave trade. From this notice in the newspaper, it is not clear why Kephart mentions this, but it is clear that it is not entirely true, having rented his property to Sheckells and Cook as recently as the previous month. In the same notice, Kephart again announces the property is for sale; however, he would not sell it until 1858. The legal proceedings initiated by Kephart against Millan in August 1858 (see more on this case below) clarifies that that this lease to Millan began March 1, 1855.

The text of the copy of the 1855 City tax list is extremely difficult to read, but it would appear that George Kephart was assessed for a house and half of a square of land on Duke between Payne and West Streets. The value of this property decreased back to \$7,000. On the line beneath Kephart, it would appear to read “W [or Wm] R. Millan”. He is assessed for a single tithable and the three story structure on the property and the tax list notes that he is a Slave Dealer. The following line is also extremely difficult to read, but appears to start “Geo”, gives a middle initial, and then concludes with a name that looks similar to “Kephart”. The person is assessed for a single tithable. According to the 1850 U.S. Census, George Kephart had a 14-year-old son

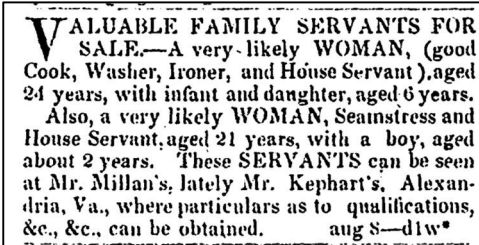
¹⁸⁸ *Alexandria Gazette*, March 5, 1855.

also named George Kephart whose middle initial was F.¹⁸⁹ George F. Kephart would have been 18 or 19 years old when this tax list was compiled and perhaps followed his father into the business of the slave trade. Additional research, including consultation with the original City tax list, is required to determine if this individual is George F. Kephart.¹⁹⁰

Additional City tax lists exist for the years beyond 1855, however, they could not be procured for this study. These tax lists, especially the years between 1856 and 1861 if they exist, should be consulted as part of future research.

After owing Kephart rent, Sheckells & Cook appear to have left (or were evicted) from 1315 Duke Street. Within a month, running the slave jail complex in their place was Walker R. Millan. While not clear it was placed by Millan, an advertisement placing him at 1315 Duke Street is dated August 8, 1855 (Figure 69), and reads:

VALUABLE FAMILY SERVANTS FOR SALE.—A very likely WOMAN, (good Cook, Washer, Ironer, and House Servant), aged 24 years, with infant and daughter, aged 6 years. Also, a very likely WOMAN, Seamstress and House Servant, aged 21 years, with a boy, aged about 2 years. These SERVANTS can be seen at Mr. Millan's, lately Mr. Kephart's, Alexandria, Va., where particulars as to qualifications, &C., &c., can be obtained.¹⁹¹



VALUABLE FAMILY SERVANTS FOR SALE.—A very likely WOMAN, (good Cook, Washer, Ironer, and House Servant), aged 24 years, with infant and daughter, aged 6 years. Also, a very likely WOMAN, Seamstress and House Servant, aged 21 years, with a boy, aged about 2 years. These SERVANTS can be seen at Mr. Millan's, lately Mr. Kephart's, Alexandria, Va., where particulars as to qualifications, &c., &c., can be obtained. aug 8—d1w*

Figure 69. *Alexandria Gazette*, August 8, 1855.

The advertisement is not signed and it is not clear if this was placed by Millan or by an unknown individual holding enslaved people at the slave jail complex managed by Millan. Millan places a runaway advertisement in the *Alexandria Gazette* on March 4, 1856, in which he says he will pay \$100 if an enslaved boy named Sawney is returned to him “at Alexandria”, and he signs it “W. R. Millan”.¹⁹²

While Kephart claims he quit the business of the domestic slave trade in June 1852, he still owns the property at 1315 Duke Street and is renting it to known and active slave traders. From his lawsuit against them, it does not appear that Kephart is a partner in the firm Sheckells & Cook, but he does seem to go into business during this period with Millan, Price, Sheckell, and Kephart under the name W. R. Millan & Co., which dissolves by mutual consent July 7, 1857.¹⁹³

Absent from this list of names is that of Grigsby. The NVUL-era museum exhibit notes that partnered with Walker R. Millan is somebody identified only as Grigsby. Alexander S. Grigsby

¹⁸⁹ 1850 US Census, Buckeystown District, Frederick, Maryland.

¹⁹⁰ 1855 Alexandria Ward IV tax list p. 11.

¹⁹¹ *Alexandria Gazette*, August 8, 1855.

¹⁹² *Alexandria Gazette*, March 4, 1856.

¹⁹³ *Alexandria Gazette*, July 7, 1857.

appears to have been a slave dealer, at one point based in Centreville, Virginia. On March 18, 1850 he and a partner, identified only as Whaley, advertised in the *Alexandria Gazette* that they wanted to purchase 100 enslaved African Americans “for a gentleman in Georgia”.¹⁹⁴ The 1850 US Census for the Buckeystown District of Frederick, Maryland places a George W. Whaley as an overseer at Kephart’s farm there.¹⁹⁵ The only evidence identified linking Grigsby to 1315 Duke Street is the advertisement placed by their successors Price, Birch & Co. on August 30, 1859, stating they now own “the establishment, lately occupied by Millan & Grigsby, West end Duke street” (Figure 70).¹⁹⁶

On May 1, 1858, George Kephart finally sold his property on Duke Street, including “a Three Story Brick house and Jail attached thereto”. It was purchased by Kephart’s former tenants at 1315 Duke Street, Charles M. Price and John C. Cook. The deed is recorded September 25, 1859,¹⁹⁷ but from a later advertisement, it appears that Kephart is still involved with this firm after the sale of the property at least on paper until 1860.¹⁹⁸

This property sale also results in another lawsuit between Kephart and one of his tenants; this time Kephart sues to remove Millan from the property at 1315 Duke Street in August 1858, three months after selling the property to Price and Cook.¹⁹⁹ According to the suit, the written lease between Kephart and Millan took effect March 1, 1855 and was supposed to last for a period of four years, ending March 1, 1859, and, supposedly, contained a stipulation that if Kephart were to sell the property prior to this date and notify Millan, Millan would vacate the property within a set period of time. On January 15, 1858, Kephart informed Millan he must give up the property as he intended to occupy it himself or rent it to another. On May 1, 1858, Kephart sells the property to Price and Cook (see above) but was unable to turn it over to them because Millan would not vacate the property. Then, on June 5, 1858, Kephart writes to Millan:

Sir,—I hereby notify you to give and deliver up possession of the house, jail, land and premises, with the appurtenances, situate on the north side of Duke street, between Fayette and West streets, in the city of Alexandria, Va., which you hold of me as tenant thereof, on the 7th day of July, 1858, as by the terms of your tenancy you are obliged to do; I having bona fide sold the said premises, with an agreement to deliver possession of the same. Witness my hand this 5th day of June, 1858.

George Kephart

It appears that on this date, Millan charged Kephart \$314.15 for various items connected to the property. Kephart apparently did not object to this charge but told Millan “to put no more repairs

¹⁹⁴ *Alexandria Gazette*, March 18, 1850.

¹⁹⁵ 1850 US Census, Buckeystown District, Frederick, Maryland.

¹⁹⁶ *Alexandria Gazette*, August 30, 1859. For more on Alexander S. Grigsby, see “Alexander Grigsby: A Slavebreeder of Old Centerville?” *Fairfax Chronicle*, published by the Office of Comprehensive Planning, Fairfax, Va.. July 1983): 1-3.

¹⁹⁷ Alexandria County Deed Book, T3, pp.353-4.

¹⁹⁸ *Alexandria Gazette*, January 4, 1860.

¹⁹⁹ *Millan v. Kephart*, Supreme Court of Appeals of Virginia, October Term, 1867.

on the property”. It is unclear what these items or work for which Millan charged Kephart were. The county court found in favor of Kephart in January 1859 and Millan appealed to the Circuit Court, which ruled in favor of Kephart. Millan appealed again to the Supreme Court of Appeals of Virginia, which also ruled in favor of Kephart in October 1867. Prior to these appeals, Millan’s original lease expired March 1, 1859 and he appears to have moved out of 1315 Duke Street and the property was able to be conveyed to Price and Cook.

Despite having sold the property (and announcing in 1855 that he had been out of the business since June 1852), Kephart continues as an unnamed partner in the firm Price, Birch, & Co. (see below). They begin advertising in the *Alexandria Gazette*, beginning August 30, 1859, approximately 16 months after purchasing the property from Kephart and approximately 6 months after Millan’s lease was set to have expired (Figure 70):

NEGROES WANTED.—We wish to purchase any quantity of NEGROES, of both sexes, for cash. All letters addressed to us, at this place, will receive prompt attention. Having bought the establishment, lately occupied by Millan & Grigsby, West end Duke street, and having refitted it to make it one of the most healthy and comfortable Depot for NEGROES, we will receive them on board on the usual terms.

PRICE, BIRCH, & CO.²⁰⁰

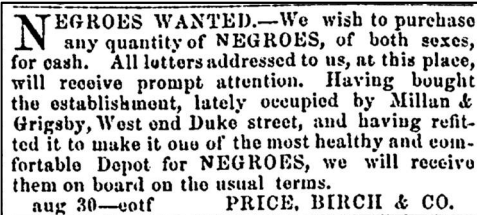


Figure 70. *Alexandria Gazette*, August 30, 1859.

This advertisement is the source of Alexander Grigsby’s partnership with Millan and his presence at 1315 Duke Street. Also, Price, Birch, & Co. appear to also invest some money into repairing and/or improving the slave jail complex, but again, it is not known what repairs or improvements these were. This need could have been the result of neglect over the previous decade after Kephart appears to distance himself from active engagement in the slave trade, competition from Bruin’s or another slave jail in the City, or both. On November 1, 1859, running water is installed at the slave jail complex. George Kephart receives permit number 788 from the Alexandria Water Company. Burch and Price are listed as his tenants. The address is noted as 1313 Duke Street (the building currently at 1315 Duke Street was previously numbered 1313 Duke Street; see below for more on the numbering of this property).²⁰¹ The Alexandria Library Special Collections has additional archival material related to the Alexandria Water Company, including possibly a book of sketches showing locations of water hookups at permitted properties, and additional research may be useful.

As can be seen below, the Birch here is William H. Birch, who appears to be a different person than James H. Birch, also a known slave dealer in Washington, most infamous for the

²⁰⁰ *Alexandria Gazette*, August 30, 1859.

²⁰¹ Erickson, Cdr. Philip M., *Alexandria Water Company Permits: The First 1000 “Pipers”*, 1988. Alexandria Archaeology Publication Number 8.

kidnapping of Solomon Northup in 1841 and recorded in his autobiography, *Twelve Years a Slave*. The relationship, if any, between these two is not currently known, but many historians, including the authors of the Engineering-Science archaeology site report, appear to conflate William H. Birch and James H. Birch when discussing the history of 1315 Duke Street and care should be taken to differentiate between these two slave traders.²⁰² James H. Birch appears to get out of the slave trading business in early 1841 (see above) and William H. Birch does not appear to advertise anything in the local newspapers until mid-1851 when he advertises eight “splendid” horses for sale in Washington.²⁰³ Northup’s account does not describe 1315 Duke Street, but does include descriptions of James H. Birch (or Burch), William H. Williams’ slave jail across the Potomac River in Washington, D.C., and his steamboat voyage to Norfolk.²⁰⁴

²⁰² See for example Artemel et al., 1987, p. 38 and the regimental history of the 25th Michigan Regiment, *The story of the Twenty-fifth Michigan*, B.F. Travis, 1897, p. 329.

²⁰³ *Washington Daily National Intelligencer*, June 20, 1851.

²⁰⁴ See Northup, 1853, Chapters II-IV.

PRICE, BIRCH, & CO. (1859-1861)

As happened several times before, the slave trading business partnership operating at 1315 Duke Street, this time between Cook, Price, Kephart, and Birch, dissolved December 14, 1859,²⁰⁵ and was reconstituted under the same name, this time explicitly without Kephart listed as a partner, as he is noted as “having withdrawn”²⁰⁶. The full notice in the newspaper (Figure 71) reads:

DISSOLUTION OF COPARTNERSHIP.—

The copartnership heretofore existing between the undersigned, under the name and style of PRICE, BIRCH & CO., has been mutually dissolved.

J. C. COOK,
C. M. PRICE,
GEO. KEPHART.
WM. H. BIRCH.

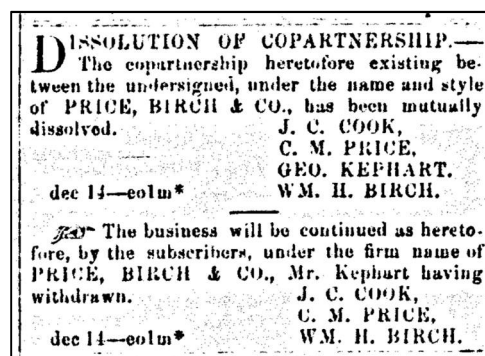


Figure 71. Alexandria Gazette, January 4, 1860.

The business will be continued as heretofore, by the subscribers, under the firm name of PRICE, BIRCH & CO., Mr. Kephart having withdrawn.

J. C. COOK,
C. M. PRICE,
WM. H. BIRCH

The first half of this advertisement first ran in the *Alexandria Gazette* December 16, 1859 and the second half noting the company was to be continued without Kephart was added starting January 4, 1860. While the firm of Price, Birch & Co. purchased the 1315 Duke Street property May 1, 1858 and March 1, 1859 For the first time, it would appear that Kephart was finally actually out of the business of the domestic slave trade.

On March 2, 1860, Price, Birch & Co. ran a nearly identical advertisement in the *Alexandria Gazette* as the one they ran on August 30, 1859 (Figures 70 and 72).²⁰⁷ Then, on the following day, March 3, 1860, the same advertisement ran, but under the name “PRICE & COOK” (Figure 73).²⁰⁸ It is not clear what prompted this name change. This advertisement continued to run for

²⁰⁵ *Alexandria Gazette*, December 14, 1859.

²⁰⁶ *Alexandria Gazette*, January 4, 1860.

²⁰⁷ *Alexandria Gazette*, March 2, 1860.

²⁰⁸ *Alexandria Gazette*, March 3, 1860.

more than a year until April 29, 1861, the final date on which an advertisement for a slave trading firm operating out of 1315 Duke Street appeared in the newspaper (Figure 74).²⁰⁹ Despite this name change, “PRICE, BIRCH & CO” is the name of the firm painted over the door of 1315 Duke Street when it is photographed during the Civil War (see below).

As an aside, immediately beneath this final advertisement in the *Alexandria Gazette* placed by any of the slave traders operating out of 1315 Duke Street is an advertisement placed by Joseph Bruin in which he writes, “Those wishing to sell, will do well to call on me before selling, at my old stand, at West End, Alexandria, Va.”²¹⁰ This advertisement would run until May 24, 1861, the day the Union Army liberated Alexandria, and this final advertisement is duplicated here (Figure 75).

Before continuing with the Civil War-era history of the site, several other primary source accounts that date to the slave pen period are worth mentioning. Generally, these either do not provide specific descriptions of the property, contain accounts tangentially related to 1315 Duke Street, or are not clear if they refer to 1315 Duke Street or another property.

On June 5, 1833, enslaved Navy Yard laborer Michael Shiner recorded in his diary that his wife, Phillis Shiner, and their children were sold to Franklin & Armfield. They were taken to Alexandria the following day. Through the intervention of several military officers, they were removed from 1315 Duke Street to the Alexandria City jail and freed several days later on the 12th of June.²¹¹

An 1881 autobiography by Laura Smith Haviland titled *A Woman’s Life Work: Including Thirty Years’ Service*

NEGROES WANTED.—We wish to purchass any number of NEGROES, of both sexee, for cash. All letters addressed to us, at this place, will receive prompt attention. Having bought the establishment, lately occupied by Millan & Grigsby, West end Duke street, and having refitted it to make it one of the most healthy and comfortable Depot for NEGROES, we will receive them on board on the usual terms.
aug 30—eotf PRICE, BIRCH & CO.

Figure 72. *Alexandria Gazette*, March 2, 1860.

NEGROES WANTED.—We wish to purchass any number of NEGROES, of both sexes, for cash. All letters addressed to us, at this place, will receive prompt attention. Having bought the establishment, lately occupied by Millan & Grigsby, West end Duke street, and having refitted it to make it one of the most healthy and comfortable Depot for NEGROES, we will receive them on board on the usual terms.
aug 30—eotf PRICE & COOK.

Figure 73. *Alexandria Gazette*, March 3, 1860.

NEGROES WANTED.—We wish to purchase any number of NEGROES, of both sexes, for cash. All letters addressed to us, at this place, will receive prompt attention. Having bought the establishment, lately occupied by Millan & Grigsby, West end Duke street, and having refitted it to make it one of the most healthy and comfortable Depot for NEGROES, we will receive them on board on the usual terms.
aug 30—eotf PRICE & COOK.
NEGROES WANTED.—I wish to purchase any number of NEGROES, for which I will pay liberal prices. Those wishing to sell, will do well to call on me before selling, at my old stand, at West End, Alexandria, Va.
aug 19—dtf JOSEPH BRUIN.

Figure 74. *Alexandria Gazette*, April 29, 1861, Final Advertisement for a slave trader operating at 1315 Duke Street (above) and advertisement for Joseph Bruin (below).

NEGROES WANTED.—I wish to purchase any number of NEGROES, for which I will pay liberal prices. Those wishing to sell, will do well to call on me before selling, at my old stand, at West End, Alexandria, Va.
aug 19—dtf JOSEPH BRUIN.

Figure 75. *Alexandria Gazette*, May 24, 1861, Final advertisement placed by Joseph Bruin, on the day the Union Army liberated Alexandria.

²⁰⁹ *Alexandria Gazette*, April 29, 1861.

²¹⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹¹ The Diary of Michael Shiner, pp. 52-4.

on the Underground Railroad and in the War includes a graphic account of a slave pen described as “the Avery slave-pen.” She writes:

I visited a number of large schools in Alexandria, September 14th, and was invited to address them. Two of these were kept in two of the largest slave-pens in the city. Alexandria was one of the greatest slave marts in Virginia. In the Avery slave-pen there was a dungeon-like room, designed for one standing, with iron staples to which the wrists were locked, and a sort of stocks for the feet, when a stream of cold water was pumped over the nude form of the refractory slave, from ten minutes to an hour or more, according to offense. They told me they had known them taken down chilled to death. It was said to be one of the most cruel punishments. They showed me the stump of the whipping post, where hundreds of writhing victims had suffered this kind of torture. But it did seem as if the better day was coming, to see a hundred and fifty-three black children here so eager to learn, and to hear them read so well after only four months’ schooling.

It’s not clear which slave pen Haviland is describing here, nor is it clear who Avery was. There is no known Avery associated with the slave trading firms operating at 1315 Duke Street or at 1707 Duke Street, presumably the two largest slave jails in the City. Aside from the school located across S. Payne Street from 1315 Duke Street in the southern end of the L’Ouverture Hospital Contraband Barracks and identified on the Quartermaster Map of that complex, no evidence of the prison complex at 1315 Duke Street being used as a school has been uncovered. That being said, Haviland describes seeing a dungeon similar to the one Abdy inquired about during his 1834 visit. If Haviland visited and is describing 1315 Duke Street, perhaps she saw what Engineering Science archaeologists excavated in 1984 as Features 100 and 134.

In a biographical account of her family titled *Out of the depths, or, the triumph of the cross* (1927), Nellie Arnold Plummer includes several brief references to Levi Hurdle’s slave pen in Alexandria.²¹² Levi Hurdle was jailor of Alexandria County between at least 1857 and 1858 and would have been in charge of the Alexandria County Jail, located at St. Asaph and Princess Streets.²¹³ In the antebellum period, county jails were used for many of the same functions as slave pens (including holding enslaved people suspected of freeing themselves or committing crimes and free African Americans who were unable to prove they were free) and no other references to Hurdle’s slave pen are known to exist. Therefore, it’s probable that Hurdle’s slave pen that Plummer refers to is the county jail. It is notable that this jail is referred to specifically as a slave pen and should be included in discussions of slavery and the domestic slave trade in Alexandria.

²¹² Plummer, Nellie Arnold, *Out of the Depths, or, The triumph of the cross*, 1927, p. 53, 68, 100, 103.

²¹³ See *Richmond Enquirer*, January 30, 1857; *Alexandria Gazette*, August 20, 1858.

In his autobiographies, Frederick Douglass describes being detained in the Easton County jail, after one of his escape attempts was discovered in 1836.²¹⁴ He only briefly describes the physical building, but spends several pages describing the slave traders who would buy enslaved people from these county jails, placing them into a context within the broader system of slavery. Franklin & Armfield have an agent in Easton, Maryland around this time, but Douglass does not mention either the firm or their agent by name (he does distinguish between slave traders, deputy slave traders, and agents of slave traders).²¹⁵ He does, though, specifically mention Baltimore-based slave trader Austin Woolfolk several times throughout his account.

Swedish traveler and reformer Frederika Bremer describes a slave prison in Washington near the Capitol and several Richmond slave prisons that she encountered during her tour of America in her 1853 *The Homes in the New World*.²¹⁶

J. S. Buckingham describes encountering a coffle of enslaved people outside Fredericksburg, Virginia. He does not link this coffle to Alexandria, but its location and direction makes it possible that it originated in Alexandria or Washington. Included in his text is an engraving of this coffle (Figure 76).²¹⁷ Furthermore, the Executive Committee of the American Anti-Slavery Society published a series of period descriptions of overland coffles in 1841.²¹⁸



Figure 76. Gang of Slaves journeying to be Sold in a Southern Market, Buckingham, 1842.

In *The Suppressed Book about Slavery!*, George W. Carleton relays an account

²¹⁴ See Douglass, *My Bondage, My Freedom*, 1855, Chapter XIX.

²¹⁵ Ibid, p. 298.

²¹⁶ See Bremer, *Homes in the New World*, 1853, Vol I, Letter XX and Letter XXXIX.

²¹⁷ Buckingham, *The Slave States of America*, 1842, p. 552-3.

²¹⁸ *Slavery and the Internal Slave Trade in the United States of North America*, Executive Committee of the American Anti-Slavery Society, 1841, pp. 53-62.

given before Congress by Representative J. R. Giddings. Giddings tells the story of George Tooman, a free African American man living in the District of Columbia who was captured under the Fugitive Slave Law and taken to the “Barracoons of Alexandria”, borrowing a word used primarily to describe structures on the coast of Africa used to detain enslaved people and applying it to an American context.²¹⁹

Lastly, largely absent from the above discussion of the slave pen period at 1315 Duke Street is Rice C. Ballard. Ballard’s papers survive and are housed at the Wilson Library at the University of North Carolina.²²⁰ While Ballard was a partner in the firm of Franklin & Armfield, he was based out of Richmond and his papers, including ledgers and account books, letters from Franklin, Armfield, and others working for the firm, and lists of enslaved people and ship manifests, generally seem to describe activities one step removed from 1315 Duke Street. The Office of Historic Alexandria, through a grant from the Historic Alexandria Foundation, is in the process of acquiring digital copies of the relevant portions of the Rice C. Ballard Papers for future research.

²¹⁹ Carleton, George, W., *The Suppressed Book about Slavery!*, 1864, pp. 131-133.

²²⁰ Rice C. Ballard Papers, 1822-1888, Collection Number 04850, Wilson Library at the University of North Carolina, <https://finding-aids.lib.unc.edu/04850/>.

MILITARY OCCUPATION DURING THE CIVIL WAR (1861-1866)

On May 23, 1861, Virginia overwhelmingly voted to adopt the proposed Articles of Secession, and Alexandrians did so with a vote of 958 to 106. The following morning, elements of the Union Army crossed the Potomac and invaded Northern Virginia.

The Union Army quickly occupied Alexandria, including the slave jail complex at 1315 Duke Street. Throughout the rest of the Civil War, the jail would be used as a military prison, primarily holding Union military prisoners, many of whom had gone absent without leave, returned late from leave, were caught drunk, or other assorted disciplinary infractions, along with civilians accused or suspected of having committed crimes or having Southern sympathies, and even captured Confederate prisoners of war, in what historian Frederic Bancroft calls “an amazing topsy-turvy.”²²¹

The capture of the slave pen complex at 1315 Duke Street attracted national attention. It occurred during the opening days of the war and many of the Union soldiers were from Massachusetts and New York, to many of whom a slave jail would have been an unfamiliar and foreign sight. Rather lengthy accounts of the seizure soon began appearing in Northern newspapers, one of the most detailed reading:

THE SLAVE BARRACON – CAPTURE OF CAVALRY.

The next point of interest was the magazine of Price, Birch & Co., dealers in slaves, as large letters over the door informed the public. At this corner the squadron of cavalry mentioned yesterday was captured by the Michigan regiment and Sherman’s battery. Their quarters for horses and men was in the slave pen. The Michigan regiment had received orders to fire, when Sherman’s battery whirled up before them and brought the cavalry within easy range. The slave cavalry then threw out a white flag and surrendered. Only one escaped. Entering the slave pen, we found grinning behind a grate a swarthy F.F.V. armed with a knife. He deprecatingly assured us that he had kept the knife to protect his wife and children. We learned that arms had been found secreted in his house, and he resisted a search with this knife. The pen which he ornamented is about fifty feet square, open above, and surrounded by walls twenty feet high, with brick flooring and dungeons underneath.

A DARKEY CAPTURED.—In the back-yard we found a happy African surrounded by Zouaves and Michiganders. When the building was seized he was the sole occupant of the slave-pen. He was liberated by the Zouaves, who picked the lock, and has been adopted by the Michiganders as their cook. He likes cooking, but says he must have a musket if fighting is to be done. He was raised in Prince George’s county, Md., and is consigned for sale in Virginia on account of the owner’s fear that the property would be unsafe in Maryland. He thoroughly appreciates this unexpected change of masters.

IMPRISONED SLAVES TO BE FREED.—The Zouaves are apparently determined to free all slaves they find in confinement. They broke into another pen by knocking a hole a foot square in a brick wall, but

²²¹ Bancroft, 1931, p. 92.

found nothing. Thirty slaves had been carried off shortly before, and embarked from a point in the woods.²²²

The incident involving Confederate cavalry briefly mentioned at the beginning of the article above is also described in more detail in the June 15, 1861 issue of *Harper's Weekly*, and the story is accompanied by the first of many Civil War-era depictions of the slave jail complex at 1315 Duke Street. It reports:

CAPTURE OF SECESSION CAVALRY AT ALEXANDRIA.

WE publish herewith, from a drawing by our special artist, an engraving of the CAPTURE OF FORTY SECESSION CAVALRY AT ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA, on the morning of 24th ult., when the advance into Virginia was made. The correspondent of the Herald thus described the affair:

One of the most unexpected features of this morning's military adventures into Virginia was the capture of a company of four officers and thirty-six men, composed of F. F. V.'s, of Fairfax County, Virginia, who had been enrolled into a brilliant and dashing cavalry corps. This secession company were early alarmed by the arrival of the Government forces in Alexandria, and, mounting their horses, began a precipitate retreat, riding till they believed themselves far beyond the reach of pursuit. They were rejoiced to see troops advancing from the west, whom they supposed to be reinforcements to their aid. Rushing hastily forward, they found themselves surrounded by the Michigan volunteers, and surrendered without a blow.

They were taken on board the steamer Baltimore, Captain West, and conveyed as prisoners of war to the Navy-yard. We found them gayly attired, with feathered chapeaus, apparently unconscious of the fate to which their treason naturally consigns them. Some of them were anxious to convince those with whom they conversed that their friends and relations, as well as their own unbiased sympathies, were on the side of the flag of our Union. They were a crest-fallen troop indeed, for some had already doffed their feathered chapeau for the simple felt. The captain was a man of fine physique and carriage. His plume was still aloft, and spurs in place, and haversack marked "W. W. Ball." Doubtless his admirers and friends are still in a maze at his sudden trip across the Potomac.²²³

Accompanying this textual narrative of the capture and surrender is a nearly full-page illustration (rotated sideways on the page), with the slave pen complex at 1315 Duke Street featured prominently in the background (Figure 77). The engraving is captioned, "Company of Secession Cavalry Surrendering to Colonel Wilcox, of the First Michigan Regiment, in front of the Slave-Pen at Alexandria, Virginia. – [Drawn by our Special Artist]". In addition to this scene showing the surrender of southern cavalry in front of the Slave Pen on Duke Street, this issue of *Harper's Weekly* also features several local images, including entrenching at Arlington Heights, and the death of Colonel Ellsworth at the Marshall House, featured prominently on the cover of the issue.

²²² *Boston Traveler*, May 27, 1861.

²²³ *Harper's Weekly*, June 15, 1861.

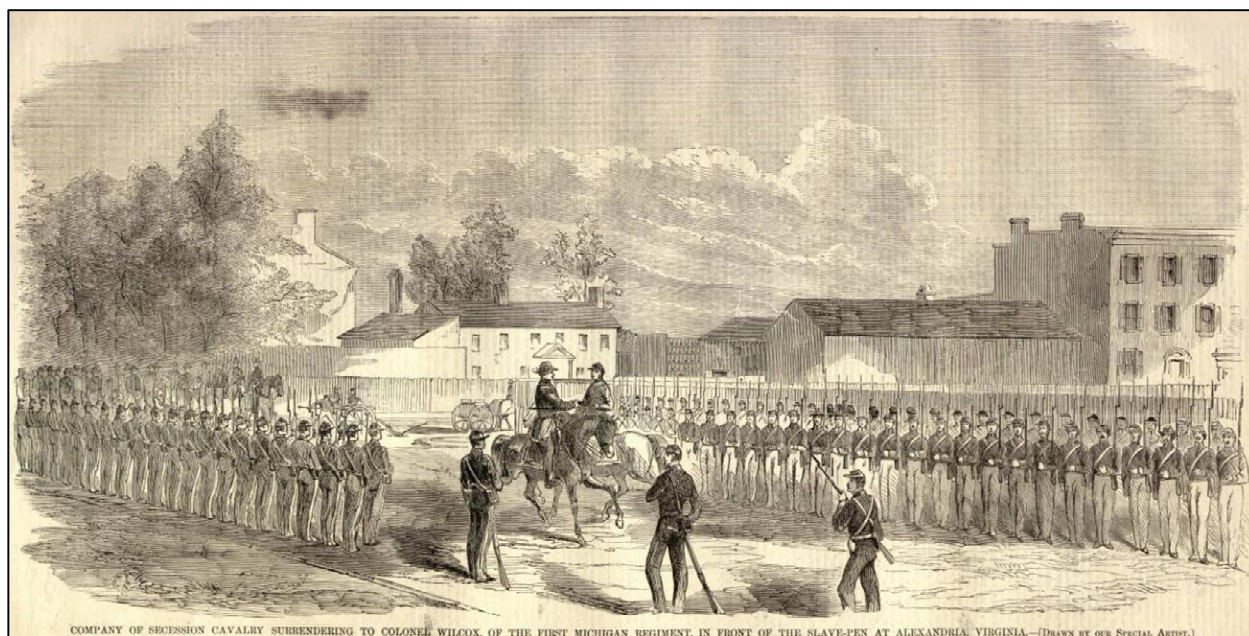


Figure 77. *Company of Secession Cavalry Surrendering to Colonel Wilcox, of the First Michigan Regiment, in front of the Slave-Pen at Alexandria, Harpers Weekly, June 15, 1861.*

The scene is pictured from the south side of Duke Street, somewhere near its intersection with Fayette Street, looking to the northwest. The context of the image and the accompanying text suggest that the two lines of troops lining both sides of Duke Street are the Michigan volunteers described in the text (the 1st Michigan regiment, which crossed into Alexandria from Washington, D.C. on the morning of May 24th), armed and standing at attention, and the surrendering cavalry is mounted and entering the scene from the left, as if being brought into town from the west where they were surrounded. Colonel Wilcox, of the First Michigan, appears to be the rightmost of the two mounted figures in the center, accepting the sword of the captain of the surrendered cavalry on the left, who is identified by his name on his haversack as W.W. Ball and the plume in his hat. The caption indicates that these cavalry troops are surrendering, but the text describing the scene is headlined with the word “CAPTURE”. Perhaps this scene is a staged formality to make the capture and/or surrender official, or perhaps the distinction between a surrender and a capture is not relevant or important.

Another account of this surrender can be found in the autobiography of Colonel George A. Armes, *Ups and downs of an army officer*, published in 1900 (Figure 78). Accompanying this account is another illustration of the scene, produced by C. L. Taylor, probably specifically for this book.²²⁴ This image, produced after the war, shows the slave jail complex at 1315 Duke

²²⁴ Armes, George A., *Ups and downs of an army officer*, 1900.

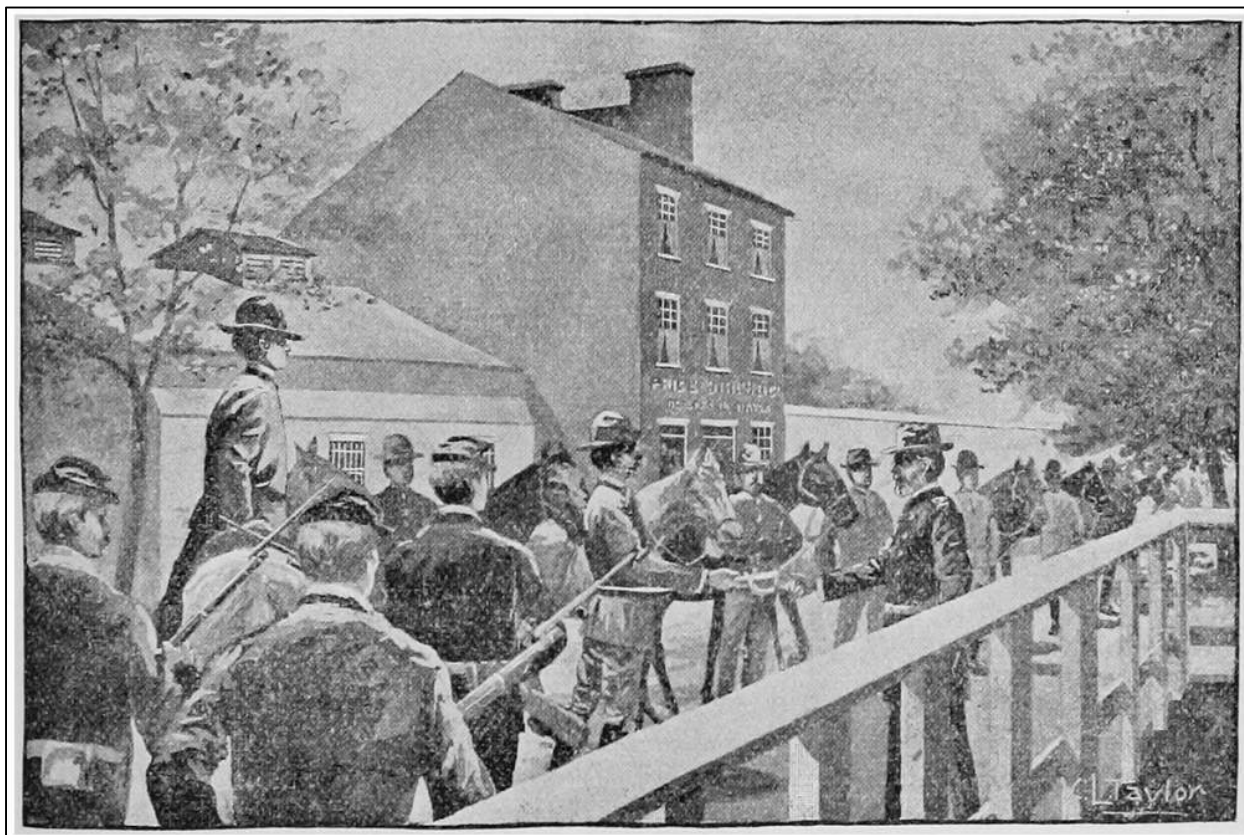


Figure 78. *Captain Ball's Surrender at the Slave Pen, 1900.*

Street, but depicts it from a similar vantage point as photographed by Pywell during the Civil War²²⁵ (Figure 94) and shows many of the same features as those depictions. This illustration includes windows in the front wall of the men's yard, two smaller vents in the roof of the men's yard, and no trees in front of the men's yard, consistent with those later depictions (see below). For these reasons, it would appear that the artist used Pywell's photograph as a reference for this scene and this illustration should be considered a post-war reconstruction of a scene that occurred May 24, 1861 in front of the building as it existed in the spring of 1865.

A letter from Captain [M. Dalany] Ball himself, explaining the circumstances of his capture perhaps in an attempt to salvage his honor, appeared in the *Richmond Enquirer* on June 11, 1861. It read:

For the Enquirer.

Letter from Capt. Ball, of the Fairfax Cavalry.

I desire, in justice to myself, that my State should know the following circumstances:

²²⁵ There are several dates attributed to this photograph, but the most likely date for this image is sometime after the Lincoln assassination on April 14, 1865. See the discussion of this photograph below for more.

On Friday morning, May 24th, about 2 o'clock, while asleep in my quarters at Alexandria, I was roused by my guards from the Long Bridge, and informed that a large body of cavalry and foot had just crossed the bridge from Washington, and marched up the road towards Drummond's Gate, (leading to Arlington,) and that a body of troops was following them from the bridge. Despatching my Orderly Sergeant and two men, with orders to proceed in the direction of Long Bridge until they discovered troops advancing, or failing to do so, to remain at the forks of the road, half a mile from the bridge, till notified to leave; and also, despatching a Sergeant and one man up the Leesburg Turnpike, with orders to advance two miles and reconnoitre, I proceeded myself to Col. Terrett's quarters; and waking him, informed him of what had occurred.

He arose and dressed, giving me orders to proceed at once to Captain Powell's quarters, and in conjunction with him throw out scouts sufficient to keep him (Col. Terrett) informed of any further movements in the direction of Alexandria. I went to Capt. Powell and he volunteered to keep up the guard till 8 o'clock, at which time it was agreed I should relieve him. He immediately started with a squad of his men in the direction of the bridge, and soon after my guard returned and reported troops near the aqueduct, and advancing towards Alexandria. I had my men roused and the horses saddled and prepared for marching. I went into my room and waited quietly for further information.

A short time after day-break, Q. M. Ford, of my company, came to me and informed me that a sergeant of Captain Powell's company had just gone by, who said he had orders to us from Colonel Terrett to get ready and leave the town by 8 o'clock. Not seeing the sergeant myself, nor understanding what to do, I started on foot to Col. Terrett's quarters. On my way I met the infantry companies, marching out of town. Advancing further, I met Col. Terrett, and he informed me, (in answer to my questions what to do,) that a flag of truce had been sent from the Pawnee, with orders to him to surrender, which he had declined; but that a large column was advancing from Washington, and that he had agreed to evacuate the town, and that it was agreed to do so by 8 o'clock. I asked him what I should do. He said, "you must remain behind, and cover the retreat of the infantry, and give notice of any pursuit;" and I understood him distinctly to say that by the agreement made, under a flag of true, it was not necessary to leave before 8 o'clock. I returned to my quarters and commenced getting ready to march. While getting ready, about 15 minutes later, some of the men being mounted, and others away, a citizen ran up to the stable, and with tears streaming down his face, begged the men to fly, as the troops were almost on us. Without orders, my men began to fly, and it was only by running through the house and meeting the company that I succeeded in stopping and forming them.—I ordered the company to form, and while they were doing so, several of the men (myself among them) not having mounted, the head of the enemy's column appeared about four squares off. I went into the stable yard to see if all the men were out, and, on returning, saw a company of Zouaves marching fast up the cross street, and just at that moment the artillery company which led their column wheeled their guns upon us about one hundred yards distant. Stopping a moment to put back in the ranks two men who had left it when their guns were wheeled on us, *and feeling perfectly confident that, under the agreement, we were to be permitted to depart*, I was just proceeding to mount my horse, when Colonel Wilcox rode up and enquired for the commander of the company. I advanced (on foot) to meet him. He called on me to surrender, or he would fire. I told him we would leave in a few minutes, *by agreement*. He replied that he *knew of no agreement*, and that, unless I surrendered, he should fire. There were then two guns bearing on us, a company of cavalry, just behind the battery, and a company of Zouaves, almost exactly in rear of my line, all distant about seventy-five yards, with other troops and one more gun just behind. Knowing it would be folly to resist, I surrendered under *protest of the agreement made under the White Flag*, and with the assurance of Col. Wilcox that "whatever was honorable" (I quote his very words) would be done.

We were immediately deprived of our arms and horses and placed under guard. I spoke several times to Col. Wilcox about our release but no information did I get. Lieut Grigsby and myself were allowed to go

beyond the guard lines on parole, and about 2 o'clock we were removed to the "Baltimore;" brought to the Navy Yard at Washington, and have been kept here since. I have made three applications to Gen. Mansfield for a hearing, but he has not noticed them.

Since our captivity we have been very kindly treated by the officers who have had us in charge. I mention particularly, Commandant Dahlgren and Lieut. Parker, of the Navy Yard; Lieut. West and Master Woods, of the Navy, and the officers of the 71st Regiment.

M. DALANY BALL,

Captain of the Fairfax Cavalry.²²⁶

Ball notes the presence of stables and a stable yard (whose locations are not currently known) and their use of a house at the site (possibly 1315 Duke Street). Mentioned in Ball's letter and captured with him is a Lieutenant Grigsby and lists of the captured cavalymen published the following day include a Private Grigsbee.²²⁷ These identities of these two men are not currently known, but their last names and enlistment in the Fairfax Cavalry suggest they may be related to slave trader and former occupant of 1315 Duke Street, Alexander S. Grigsby. Perhaps a familiarity by one of the cavalymen with the site led to their use of the property in the days leading up to their capture. Additional research should be undertaken to determine the identities of these two men.

In addition to being illustrated here, this incident early in the war was also remembered locally and was referred to during a local political meeting of the Radicals [Republicans] of the First Ward several years later in 1871. W.D. Massey gave a speech in which he attacked Col. Ball, "who would reduce you all to servitude had he the power." Jacob Thomas spoke after Massey and, in the opinion of the reporter for the *Alexandria Gazette*, "made quite a laughable harangue". John Burrill [Birrell] rose next. The nuance of the exchange is lost without understanding its context, but it is reproduced here:

Mr. Birrell—Mr. Massey has attacked a great hero this evening. He should not forget that Col. Ball captured a whole company of Federal soldiers at the slave pen the first year of the war.

Mr. Massey—The gentleman will allow me to correct him. A company captured Ball and his company. [Great laughter]²²⁸

It is not quite clear from the report in the *Gazette*, but perhaps Burrill [Birrell] misspoke intentionally to mock the "laughable harangue" by Thomas. In any case, the capture of Ball and his cavalry in front of the slave pen remained in the collective memory of the town following the war, charged with political power.

In the background of the engraving appearing in *Harper's Weekly* are portions of the slave jail complex at 1315 Duke Street. Visible are the enclosed women's yard on the east side of the original 1812/3 structure, the lean-to/shed roof over the northern part of that yard, the two-story

²²⁶ *Richmond Enquirer*, June 11, 1861.

²²⁷ *Washington Evening Star*, May 25, 1861.

²²⁸ *Alexandria Gazette*, May 17, 1871.

structure behind the yard and set back from Payne Street, and partially obscured by trees is the main block of 1315 Duke Street itself. Rising behind the lean-to roof covering the northern part of the women's yard is a large chimney that is probably the southern chimney of the original kitchen wing and not the flue or vent rising from the women's yard seen in other photographs. Also shown here is a wooden fence or wall that surrounds at least the southwest corner of the property and is tall enough to partially block the first story of the building behind it. This feature, although similar to a wall or fence that appears in the 1836 anti-slavery broadside, is not visible in any of the Civil War-era photographs of the area (except possibly the photograph of the woman holding a basket in the yard), so this was probably removed shortly after this image was sketched and engraved. Not visible is the men's yard or the kitchen wing behind 1315 Duke Street, although these structures are either obscured by trees or not visible from this angle.

After capturing Ball's Fairfax Cavalry, Union soldiers entered the slave jail complex at 1315 Duke Street and found there a "slave-shamble which was broken up".²²⁹ That description comes from the writings of abolitionist Moncure Daniel Conway. Conway wrote about the Alexandria slave jail complex at least twice during his career, both times under the title "Mysteries of a Shamble", once appearing in the *New York Daily Tribune* on July 15, 1861, and he published this material again reworked slightly to appear as a chapter in his 1864 book, *Testimonies Concerning Slavery*. Conway provides descriptions and abstracts of thirteen letters, given to him by a friend of his in the Union Army who had "filled his pockets with letters and papers which were found strewn about the floor of the office adjoining", "where they lay in a huge pile". Conway selects these thirteen from among "over a hundred or more letters that were found in that slave-shamble" that were in his possession. Unfortunately, he only tells us the letters collectively date from between 1837 and 1857 and does not include the specific date for each letter. While he correctly attributes the letters from these dates to the firm of Kephart & Co., he mistakenly attributes the present structure and business to Kephart, as Kephart appears to have removed himself from the daily operations of the business in 1852, sold the property in 1858, and removed himself as a partner in the business in late 1859.

Included among the correspondents noted by Conway are many known business associates of Kephart, including Bacon Tait of Richmond, a Mr. Boudor [or Baudar] in New Orleans, Robert Brashear of Natchez, Robert Windsor of Alexandria, Horatio Harbin, and John Armfield. Also mentioned are a Mr. S. Grady and an individual only addressed as Sims. The subject matter of these letters appears to be similar to other extant (and more complete) collections of letters from slave dealers such as the ones of Rice Ballard at the University of North Carolina²³⁰ or Ziba Oakes at the Boston Public Library.²³¹ The value of this collection described by Conway is not necessarily in the subject matter, its ability to highlight the business of the domestic slave trade,

²²⁹ See Conway, Moncure Daniel, "Mysteries of a Shamble", *New York Daily Tribune*, July 15, 1861 and *Testimonies Concerning Slavery*, pp. 19-26, 1864.

²³⁰ <https://finding-aids.lib.unc.edu/04850/>.

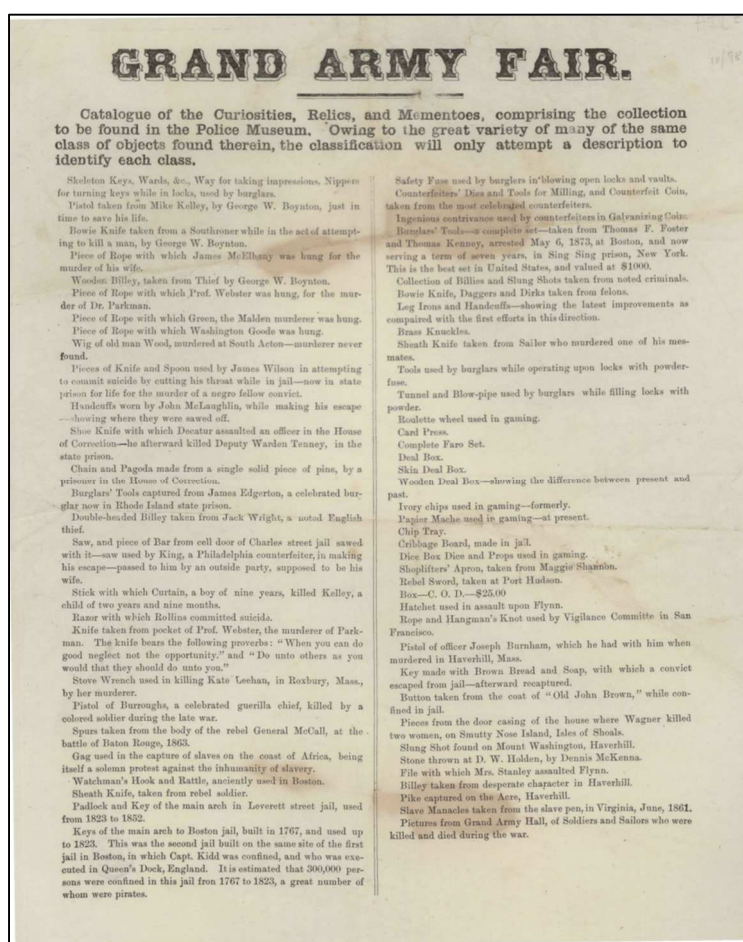
²³¹ <http://archon.bpl.org/?p=collections/findingaid&id=34&rootcontentid=10249>.

Conway does not seem to have visited the slave jail complex himself and as such neither of his accounts provide much of a written description of the property aside from calling it a “slave-shamble”. His accounts are notable, however, for describing the contents of the letters recovered from the structure. A cursory search of his papers held by the Columbia University Library was unable to turn up these 13 abstracted letters or any of the “over a hundred or more” that at one point were reportedly in his possession. He does, however, tell us that an iron ring and chain were “torn out of the dungeons” were given to H. [Henry] W. [Ward] Beecher, “who exhibits the same to his friends” (although Beecher himself may dispute this point²³²).

In the summer of 1873, a “Detective’s Museum” opened in the Falmouth Hotel, in Portland, Maine.²³⁴ The proprietor of the collection is listed as a Mr. A. W. Scott, who it is noted spent 16

²³³ "Grand Army Fair, 1873, Massachusetts.

²³⁴ *Portland Daily Press*, July 9, 1873.



years with the Boston detective force. It is not made explicit, but comparing the other objects described in these newspaper descriptions with the Grant Army Fair catalog and considering Scott's involvement with the Boston police, these are likely the same assemblages or collections.

Scott takes his collection on tour and a review of the exhibit is recorded in the *Daily Inter Ocean* when it comes to Washington, D.C. in 1875. Among a great number of other objects, the correspondent explicitly notes the presence “bucks and gags, shackles, leg irons, and handcuffs”, although it is not specified if any of these are the same “Slave Manacles” described in the 1873 broadside. By 1888, Scott no longer appears to be touring with his Detective's Museum and Austin's Nickelodeon in Boston begins advertising an extremely similar Detective's Museum, with “over 400 implements of crime, each of which is connected with some well-known criminal event”.²³⁵ Another advertisement in the paper notes, “Every instrument has a history, and is properly labeled with date and data”²³⁶, and is possibly derived from Scott's Detective Museum collection in some form. Austin's Nickelodeon closes and is remodeled as Austin's Palace Theatre in 1891²³⁷ and then the Austin & Stone Museum. Austin & Stone's closed in 1912²³⁸ and it is not known if the manacles described in 1873 remained with the museum until its closure or what happened to their collections after 1912.

Tracking additional relics and mementos purported to have been taken from 1315 Duke Street, Civil War diarist Julia Wilbur describes being given a pair of handcuffs and a leg chain found at the Slave Pen prison.²³⁹ Other possible destinations for shackles taken from 1315 Duke Street include the Libby Prison War Museum collection held by the Chicago Historical Society and a pair given to abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison and held by the Boston Public Library (although these may be conflated with a pair from the Leverett Street Jail). These two cases are not well documented and should be considered as speculation or rumor until they can be confirmed or denied through additional research.

Soldiers stationed in Alexandria are known to have removed other objects from the slave jail complex at 1315 Duke Street. A history of the 127th New York notes:

The following morning, a visit was made to Upton's Hill, and thence to the old “Slave Pen” and Christ Church at Alexandria, where the weight of the plate on Washington's pew again baffled the greed of the relic hunting portion of our company, who, however, found solace in a piece of timber from the “Slave Pen,” though the scoffer in the party insisted that it was merely part of a modern coalbin.²⁴⁰

²³⁵ *Boston Herald*, October 11, 1888.

²³⁶ *Boston Herald*, January 6, 1889.

²³⁷ *Boston Herald*, May 24, 1891.

²³⁸ *St. Albans Messenger*, April 4, 1912.

²³⁹ Julia Wilbur Diaries, April 22, 1863; February 17, 1864, see below for more on Wilbur.

<https://www.alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/historic/info/civilwar/JuliaWilburDiary1860to1866.pdf>.

²⁴⁰ McGrath, Franklin, *The history of the 127th New York Volunteers, “Monitors,” in the war for the preservation of the union*, 1898 p. 171.

On June 3, 1861, two weeks after the Union Army crossed the Potomac and liberated the slave jail complex at 1315 Duke Street, Charles M. Price sold the property to Solomon Stover for \$6,000.²⁴¹ The transaction was conducted in Loudoun County and not recorded in the Alexandria deed book until January 17, 1862. Unlike previous property sales, this deed only conveyed to Stover the half square of ground on the north side of the 1300 block of Duke Street and did not include the two other parcels on the north and south sides of Duke Street to the west of West Street. As described in a dispute over claims for rents and damages following the war, Stover may be Price's brother-in-law and this transaction may have been conducted in an attempt to prevent the property from being confiscated entirely by the army.²⁴²

Also on June 3, 1861, the Fifth Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry set up camp outside Alexandria, where they would stay until departing for Manassas on July 18, 1861. Alfred Roe writes in the regimental history of the Fifth Massachusetts volunteer infantry:

The slave-pen of Price and Birch, made famous throughout the entire North through the "Life of Solomon Northrup," was within the points covered by the men of the Fifth, and the most of them carried away with them memories of their impressions when they first saw the hateful sign. Though they may not have seen the sale of human beings from the auction-block, they did see where such iniquity was practiced, and they were only too glad to act in any way which should enhance the condition of the black man and thereby trouble the slave holder. From this place the boys took a colored man, for whom only one name had been found up to this time, and that was "John." The man became a great favorite with the members of the regiment, and attaching himself to the person of Captain Brastow of Co. I as a body servant he returned to Massachusetts with the latter and remained in Somerville until, hearing from his wife in the South, he joined her here. In the regiment the negro was almost as well known as the Captain.²⁴³

Roe seems to have conflated James H. Birch, captor of Solomon Northup with William H. Birch of Price, Birch & Co., but possibly continues the story of the man found in the slave jail when liberated on May 24, 1861. On July 18, the day they departed Alexandria, Roe writes, "The Captain proposed to me that I go buy one of the animals and thus give the boys a lamb stew for dinner, it being understood that we would remain in camp until afternoon, and Old Jack, the relic from Price and Birch's Slave-pen, would cook the same to the queen's taste."²⁴⁴

Soon after liberating the slave jail at 1315 Duke Street, the Union Army subsequently occupied it and used it as a military prison. Generally used to confine Union soldiers for a variety of (usually petty) disciplinary infractions, the site also held civilians arrested by military authorities and small numbers of Confederate military prisoners. The former slave jail complex at 1315 Duke Street quickly developed a reputation. It was noted by the Provost Marshall in 1862 that, "...the Slave Pen is not a place calculated to conduce to the health or comfort of the persons confined".²⁴⁵

²⁴¹ Alexandria County, Deed Book V3, p.29.

²⁴² Chief Quartermaster's Office, January 20, 1866. See Artemel et al., 1987.

²⁴³ Roe, Alfred S. *The Fifth regiment Massachusetts volunteer infantry in its three tours of duty 1861, 1862-'63, 1864*, 1911, p. 55.

²⁴⁴ Ibid, p. 80.

²⁴⁵ National Archives, RG 393, pt. 4, entry 1526; 1527; vol. 373/943, 944, cited in Artemel et al., 1987, p. 41.

One such incident comes from soldier Charles Flynn, Company H, 2nd Massachusetts Volunteer Militia, who was detained in the former slave pen in early 1862. He swore:

I do hereby certify upon honor, that I have been an invalid in the hospital, since the 1st day of December last; and that once during that time I went to my supper. A waiter gave me my ration; another accused me of stealing it. I denied it; I was then arrested, taken before the surgeon; he ordered me to what is called the old Alexandria *slave pen*, without my supper. I remained there until about two o'clock the following day, having been without food nearly twenty-four hours.²⁴⁶

A postwar account by H. S. Canfield originally published in the *Chicago Time-Herald* and reprinted in the *Denver Post* in 1897 recalled:

That [being arrested and thrown into a room in the basement of the capital] was fun compared with a later experience. Again I had gone to Washington and again had overstayed my leave. I got to camp an hour late. My company was stationed at Alexandria. I was seized and thrown into the slave pen. It was an inclosure shut in by high poles whose sides touched—a stockade I suppose you would call it. It was circular in form and some sixty feet in diameter. The floor was of dirt. It had been used to confine slaves brought into Alexandria for sale, and it smelled yet of the Africans who had been herded in it. The door was opened and I was shoved violently in. The dark was falling, but I could see that I had something like 300 companions. Many of them were drunk.

I put in some bad nights in the Wilderness, I fought in nine pitched battles, I saw the horrors of ‘Grant’s crater,’ but for concentrated terror I have never seen the equal of those hours in the Alexandria slave pen. In a little while a couple near me, both drunk, began to fight. You know that cattle sometimes become crazed and stampede, but possibly you don’t know that masses of men sometimes go mad and attempt to slay each other. Inside of five minutes twenty private battles were in progress and inside of ten minutes the entire interior was a mass of struggling, writhing, frenzied men. They had no weapons of course, but they did fearful damage with their bare hands. Massachusetts was fighting New York, Pennsylvania was fighting Maine, New Hampshire was fighting Connecticut. The combatants lost all sense of the cause in which they were soldiers, of the fact that they were leagued against a common foe under one flag. All idea of patriotism and duty was smothered in a wild desire to slay. Yells, screams, oaths, moans rent the air. When a man went down it was the last of him. He was instantly kicked into insensibility by a hundred pairs of feet.

I got next to the wall of the stockade and laid down....The guards clambered up the walls outside, and, peering over with white faces at the pandemonium below, threatened to shoot....The guards clambered down again and left their prisoners to slay or be slain....

....I was without a scratch, but covered with blood. I would rather fight the Southerners four years more than pass another night in the slave pen.²⁴⁷

It’s not clear what Canfield is referring to when he describes a circular stockade as no other accounts or photographs of a stockade at 1315 Duke Street exist. The adjacent US Military

Railroad complex was fortified by a similar wooden stockade (Figure 80, 81, and 82) and Soldier’s Rest was enclosed by a tall board fence. In this photograph of the barricades or stockade at Alexandria (Figure 82), this stockade fence is believed to be built along S. Payne

²⁴⁶ *Daily National Republican*, February 3, 1862.

²⁴⁷ *Denver Post*, October 1, 1897.

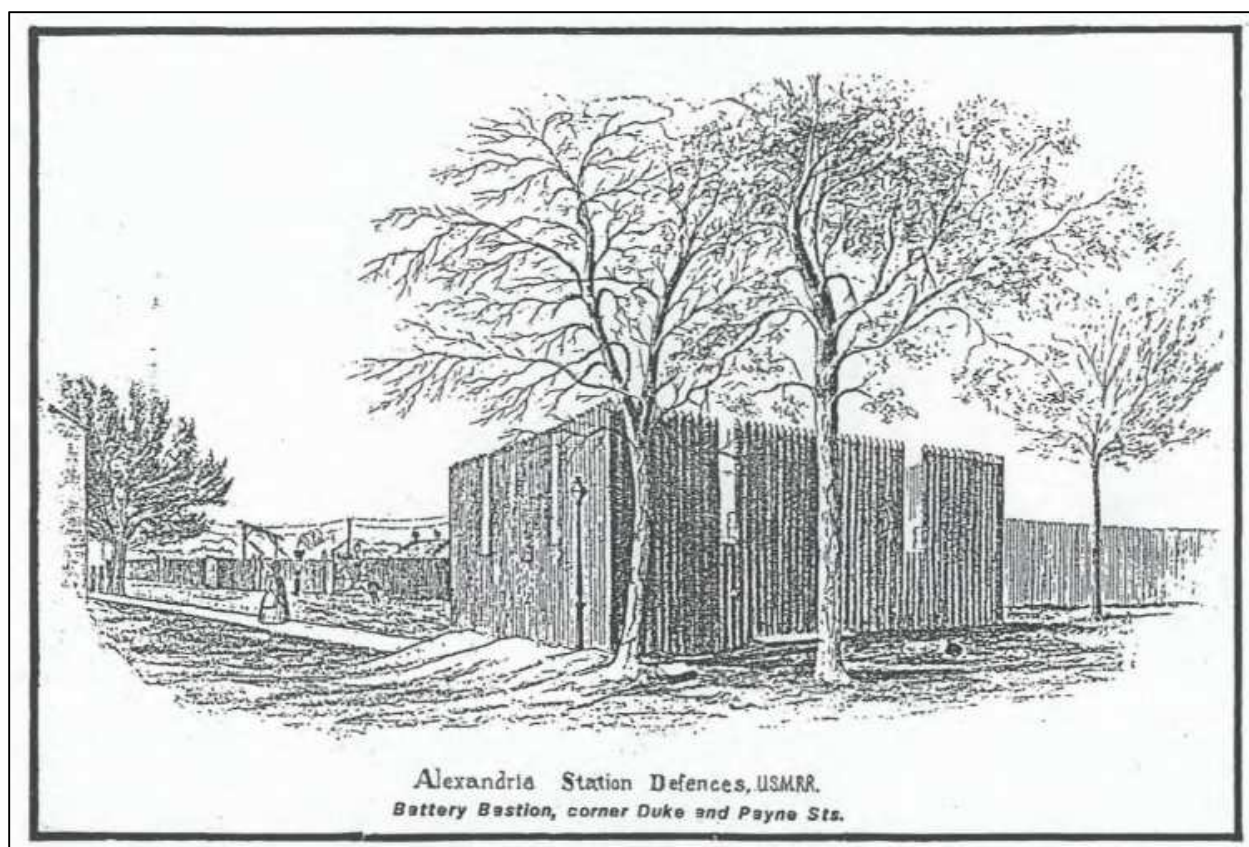


Figure 80. Fort Clough, Alexandria Station Defences, USMRR, Merrick, Reproduced from Cromwell 1989.

Street, running north toward Duke Street. The long white building on the right of the photograph is the Contraband Barracks along east side of the 200 block of S. Payne Street. The front façade of 1315 Duke Street would be visible in this photograph behind and to the left of the wide ladder structure in the center of the frame if the stockade was not blocking it. Perhaps Canfield was placed in some portion of one of those facilities or perhaps an ancillary and temporary structure of similar construction was built at the slave pen complex. In any case, whether Canfield's account is accurate or the exaggerated result of 40 years of retelling, the military prison at the former slave pen in Alexandria did not appear to be designed with prisoner comfort in mind.

As if to emphasize this point, sometime during the night of Tuesday February 4th, a soldier named William Cornus, froze to death while in custody at the slave pen.²⁴⁸ Descriptive accounts of the conditions faced by Union prisoners (that is, Union Army soldiers arrested for a wide variety of frequently minor offenses) at the site were widely published and a scandal quickly erupted. It was quickly noted that the Army was using the former slave pen to confine American soldiers in conditions similar to the way Franklin, Armfield, Kephart, Price, and Birch kept enslaved African Americans and much of the outrage centered on this juxtaposition between American soldiers and enslaved African Americans.

In a dispatch to the *Philadelphia Inquirer* dated February 9, 1862, a reporter wrote:

²⁴⁸ *Cincinnati Commercial Tribune*, February 10, 1862.

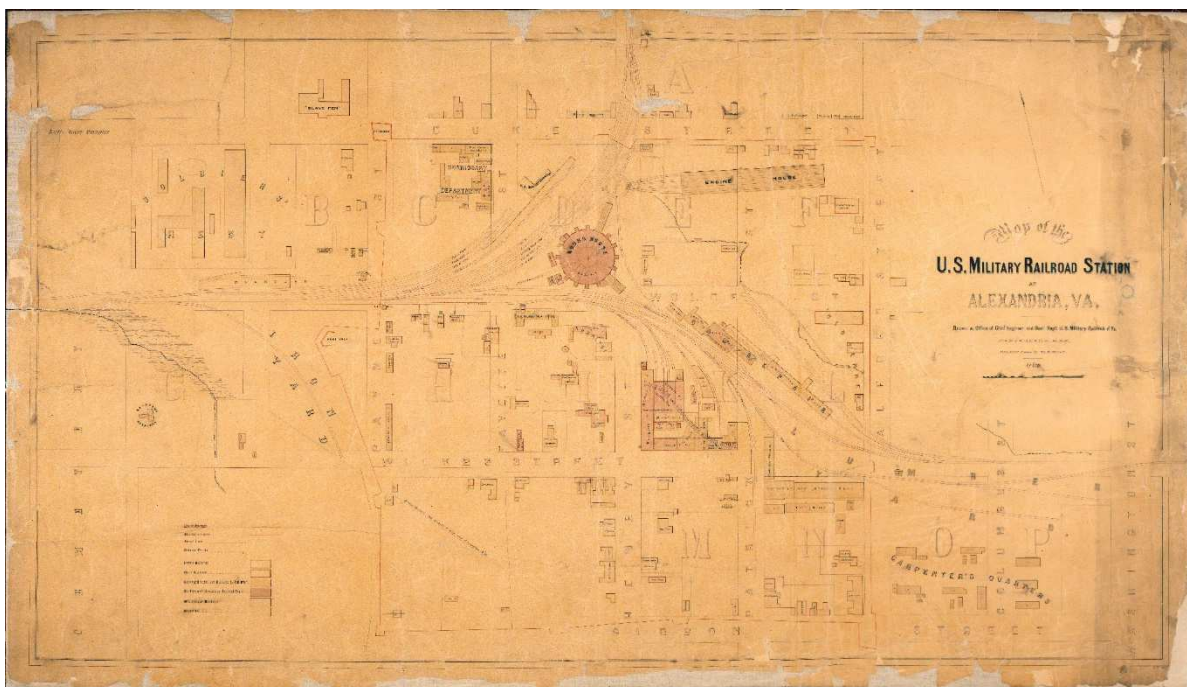


Figure 81. Map of the U.S. Military Railroad Station at Alexandria, Va., Wm. M. Merrick, National Archives.

The Alexandria Slave Pen—The Difference between Rebel Prisoners and our Own.

The old slave pen in Alexandria, to the burning shame of our officers though it be, is still used as a guard house for the soldiers. We visited it on Saturday morning again, with Mr. LUMLEY, the artist of the *New York Illustrated News*, who succeeded in making one of his usual accurate sketches of the bleak walls and iron gates. It is merely a square pen, made by four brick walls, about twenty feet high and two feet thick, covering a space of about sixty feet square.

There are no windows and but one door; no roof over it, except a narrow strip over one corner to keep off the pelting storm or cold and poisonous malaria that fills the air at night. A stream of filthy water runs through the centre, and the floor is of brick—always cold, damp and dirty. Here the soldiers are placed who are arrested for any cause. If a man overstays his time from camp, gets into a quarrel with another soldier or a Secesh, if he comes into town without a pass, or violates any of the orders, away he is marched into this den. The Rebels used it as a place of punishment for slaves, or a store-house for “property,” alias negroes. We deprecate their conduct for inhumanity and then degrade our own troops by putting them upon a level with the “property.”

We do not question the propriety of arresting the soldiers for diverse offences, for it is absolutely necessary to maintain order and discipline, but why when Rebel soldiers are taken, when Secesh emissaries and spies are arrested, are they taken to good quarters in clean houses and *well provided for*? There is a grievous wrong here that should be remedied at once. Gen. MONTGOMERY and Colonel MCLEAN are men of kind hearts, and in whose breasts there lacks not the slightest sympathy for a Secessionist, but somebody is to blame for this inhuman state of affairs. We cannot learn who it is. Why tie up the hands of our officers whose whole souls are in the war? Why dishearten and disgust our volunteers by such invidious distinctions? Last Thursday night, a private of the New York Sixty-third was placed in this pen, intoxicated.



Figure 82. Barricades at Alexandria, Va, National Archives Identifier 524934.

He laid down on the only vacant space, in bed, snow and slush over three inches deep, and next morning, when the iron grate was swung open, he was carried out a corpse. An inquest was held, and a surgeon testified that he died from drunkenness and exposure; but the surgeon in-chief says he was frozen to death.

There are hundreds of nicely furnished houses all over the city, whose owners are in the Rebel army. A number of fine public buildings are unoccupied; why allow them to remain unused, while our soldiers are sleeping on the cold damp ground in this vile hole. If it is not a crime to wear the United States uniform, why use the men so? We hope that the new Secretary will see that our troops are put at least on a par with Rebels.

In one side are occasionally a few soldiers huddled around a small fire built on the floor.²⁴⁹

Another such article appeared two days later in the *North American* under the title, “Horrors of the Alexandria Slave Pen—Brutality to Prisoners”:

The “pen,” as it is called, is one of the former slave depots on Market street, and is an ordinary three-story brick dwelling, with back buildings. These back buildings are occupied by company C of the 88th Pennsylvania volunteers, the main building by the officers, the back buildings by the men for quarters,

²⁴⁹ *Philadelphia Inquirer*, February 10, 1862.

kitchen, &c. On either side of the house is a square enclosure, surrounded by a high brick wall, and entirely open at the top, excepting a narrow strip of roof along one side, but too high to afford any shelter. We entered the pen through a low doorway in the rear, and closed by a heavy iron grate.

It was once paved and whitewashed and would seem to be a tolerable place for confining cattle during warm weather. But since the winter weather commenced, there have been but few days that the floors have not been covered with mud and filth, or with snow and slush, and they are seldom if ever cleaned. It may be well supposed that they present a horrible picture of filth. A stranger looking through the grate into one of these dens would involuntarily shudder at the idea of going into it, even for a momentary inspection, and visitors seldom give more than a glance at the poor half-frozen soldiers inside—not realizing that these men are their brethren, who came here to offer their lives, if need be, in defense of the country they love. Are these men criminals, traitors, or what are they? They wonder. Oh, no. Rebels and traitors there *are* here, but they are arrested in a genteel manner, and furnished with comfortable rooms at the Provost Marshal's office.

The men in the slave pens are merely Union volunteers who are guilty of drinking some of the villainous liquors sold to them under license here, openly and in defiance of the orders of Gen. McClellan. Most of them, and indeed almost all of them, are from the camps around Alexandria, and perhaps ignorant of any wrong, supposing that they may do as some of their officers do—get drunk when they please! There are a great many who are arrested and confined here because they are not provided with passes properly signed; or if they have, they may be incorrect as to date, etc; or the soldier may be found inside of the city limits after 5 P.M., contrary to orders.

These are their crimes, and let us see the penalty. A soldier arrested and brought to the office is at once registered, and his money put away for safe keeping. The questions asked are not always answered, and the hard earned money given up promptly, and we have been told by a number of persons that the prisoner is knocked down and beaten, choked, kicked and abused, until he either complies or is rendered senseless. We have heard of this repeatedly, and could not credit it, or at least considered that it might have happened in a single instance. But there is abundance of evidence at hand to prove that this is almost a daily occurrence at the slave pen, and that some of the officers in charge take pride in thus showing their courage and fighting qualities.

After the prisoner is registered and handed over to the turnkey, he is thrust into the pen. If he is drunk or sick, he can lie down in the mud or slush to rest and recover his senses, and to wonder why he has been so inhumanly treated.

Now all this may be a matter of a day or two's discomfort to a strong, rugged man, or it may through the cold and exposure bring on an attack of pneumonia, or pleurisy, or develop a typhoid or camp fever, already lurking in his veins, and thus sacrifice a life offered in good faith for the defense of our country.

It has already been mentioned that a man was frozen to death in the pen last week. The medical certificate published states that this man, William Cornus, "died from intemperance and previous exposure." This document is signed by Dr. Mitchell, the Assistant Surgeon of the 88th Pennsylvania regiment, a young man fresh from his studies, and necessarily of limited experience. The Surgeon of the regiment, Dr. J. H. Seltzer, a gentleman of larger experience and attainments, assures us that there can be no doubt that the soldier, William Cornus, was but slightly intoxicated, if at all, when arrested, and that he saw fit to put him in the pen, and that it is his belief that the man was not well when put in, and probably found it necessary to lie down, and there in the snow and storm of the coldest night of the winter he evidently became benumbed, chilled through, and thus literally froze to death. The examination in the case appears to have been a mere farce.

But this is not to be the last of the matter, and we predict that unless some changes are made in the treatment of our soldiers in this place, there will be others who will meet their death in the pen, and many more will carry from it the seeds of disease and death in their system. Not long ago, it will be remembered, one of the soldiers had his back broken, and another his leg broken, in a fight which occurred in this den.

But enough has been said to show that this treatment of our soldiers is most outrageous and inhuman, and needs a speedy and radical cure. The cure is simple and easy. Stop the sale of liquors in Alexandria or keep the soldiers out of it, or else when they are arrested, handcuff them and put them in small numbers into decent, warm rooms. If this cannot be done, and if it be not too good for the poor unfortunate soldiers, put a roof over the pen to keep off the snow and rain. These facts are undeniable, and call loudly for interference. Let the slave pen be levelled to the earth it disgraces.

Gen. Montgomery is commander of the Alexandria City Guards, consisting of the 88th Pennsylvania volunteers, and is responsible for the police regulations of the city. Can he not find out who is at fault?²⁵⁰

It is not clear what this author means by describing the depot as being on Market Street as there is no Market Street in Alexandria, but from the description and context, it is clear describes the slave jail complex at 1315 Duke Street.

Briefly mentioned in this account is Company C of the 88th Pennsylvania Volunteers. The regiment moved to Alexandria from Washington, D.C. on October 21, 1861 and was stationed there on guard duty. The regimental history of the unit notes:

There were many points of interest in this antiquated city, but the centre of attraction was the Marshall House, where Ellsworth met his untimely death, used subsequently as the quarters of Company K. The slave-pen was also an object of especial interest to Northerners, who viewed with horror the manacles and chains used to bind unruly negroes, the block from which they were sold, and the posts, cells, etc., where they were confined. Company C was afterwards quartered at the pen, and the soldiers took especial delight in showing and explaining to visitors the various implements which the slave-dealer had left in his flight.²⁵¹

It is not clear if these cells mentioned in this description are the large, enclosed yards on either side of the main block of 1315 Duke Street or if they refer to the small, individual compartments seen in Civil War-era photographs, generally thought to be Civil War-era additions to the property. If it is the latter, this is the earliest textual reference to these individual cells. None of the earlier visitors to the slave pen complex describe such a feature and it is thought that these most likely a Civil War-era addition added by the army; however, Company C of the 88th Pennsylvania arrives in Alexandria and is stationed at the slave jail relatively early in the war and these cells may date to the renovations carried out by Price, Birch & Co after taking over from Millan & Grigsby. Company C, along with Companies A, D, E, and I, returned to Washington, D.C. on February 18, 1862 and they regrouped on April 17, 1862 at Cloud's Mill with the rest of the regiment which had remained in Alexandria until just two days prior, meaning these cells would be an early-war addition. It is also possible that the cells here refer to the underground

²⁵⁰ *Philadelphia North American*, February 12, 1862.

²⁵¹ Vautier, John D., *History of the 88th Pennsylvania Volunteers in the war for the Union, 1861-1865*, 1894, p. 20.

chamber or dungeon rumored to exist under 1315 Duke Street and described by at least two authors above.

By the end of the week in which these accounts of the military prison at 1315 Duke Street were published, the Congressional Committee on Investigating the Conduct of the War announced that it had “taken in hand the subject of the guard house in the Alexandria Slave Pen, whose horrors were described in THE INQUIRER on Monday.”²⁵² On February 11 and 12, 1862, the Committee questioned Colonel George P. McLean, commander of the 88th Pennsylvania Volunteers stationed at the former slave jail complex, Dr. J. H. Seltzer, surgeon of the 88th Pennsylvania, Lieutenant D. D. Jones, quartermaster of the 88th Pennsylvania, and a Dr. Benjamin Lippincott of Washington, who had recently visited 1315 Duke Street with Seltzer and Jones and several others.²⁵³ Lippincott appears to have described the former women’s yard, located on the east side of the complex, to the committee, saying:

We were taken into the slave pen by Dr. Seltzer—the place where soldiers are imprisoned. I walked around the pen. I should say it was some 40 or 50 feet square. It is enclosed by a high wall, with a little shed along on one side of it; the rest of it with no roof at all, but all open to the weather. The shed was simply a roof on one side that afforded no shelter, for it was so narrow that the slightest storm would strike the wall inside and under the shed. I thought it was a horrible place to keep men in, and spoke to the doctor about it.

He continued:

He [Dr. Seltzer] said it was a disgraceful place. He showed me where he had had a cellar entrance filled up, where one man who had been put in there intoxicated had fallen down and broken his back. The privy there had been open when the men were put in there, and he had had that covered over. He told me of the depth of the filth that had been in the pen. He said that at one time there was some two or three inches of mud, and some two inches of snow and slush on top of that, during that severe spell of weather, and one of the prisoners who had been put in there during the bad weather had been found dead in the morning. He had laid down in the slush there during the night and been frozen to death. I saw in an adjoining room a man some 50 years of age, who had been exposed in that pen over night. He was suffering from pneumonia, and looked to me as if he must die.

Asked by the chair of the committee if the former slave jail was “a fit place for men to be put in during the winter season”, Colonel McLean answered:

In my opinion it is not, and I have so expressed myself frequently. It is not a proper place from the fact that the prisoners there are exposed to the inclemency of the weather. The men coming in from the various camps generally come in without blankets, and very frequently without overcoats; and they are put in there without any covering, and have nothing to lie upon except the brick pavement. My opinion is that it is a very unfit place to put the men in.

When questioned, Dr. Seltzer offered what he described as “a plain, undisguised, unvarnished statement of the whole affair”, answering:

²⁵² *Philadelphia Inquirer*, February 14, 1862.

²⁵³ *Report of the Joint committee on the conduct of the war*, 1863, pp. 645-56.

I have called the attention of the authorities to this matter of confining soldiers in that slave pen. I have visited it daily, and seen as high as 150 or 200 (between 200 and 300) men confined in that pen. They are men who have come in from their camps, and are probably from five to ten minutes behind their time; not having a watch, they cannot tell what the time is, or they may have taken a glass of liquor too much, and our soldiers arrest them and take them to that slave pen. You know what a drunken man is; he feels unpleasant at the idea of going to a slave pen rather than to a guard-house. I have heard them say that if they were put in the guard-house they, at least, had a comfortable place to lie on. They are generally pretty roughly handled when taken to this slave pen, as drunken men usually are, and then they are confined there. I have called the attention of those in authority to these matters. There have been at times three and a half inches of snow, dirt, filth, and such truck, on the pavement, and they had to lie there without any covering at all; and I have seen as many as one hundred men in there when the thermometer was at twenty-one degrees. The men were wet, were brought in there wet, and they were forced to lie down there, as there was no other place for them to lie down, except right on the bricks. The place was not fit to put dumb brutes in, let alone the freemen of the north.

He continued:

This slave pen is in such a condition that a man broken his back there, and another man, of our regiment, broke his thigh, which has disabled him for life.

There was an open place in the cellar-way down which the man fell; and by almost fighting I have succeeded in having it closed up. The men put in there, having nothing to sit upon, would pull up the bricks of the pavement to make a seat to sit on; and then they would have some drunken men in there who would get into a fight, and the loose bricks would fly, and most generally, some one will be disabled for life.

Shortly after this testimony, changes were made to 1315 Duke Street. The *Chicago Daily Tribune* published an item about the Alexandria Slave Pen the following month, proclaiming, “the improvement in this place since it has been placed under the charge of Captain Myers has been great, and offers a great contrast to what it was a month ago”. This item suggests that at least some of these charges were taken seriously by the Army.²⁵⁴ On March 10, 1862, Thomas Butler Gunn, war correspondent for the *New York Tribune*, came through Alexandria and noted in his diary, “After a visit to...a ruined slave pen, in process of being pulled down, and near which soldiers were playing, we rode out of town where the prospect looked dreary enough and where I parted from my two companions.”²⁵⁵ While it is not clear that Gunn is describing the slave jail complex at 1315 Duke Street as opposed to either Bruin’s jail at 1707 Duke Street or the one built by Home on the 1500 block of King Street, the date of these improvements mentioned in the *Chicago Daily Tribune* roughly correspond to Gunn’s visit and portions of the complex, like the exterior, plank fence are known to have been removed at some point during the war.

On September 22, 1862, a detail from the 2nd Connecticut Volunteer Heavy Artillery was assigned to patrol duties in Alexandria. Theodore Frelinghuysen Vaill noted:

²⁵⁴ *Chicago Daily Tribune*, March 4, 1862.

²⁵⁵ Thomas Butler Gunn Diary, Volume 19, pp. 31-2, Missouri Historical Society, <https://mohistory.org/collections/item/resource:103591>.

It was the duty of the patrol to move about the city in small squads, or stand guard at theatres and certain other places, and arrest all soldiers who could not produce passes, or who were in mischief, and bring them to the Provost Marshal's office, whence they were usually escorted to the "Slave Pen" in Duke Street, --a horrible den, with the following sign in large letters over the door: "PRICE & BURCH, DEALERS IN SLAVES." It had a large room or yard, about fifty feet square, with windowless brick walls fifteen or twenty feet high, a door of iron bars, and no floor except the earth. It had been one of the chief institutions of Alexandria, and any urchin could direct a stranger to the "Slave Pen" as readily as a New York boy can point out the City Hall. This was the place where, only two years before, black men, women and children had been herded together by their masters while awaiting a sale. It had been a very safe place for a Virginian to keep his happy and contented property over night, and it was now equally safe for stragglers, deserters, bounty-jumpers, and drunken soldiers, who could sleep as securely there as lambs in a fold, without the least fear that wicked men would break in and hurt them. It must not be supposed, however, that all who found it necessary to lodge there were hard cases. By no means. Indeed it was no uncommon thing even for Captains of the Nineteenth to be obliged to go and extract some of their men from the Slave Pen, who had found their way there in some unaccountable manner.²⁵⁶

Here, in the autumn of 1862, Vaill describes a large room or yard, and notes that it had windowless brick walls. It is not clear if he was describing the men's yard on the west or the women's yard on the east, but the use of the word room might indicate the former rather than the later. Also of note is the use of the phrase "windowless brick walls". Sneden's illustration of the slave jail complex at 1315 Duke Street is dated 186 and depicts the men's yard with three windows in the front wall and several copies of the Pywell photograph are dated either 1862 or 1863; however, these dates may be misattributed (see a discussion of the date for the Pywell photograph below).

A description of guard duty at 1315 Duke Street can be found in the Civil War account of John J. Ryder, who joined the 33rd Massachusetts in the spring of 1862.²⁵⁷ He writes:

We expected to join them [at the second battle of Bull Run], but were ordered to do provost guard duty in Alexandria instead. A great many camp followers and stragglers from McClellan's army were intoxicated and conducting themselves in a lawless manner in the city. It required our whole regiment to suppress them. A building formerly a slave pen was used as a guard house and it was soon filled with a howling mob. It was no pleasant duty to be on guard outside to keep them from jumping from the windows. This was my post one day. Our strict orders were to shoot anyone who attempted to jump from the windows. Some of the occupants of that post had been intimidated from doing their duty by the threats hurled upon them and a number had escaped. For that reason I suppose I was placed on that post; our officers knew I would obey orders. Several attempted to try the window scheme, but in every instance I covered them with my rifle and assured them of the consequences if they jumped. They fortunately did not take the risk. In due time they were sent to their respective regiments and the city became reasonably quiet.

Perhaps this "window scheme" as described by Ryder explains the boarded windows that appear in several of the Civil War-era photographs of 1315 Duke Street.

²⁵⁶ Vaill, Theodore Frelinghuysen, *History of the Second Connecticut Volunteer Heavy Artillery*, 1868, pp. 19-20.

²⁵⁷ *Reminiscences of three years' service in the Civil War*, John J. Ryder, Reynolds Printing, New Bedford, MA, 1928, p. 21.

Another description of the conditions at the former slave pen can be found in Sophronia E. Bucklin's *In hospital and camp: a woman's record of thrilling incidents among the wounded in the late war*.²⁵⁸ She writes:

A slave pen still stood within the city's limits, with auction block standing about it, and high stone wall surrounding it on three sides, the other wall made up of an old building, in which the human "chattels" had been thrust, in dirt and darkness, to await their transfer to new masters.

Blood spatters were on the wall of the house, and stained the auction blocks, suggesting horrible thoughts of lashings and agony, which were no sadder than the wrenching away of those dusky men and women from home, and children, and friends.

What sighs had gone up from that dreadful square; what cries and groans had appealed to hearts grown callous in the traffic in blood; what unspeakable wretchedness of mind had these creatures endured, with the lash, the knife, and the blood-hound frequently their only reward for a life of toil.

The building was occupied by ragged contrabands, huddled together in indolence, and filth, and poverty. They evinced a strange sense of freedom, and seemed perfectly secure while lines of men were marching in proud blue uniforms to drum-beat and bugle-call to guard them. They felt, where feeling was possible, where it had not been crushed out by life-long bondage, that *they* stood between the combatants, the prize for which they were contending. They had unbounded faith in "Massa Lincoln's soldiers."

This pen—degrading, disgraceful association—was used for the safe keeping of men who wore the blue uniform of Union soldiers, and who, for trifling offences, were put under guard in that loathsome pen, when the very dust was alive with vermin.

One man from our hospital was thrust in, but released in a few days, literally covered with vermin, and burning with rage at this insult to his manhood. He ran away to his regiment, well knowing that he could not be taken for desertion, and defying the keepers who used their brief authority to heap insult on men immeasurably their superiors.

An analysis contained in the Engineering Science archaeology report estimates approximately 80 prisoners were detained at the former slave pen jail at any given time, with the average length of detention of 10 days. They estimate approximately 7,680 people were kept at the prison over the war, or approximately 2,000 per year, a figure slightly higher than, but close to, the number of people enslaved in the prison during the peak of its use by Franklin & Armfield and Kephart.²⁵⁹ Their analysis appears to come from the papers of Captain Dudley Pettit, the Inspector of Prisons, which are housed at the Alexandria Library Special Collections. These include consolidated monthly reports summarizing conditions and the operations of many military prisons in and around Alexandria during the Civil War, including the Slave Pen Prison. This

²⁵⁸ Bucklin, Sophronia, E. *In hospital and camp: a woman's record of thrilling incidents among the wounded in the late war*, 1869, pp. 130-1.

²⁵⁹ Artemel et al., 1987, p. 47.

collection, as well as a Register of Prisoners Confined and Released from the Slave Pen housed at the National Archives warrants additional research as time permits.²⁶⁰

Union soldiers were not the only people detained in the military prison at the former slave jail complex at 1315 Duke Street. Aristides Monteiro, a surgeon who served under infamous Confederate cavalry officer John S. Mosby, writes of some captured colleagues sent to the slave jail in Alexandria:

Capt. Babcock and his gallant comrades were sent from Emory's to Piedmont station, thence by train to Alexandria, and there lodged in the Slave Pen, a prison established for Yankee criminals and bounty jumpers. This place is described by the gallant Captain as being unlike paradise as its uncomfortable occupants could possibly imagine. It was a huge pen, with a brick floor, and rough planks as beds for prisoners to repose on.²⁶¹

He continues:

About this period of their prison life our friends were frequently visited by the curious old maids and schoolmarms of the North. These primed up female oddities, would come to the Slave Pen every Sunday. The New England schoolmarm is a peculiar animal. She is as trim as a starved race horse, with a waist like a consumptive wasp, and she is always anxious to see a rebel prisoner, particularly a caged guerrilla. These attenuated specimens of New England female humanity were escorted by officious and foppish Yankee officers to the portion of the slave pen occupied by Capt. Babcock and his partisan comrades, called in the affected nomenclature of the school marm dialect the "Guerrilla Corner." One of the most curious and inquisitive of these female nondescripts advanced to the front, raised her glasses, and stared the Captain full in the face for sometime and exclaimed, with an air of great surprise, "Good gracious! They look just like our people." The spinster had evidently made as important a discovery as the great philosopher of England when he found the paving-stone with "Bill Stump his mark" engraved upon it. Capt. Babcock, one of the largest and most conspicuous of the prisoners, enjoying upwards of six feet of altitude and one hundred and eighty avoirdupois—feeling to a remarkable degree a just sense of disgust at being exhibited and glared at like some recently captured wild beast—arose to walk away from the uncomfortable gaze of the ugly basilisk. As he put his huge anatomy in motion he seemed to alarm his unwelcome visitors still more. As, if by a given signal, the old schoolmarms all at once raised their shriveled arms before their elongated withered, and homely face, and with a shrill voice that passed rapidly into a gentle and excited scream, cried out "Good gracious! What a big guerrilla." Ever since that memorable scream of the schoolmarms Capt. Babcock was known by his Yankee keepers as the "Big Guerrilla." From the Alexandria slave pen the prisoners were removed to the old Capitol prison in Washington.²⁶²

Perhaps one of Monteiro's "schoolmarms", New York abolitionist Julia Wilbur spent much of the Civil War in Alexandria. Wilbur's diaries have been transcribed by Alexandria Archaeology, and especially through the efforts of Paula Whitacre.²⁶³ In her diaries, Wilbur makes frequent mention to the slave pen, frequently in conjunction with the nearby contraband barracks, school

²⁶⁰ See Alexandria Library Special Collections, Box 93, Captain Rufus Dudley Pettit Papers, July 1864-1865 and National Archives, War Department, Post of Alexandria, Virginia, Office of the Provost Marshal, RG. 393, Register of Prisoners Confined and Released from the Slave Pen, ARC Identifier 5664270.

²⁶¹ Monteiro, Aristides, *War reminiscences by the surgeon of Mosby's command*, 1890. p.211.

²⁶² *Ibid.*, pp. 213-5.

²⁶³ <http://www.paulawhitacre.com/blog/2020/2/2/julia-wilburs-diaries-and-letters-now-digitized>.

house, hospital and Soldier's Rest. Additional research into Julia Wilbur's descriptions of the Slave Pen in her Civil War diary is recommended.

One Social reformer Harriet A. Jacobs, author of *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*, briefly describes a similar scene at 1315 Duke Street. In a report appearing in *The Liberator*, she writes, "From this place, I went to Birch's slave-pen in Alexandria. This place forms a singular contrast with what it was two years ago. The habitable part of the building is filled with contrabands; the old jail is filled with secesh prisoners—all within speaking distance of each other".²⁶⁴ Jacobs is mentioned frequently in Wilbur's diaries and the two of them are known to have gone to 1315 Duke Street on several occasions.

Following the cessation of hostilities in the spring of 1865, the Army remained in Alexandria and continued to use the jail at 1315 Duke Street as a military prison. On Christmas Day, 1865, racial violence erupted in Alexandria. Accounts disagree over the scale of the disturbance, its immediate causes and instigators, and the number of persons injured or killed, but they all agree that the incident was ultimately racial in nature.²⁶⁵ Drunken and armed gangs roamed parts of the City, fights broke out between ex-Confederates and their African American neighbors, and gunfire could be heard throughout the City. At least one and as many as ten or fourteen people were killed, including one African American soldier stationed in the City²⁶⁶, although the actual number does not seem to have been determined. The military authorities still in Alexandria after the war identified the perpetrators of these riots, mainly white Alexandrians who were charged with attacking African Americans, and they were imprisoned in the military prison at the former slave jail. Tried before a military commission, they were found guilty on April 3, 1866 of several (but not all) charges, including assault and battery with intent to kill and murder, and sentenced to up to fifteen years hard labor in a federal penitentiary (mitigated to only five and two years for the two primary convicted suspects).²⁶⁷ Two months later, they were released on a writ of habeas corpus, as they had been sentenced by a military commission after the close of the war and not found guilty by through regular jurisprudence. The circumstances of their early release the *Alexandria Gazette* declared "evidence of the reign of constitutional authority".²⁶⁸

Unfortunately, while voluminous, the nature of the documentation of this site between 1861 and 1865, and especially the metadata accompanying the photographs, frequently compresses those four years into a single, undifferentiated date covered by the heading of "The Civil War". This is especially true for many of the maps, photographs, and illustrations that are some of the best documentation for the slave pen complex at 1315 Duke Street and which have lost their original documentation, including its creation date, or are presented with a best guess from the archival

²⁶⁴ Jacobs, Harriet A., "Life Among the Contrabands", *The Liberator*, September 5, 1862, p. 3.

²⁶⁵ See *Alexandria Gazette*, December 26, 27, 28, 29, and 30, 1865; *Richmond Daily Dispatch* December 27, 28, 29, and 30, 1865; *New York Tribune*, December 27, 28, 29, 1865.

²⁶⁶ *Staunton Spectator and Vindicator*, January 2, 1866.

²⁶⁷ *Alexandria Gazette*, April 7, 1866.

²⁶⁸ *Alexandria Gazette*, June 4, 1866.

institution. The date listed for many of these is “1861-1865”, which is not helpful for establishing a chronology or documenting changes to the building that occurred during the Civil War (in one such case, the Library of Congress appends the helpful descriptor “Civil War time” to the image title). There are some images or depictions for which more specific provenience information is known (years, months, or even specific dates) or can be determined through additional research, but because of the general vagueness of the information provided for these images and maps, and because these four years provide us the best look at the building, they will be discussed here together, moving around the building showing various aspects of the building and surrounding property, grouping similar views together and not chronologically. It is hoped that future investigation involving the photographers, known built changes, military uniforms and unit movements, and other identifying information in the photographs will be able to further refine the chronology of these photographs and maps.

This is not to say that there were no changes to the complex during these years. As will be discussed below, several important changes to the property can be documented between 1861 and 1865. The fence surrounding the complex appears to have been taken down fairly early in the war, the roof vent of the taller men’s yard was reconfigured from a single, long vent to two separate, smaller vents, barred windows were added to the front wall of the men’s yard, shutters were removed and several windows were damaged from the main block of the house, two trees in front of 1315 Duke Street were removed, and the “Price, Birch & Co/Dealers in Slaves” sign over the door was allowed to fade over time. Additional research may be able to further refine the dates of these changes, as they do not appear to happen all at the same time and the sequence of these changes is not immediately clear without refinement of the dates provided for these photographs, illustrations, and maps.

See Appendix B for a conjectural plan of the prison when it was occupied by the Union Army during the war.

Exterior Views

Mathew Brady

Slave pen, Alexandria, Va. (1861-1865)

Library of Congress²⁶⁹

This photograph shows 1315 Duke Street and the slave pen complex from the southeast looking northwest (Figure 83). It is taken from a similar vantage point as the engraving appearing in *Harper’s Weekly* in June 1861 (Figure 77) and the Merrick and Magnus sketches (Figures 84 and 85). It shows the main block of the original 1812/3 house with two doors on the Duke Street side (a narrower one in the leftmost bay where the door is presently and a wider one in the center bay

²⁶⁹ Library of Congress: <https://www.loc.gov/item/2014645758/>, see also <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/529224>.



Figure 83. Slave pen, Alexandria, Va., Mathew Brady, 1861-1865.

where there is currently a window). Both have rectangular lights over the transom. The leftmost door (the present entrance) has a stoop or step in front of it and the one in the center bay steps down directly onto the sidewalk and has a boot scraper beside it. The chimneys and eastern wall of the main house are obscured by tree cover. The shed or lean-to roof covering and between the two chimneys and sloping away from the east façade of this block can be seen through the tree, but not as well as in a photograph taken to the west of this one (Figure 89).

The PRICE & BIRCH sign over the door can be seen through the trees, with black letters on a solid whitewashed background. There are no shutters over the windows in this photograph, but none of the windows appear to be boarded up or broken (although it is hard to see some of them through the tree cover). Above each opening on the south façade is a white jack arch, probably painted or whitewashed brick.

The street here appears to be dirt and the horse-drawn cart is in a several inch-deep rut in the mud. From the front door of 1315 Duke Street to the corner of Duke and Payne Streets, along the sidewalk at the edge of the street and still in the public right of way is a line of five regularly spaced trees of roughly the age. At the corner of Payne and Duke Streets is a Gadsby-style streetlight with decorative eagle.

Behind these trees can be seen the women's yard is in the center of the image. The stepback at the top of the women's yard and the inward-sloping half-gable or lean-to roof to the rear of the women's yard can be seen here. Importantly, this photograph best shows the articulation of the brick-walled women's yard with the low two-story structure to its rear (to the north). The eastern sides of these two structures are either even or set back only one or two brick courses from each other. It appears a small portion of a cornice at the top of the brick wall juts out past the eastern façade of the two story structure, and a small portion of the eave of the two story structure juts out past the stepped-back upper portion of the brick wall and flounder roof. The chimney or vent flue rising from the center of this covered portion of the women's yard can be seen here but is mostly obscured by a tree and in a blurry area of the photograph. Likewise, the southern chimney and part of the roofline of the original kitchen wing are partially obscured here as well.

This photograph is also the best view of the low two-story brick building setback from Payne Street. It appears as three repeated units, two bays wide each. There appear to be seams in the brickwork dividing each of these units, suggesting they were originally constructed as three conjoining, but separate units. The first two are divided by an interior chimney that appears to be two chimneys placed back to back and the third has an internal end chimney against the exterior wall, half the width of the other conjoined stack. The central unit has a large, forward-facing portico or entry porch supported on two square columns in the Greek Revival style. The right unit (northern-most) has a window here in this bay while the left unit (southern-most) has no opening here. The shingles in the gable roof appear to be in poor condition in this photograph.

The bricked and roofed men's yard can be seen on the left, but the roofline of this yard is not visible. No windows are present in the south wall of this yard, and the tree removed at some point during the war is just visible at the edge of the frame, suggesting this photograph was taken earlier in the war rather than later.

William Marshall Merrick

“A ‘Peculiar Institution’. Used as a Prison by the City Provost Marshall. Alexandria Va. May 14, 1863”

New York Public Library²⁷⁰

This sketch, dated May 14, 1863, is drawn from the southeast corner of Duke and Payne Streets (Figure 84) and is a similar view to the 1836 broadside (Figure 28), the Magnus sketch (Figure 85), and a Brady photograph (Figure 83). Visible here is the main block of the 1812/3 Robert Young house, the taller men's yard on the left, the women's yard on the right, and the two-story structure behind the women's yard, setback from Payne Street. Also visible is a chimney or vent

²⁷⁰ New York Public Library: <https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/collections/five-sketchbooks>, not available online.

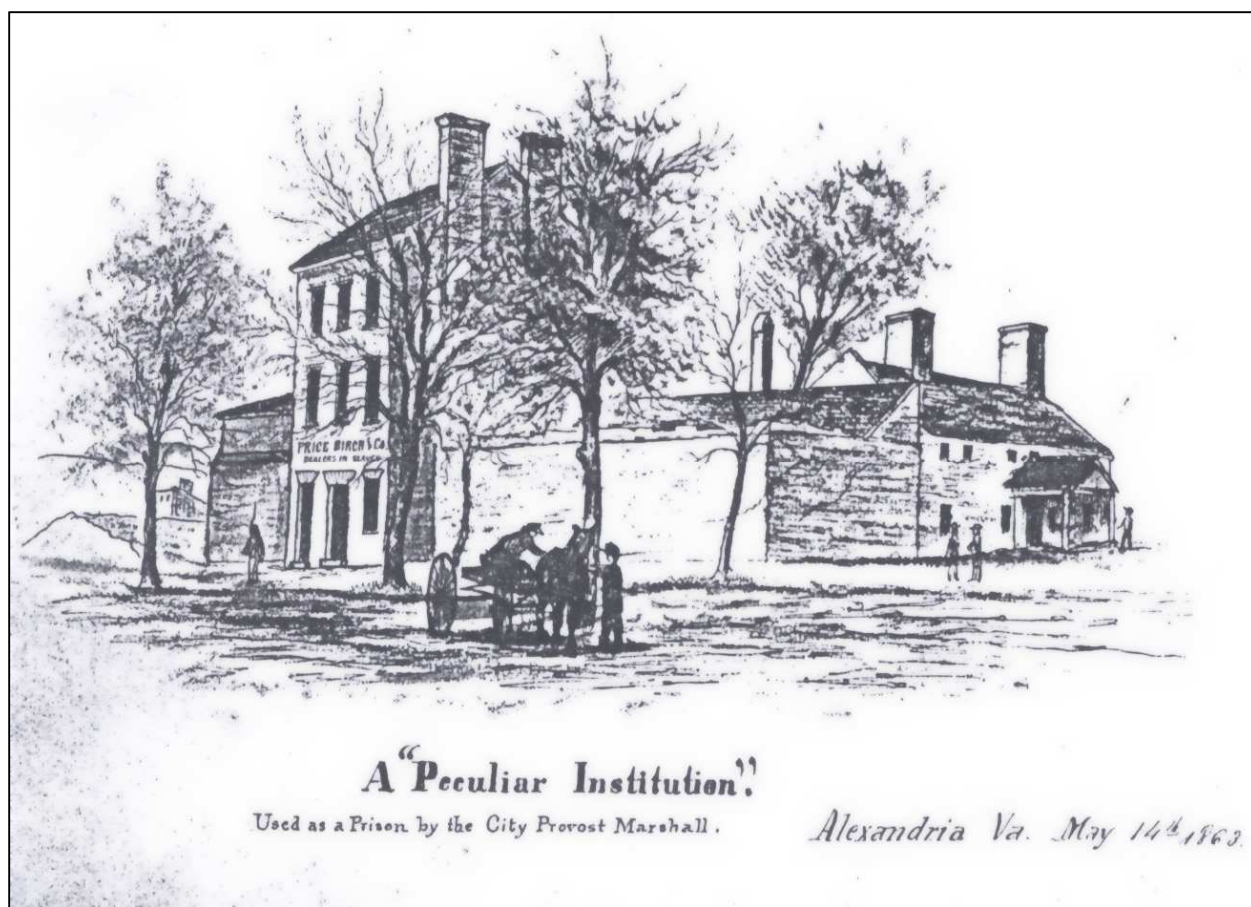


Figure 84. A "Peculiar Institution", Used as a Prison by the City Provost Marshall, William Marshall Merrick, May 14, 1863.

rising from the center of the lean-to roof over the northern portion of the women's yard. To the west of the complex, an embankment is visible on the north side of Duke Street, either to the east or west of West Street, in either case property associated with the slave jail complex. The details in this sketch largely conform to other views of the slave pen complex with the exception that the roofline of the main block between the chimneys comes to a point instead of being flat, the main block is drawn taller and leaner than it appears in photographs, and the chimney of the original kitchen wing of the 1812/3 building is visible behind the women's yard.

The absence of windows in the men's yard and the tree in front of it and the inclusion of a date in the sketch strongly imply these changes did not occur until after mid-May 1863.²⁷¹

Charles Magnus

Slave pen in Alexandria, Virginia envelope

²⁷¹ While also dated, the Sneden sketch of 1315 Duke Street (Figure 96) shows the opposite, that is, windows in the men's yard and no trees in front of it. See below for a discussion of the problems with establishing a chronology from these images.

Library Company of Philadelphia²⁷²

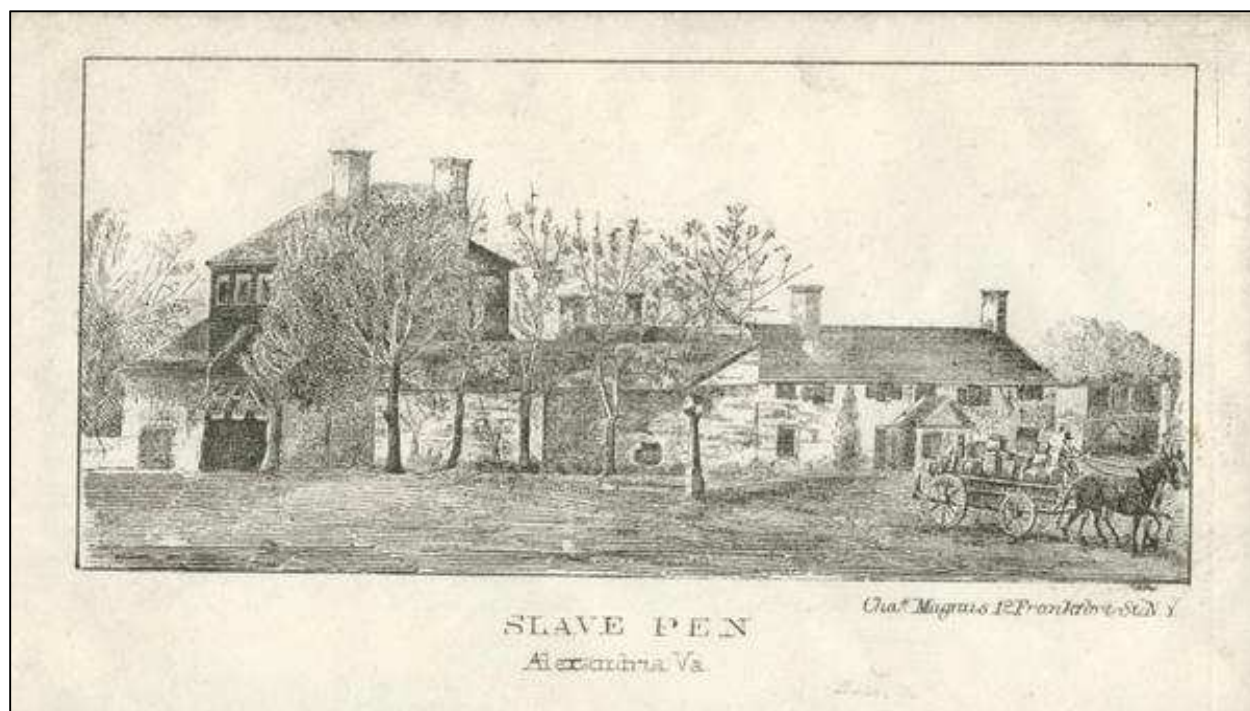


Figure 85. Slave Pen, Alexandria, Va., Charles Magnus, c. 1863-4.

This sketch (Figure 85) is undated, but the artist, Charles Magnus, was known to have been in Alexandria during the Civil War and he produced a well-known Bird's Eye View lithograph of the city dated 1863 (Figure 108), one of Camp Convalescent just north of Alexandria across 4 Mile Run in Arlington dated 1864, and another of Soldier's Rest on the other side of Duke and West Streets from the slave jail complex also dated 1864. This sketch is extremely similar to the one by Merrick in that it is drawn from approximately the southeast corner of Duke and Payne Streets (Figure 84), looking to the northwest and the Brady photograph (Figure 83). It shows many of the same features, but also a few differences. The brick on most of the complex is whitewashed except for the main block of the 1812/3 house, which appears to be exposed brick, perhaps a nuance Merrick was not capable or interested in reproducing. The roofline between the two chimneys is flat and does not come to a point. The windows and doors on the south façade of this block are difficult to discern, especially on the first and second stories, but it appears as if there are awnings over the first-floor doors and windows. The large chimneys of the house's original kitchen wing and its roofline are visible behind the woman's yard. This sketch also shows a patch of exposed brick along the east side of the women's yard (a similar patch can be seen closer to the main block of the house along the southern wall of the women's yard in one of

²⁷² The Library Company of Philadelphia:

https://digital.librarycompany.org/islandora/object/digitool%3A37627?solr_nav%5Bid%5D=a96c0f169293dca797b5&solr_nav%5Bpage%5D=0&solr_nav%5Boffset%5D=133.

the Civil War-era photographs) and there is an unclear, darker feature along the southern wall of the men's yard. In some photographs, there appears to be stacked firewood here or in others, barred windows are present here. From the digital scan of this sketch available from the Library Company of Philadelphia's website, it is not clear which this is supposed to be.

Andrew J. Russell

No. 119. Commissary Department, Alexandria Slave Pen, Fort Ellsworth, Seminary Hospital, Camps, etc. in distance. [April 1863].

The Getty Museum and Library²⁷³

Huntington Library²⁷⁴

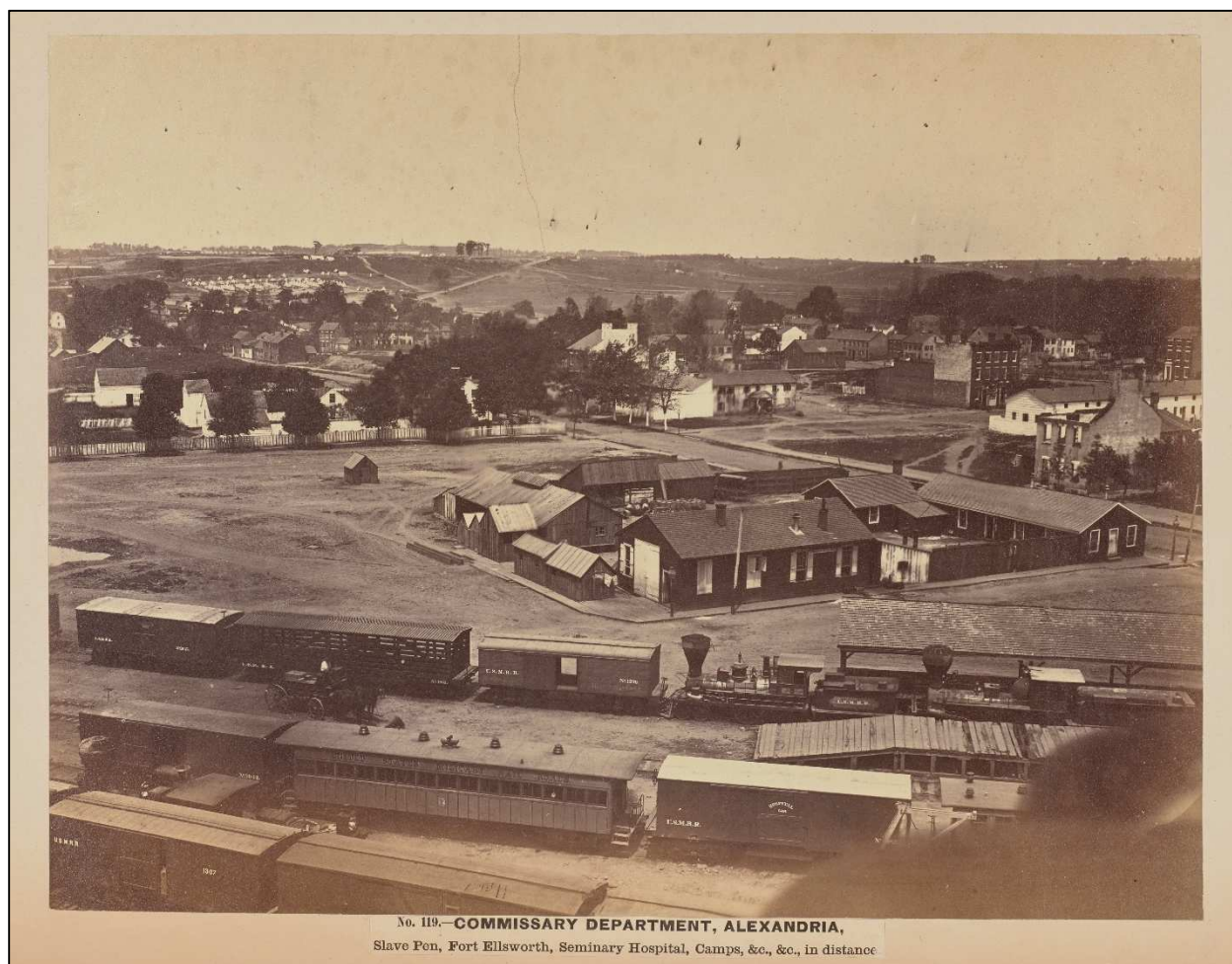


Figure 86. No. 119, Commissary Department, Alexandria Slave Pen, Fort Ellsworth, Seminary Hospital, Camps, etc. in distance, Andrew J. Russell, April 1863.

²⁷³ The Getty: <http://www.getty.edu/art/collection/objects/62599/aj-russell-no-119-commissary-department-alexandria-slave-pen-fort-ellsworth-seminary-hospital-camps-etc-in-distance-april-1863-american-april-1863/>.

²⁷⁴ Huntington: <https://hdl.huntington.org/digital/collection/p16003coll6/id/345>.

This photograph was taken by Andrew J. Russell, a photographer for the United States Military Railroad Construction Corps, in April 1863 from the roundhouse at the Orange and Alexandria Railroad depot, near the corner of Wolfe and S. Henry Streets, then being used by the United States Military Railroad (Figure 86). More than one print of this photograph is known to exist, with both the Getty and the Huntington Library holding copies. The one at the Getty seems to be generally a sharper print but has a stain or damaged area in the top left corner. This photograph, along with several others also taken from the top of the roundhouse, create a Civil War-era panorama of the outskirts of town starting in the south and going to the north west.

At the right of this image are the L'Ouverture Hospital barracks to the east of Payne Street and the building used as headquarters to the west of Payne Street, but the portions of this hospital and barracks complex known to be located to the west of Payne Street as well as the school room to the east of Payne Street do not appear to be built as of April 1863. Visible directly in front of this low white barrack building along Payne Street are the buried ruins of a house on Duke Street, believed to be the brick dwelling that previously belonged to Robert

FIRE.—The brick dwelling, on Duke street, opposite the Orange and Alexandria railroad depot, belonging to the estate of the late Robert Windsor and Messrs. Grigsby and Millan, caught fire to-day about one o'clock, and the roof and interior were consumed. The house was at the time used as quarters for "contrabands. The fire originated in one of the upper rooms, in which there was a stove, a coal of fire from which fell on the floor during the absence of the occupants of the room.

Figure 87. *Alexandria Gazette*, October 21, 1862

Windsor that burned on October 21, 1862 (Figure 87). This building is noted on City tax lists as being occupied by at times by George Kephart, either personally or for by Kephart & Co., and in this article in the *Alexandria Gazette* by Grigsby and Millan. This ruin provides a good date after which this photo has to have been taken and is not at odds with the provide date of April 1863. In the distance at the left is Fort Ellsworth on Shuter's Hill, the Dulaney mansion on Shuter's Hill is just to the right of that, Fairfax Seminary can be seen even farther in the distance to the right of that. A Civil War camp can be seen on the foot of Shuter's Hill, but it lacks the distinctive arches of the camp of the 44th New York photographed in the same location on March 20, 1864 and seems to be comprised of different kinds of tents than that camp. The house at 1315 Duke Street and the slave pen complex is in the center of the photograph, between the foreground and the background.

The roofline and exterior end chimney of the original kitchen can be clearly seen here. From this view, if there is a structure or interior space connecting the original 1812/3 house to the kitchen as some of the interior photographs suggest, it is lower than the top of the second story/eaves of the kitchen and not visible here. The eastern wall of the enclosed women's yard and low two-story brick building along Payne Street are visible here and are clearly set back from the edge of the Payne Street right-of-way. The half-gable or lean-to roof over the woman's yard covers approximately only the northern one-third of the yard. The shadow under this roof suggests the yard is open under it and there is not an additional wall running lengthwise through the yard enclosing portions of this space. This is consistent with written accounts of this space presented above. A chimney or flue can be seen piercing the roof of this covered area, likely connected to a

stove or some other fireplace or hearth, also described in the primary accounts above. The men's yard is mostly obscured by trees; however, a featureless section of wall can be seen through them. While far from conclusive, the later, barred windows in this yard should be visible here, suggesting again that they were added sometime after mid-May 1863 when Merrick drew a windowless wall (Feature 83).

The front of the low two-story structure to the rear of the women's yard is parallel to, but set back from, Payne Street. It appears to be either in-line with (or set back by only two or three brick courses from) the eastern edge of the women's yard. It initially appears further back than the women's yard because the brick on the bottom of this façade is darker in shade, either from dirt splashed onto the wall by rain or from faded whitewash on the brick wall. Closer examination of this photograph and a comparison to the photograph attributed to Mathew Brady (Figure 83) reveals this to be an illusion caused by this shading.

The presence of a door and porch on this façade of a building used by the enslaved, along with the offset from Payne Street is additional evidence that suggests there used to be a fence or wall enclosing this space as can be seen in the May 24, 1861 engraving of the surrender of Confederate cavalry as well as in the background of one of the stereopair images of the woman in the yard. Other photographic and cartographic evidence from the Civil War shows that any fencing around the slave jail complex came down relatively early during the Civil War.

Potentially of note is the rectangular ghost comprised of whitewashed and not whitewashed brick seen in the side of the rectangular building on Payne Street behind the complex, later used as the headquarters of the L'Ouverture Hospital and contraband barracks. The original back line of the one-acre slave complex lot comes close to the southern edge of this structure and there are structures known to be present on this lot but are currently unaccounted for, such as a stable. A



Figure 88. Detail from No. 119, Commissary Department, Alexandria Slave Pen, Fort Ellsworth, Seminary Hospital, Camps, etc. in distance, Andrew J. Russell, April 1863.

claim for damages submitted by Solomon Stover following the war asks for \$1,200 in reparations for “Stables all destroyed entirely” (see more on Stover’s claims below).²⁷⁵

Again, visible along Duke Street from its intersection with Payne Street is a Gadsby-style lamp post and a row of several evenly spaced trees. Visible here is whitewash applied to the trunks of the lowest 6 or 8 feet of these trees. These are in the Duke Street right of way, but perhaps they are whitewashed to blend in with the whitewashed brick of the slave pen. In some photographs, they appear whitewashed and in others they either do not or it is difficult to tell. This photograph shows the most contrast in this treatment. An embankment can be seen several blocks west of 1315 Duke Street near where the street crosses Hooff’s Run.

Andrew J. Russell [also attributed to Mathew Brady]

Front of "slave pen," Alexandria, Va. (1861-1865)

Library of Congress²⁷⁶

National Archives²⁷⁷



Figure 89. Front of "slave pen", Andrew J. Russell (or Mathew Brady), 1861-1865.

²⁷⁵ Senate Committee on Claims, Solomon Stover, 41st Congress, 2d. Session, Report No. 104, April 14, 1870.

²⁷⁶ Library of Congress: <https://www.loc.gov/item/2006683273/>.

²⁷⁷ National Archives: <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/528808>.

This photograph (the National Archives attributes the negative to Mathew Brady while the Library of Congress attributes a print to Andrew J. Russell, Figure 89) and the one taken to the west of 1315 Duke Street attributed to William Pywell in August 1862 or August 1863 (Figure 94, although these dates are both believed to be incorrect) are useful for highlighting several major changes that occurred to the slave pen complex during the Civil War. Unfortunately, the negative held by the National Archives is only dated ca. 1860-1865 and the print held by the Library of Congress is dated 1861-1865.

The first two notable changes are related to the men's yard. The two trees visible here in front of the men's yard help order these changes chronologically as these trees are gone in later photographs. It is possible that the order is reversed and that the trees are transplanted at their current size instead of being chopped down or removed, but this is far less likely. In this earlier configuration, the wall along Duke Street has no windows. Given its use as a holding area for enslaved individuals or military prisoners, adding windows here, even if barred, increases the risk of escape. The 1836 engraving of the complex (Figure 28) shows a solid wall, unpierced by any openings, although it may be showing a shorter wood fence directly in front of this yard space. Following the scandal in the winter of 1862 over conditions in the former slave jail in which a soldier being held here froze to death, adding barred windows to this space could have been one of the improvements noted by the *Chicago Daily Tribune* under Captain Myers and could be described as a “great contrast”.²⁷⁸

The second change here is the vent or vents located at the apex of the enclosed roof at the top of the men's yard, which change at least once during the war. Here, it is seen as a single, long vent that runs the entire length of the ridgeline of the roof over the yard. This vent has louvered sections on its walls and what appear to be skylights or openings above each louver on the roof. Light coming



Figure 90. Detail from *Soldier's Rest, Alexandria, VA*, Charles Magnus, 1864.

in through a roof configuration like this one can be seen in one of the interior photographs of the men's yard. This single long vent appears to be replaced by two separate, shorter ones of approximately the same profile as seen in the photograph attributed to Pywell (Figure 94). It is not clear what necessitated these changes, but perhaps smaller vents allowed for greater control over the temperature of this enclosed space. It should be noted that this roof vent configuration appears similar to long ridge roof vents seen across Duke Street at Soldier's Rest, which was

²⁷⁸ *Chicago Daily Tribune*, March 4, 1862.

constructed by the Army during the war (see for example the Bird's Eye View of Soldier's Rest produced by Charles Magnus in 1864 (Figure 90) or the plans drawn of that complex by the Quartermaster's Office held by the National Archives as part of Record Group 92 (Figure 91)). The possibility that this roof vent was constructed by the army during the Civil War should be considered.

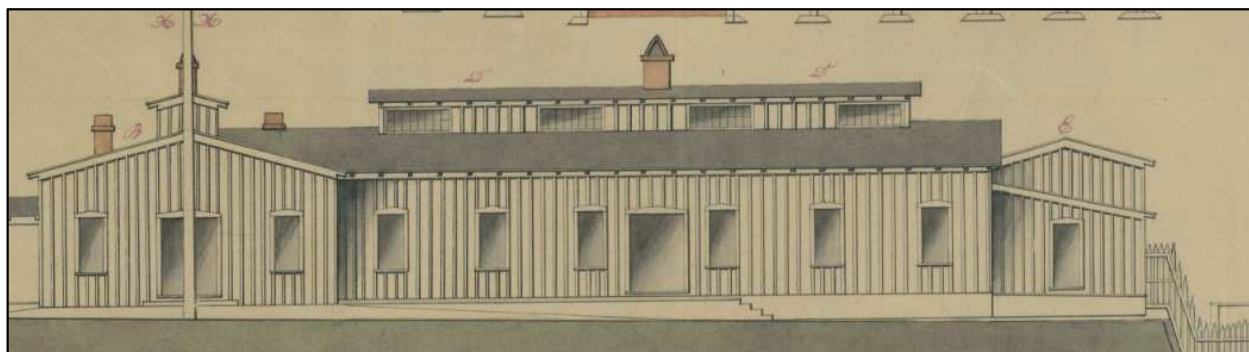


Figure 91. Detail from Soldier's Rest, Alexandria VA, Office of the Quartermaster General, Map 111, Sheet 2.

The third major change that appears to take place during the Civil War is related to the “Price, Birch & Co./Dealers in Slaves” sign. Here, and on other earlier photographs, the sign consists of a solid (but in some places fading) whitewashed band between the openings on the first and second stories with two superimposed but offset, sets of lettering, the top one dark and the one underneath lighter and offset slightly to give the illusion of depth to the text. It is not clear why the letters are both highlighted with a white shadow and also surrounded in whitewash. Either the whitewash was placed over the white shadow in order to replace it or the drop shadow is a slightly different shade meant to be seen over the whitewash, but the difference between the two shades is not readily distinguishable in this black and white photograph. In many places where these dark letters cross mortar joints in the brick wall behind them, paint or whitewash appears to have collected or is coming through from behind. Here, but especially in later photographs, this whitewashed band has begun to fade and some of the lines in the mortar joints do not appear as prominent as they have been allowed to weather throughout the war.

In this photograph, the center and rightmost window sashes on the third floor have been removed and boarded over, although incompletely as there are several holes still in these coverings. The lower sash of the leftmost window on the second story is also broken and one of the panes is broken in the rightmost window on this floor. The negative of this photograph held by the National Archives most clearly shows the jack arches over these doors and windows are painted brick, probably with a different treatment than the white band behind the Price, Birch & Co. sign as the latter fades in later photographs but the former does not. These arches were likely demolished and replaced in the early 20th century when the fourth floor was added to this structure and the windows were redone throughout. On the Duke Street face, we can also see pintels and shutter fasteners embedded in the brick wall, but no shutters over these windows. The

single window on the first floor appears to have a pair of ghosts outlines in the brick where shutters would have been. All seven of these windows are twelve-over-twelve hung sash, none of which are on the current structure. They have been replaced by two-over-two hung sash, again, probably at the same time the roof was reconfigured, given the windows on the west side of the fourth floor, which did not exist during the Civil War, match those on the front and sides (see below).

Firewood is stacked against the exterior wall of the men's yard. In the negative held by the National Archives, there appears to be significant damage to the exterior of the brick wall of the men's yard, but this does not appear in the print held by the Library of Congress and is probably damage to the physical negative and not photographic documentation of the addition of the windows present in later photographs. To the right of the main block, there is brickwork extending above the top of the women's yard wall adjacent to the chimney of the main house similar to the shed-like addition seen in the 1836 anti-slavery broadside image. Given the ghost openings visible on the exterior of the chimneys today, this may have been a multi-story, interior space that was both heated and enclosed, but no other good views or other textual references to such a space exist.

Brady & Co.

Alexandria, Virginia. Slave pen. (Price, Birch & Co. dealers in slaves)

Library of Congress²⁷⁹

This Civil War-era photograph of the former slave pen at 1315 Duke Street (Figure 92) is one half of a stereopair of images taken of the front of the complex and is probably one of the earliest photographs of the slave jail complex as evidenced by the presence of the pair of trees in front of the men's yard, single long roof vent, unfaded whitewashed band behind the Price, Birch & Co. sign, and the presence of shutters and windows on the main block of the house.

In this image, several Union soldiers are visible in front of the structure along

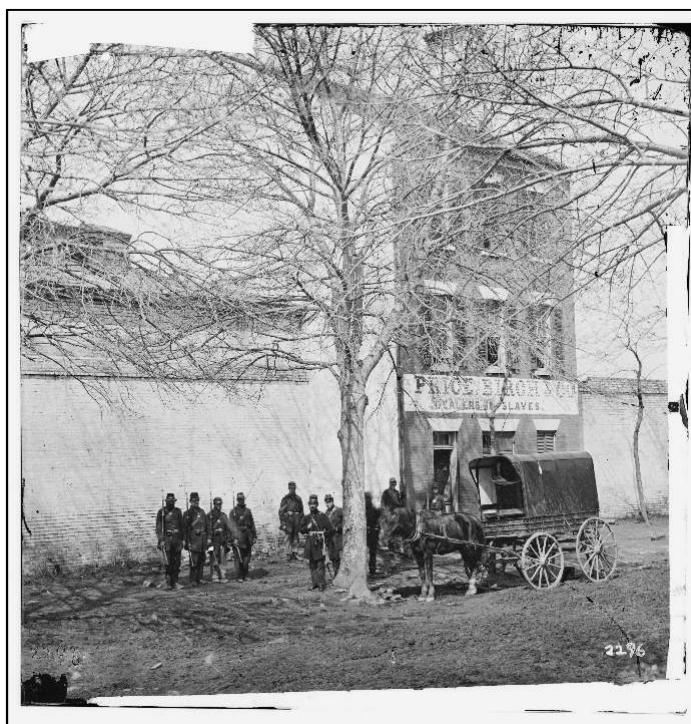


Figure 92. Slave pen. 1861-1865.

²⁷⁹ Library of Congress: <https://www.loc.gov/item/2018670631/> (original negative); also stereograph prints of this image <https://www.loc.gov/item/2011648597/> and <https://www.loc.gov/item/2011646199/>.

with a covered, horse-drawn cart or wagon. One printed version of this stereopair attributes the negative to Brady & Co and is dated 1861-1865 (Figure 93). There are no windows in the men's yard and there are no clearly identifiable seams or ghost openings one might expect if windows previously existed and were subsequently bricked in. While it is difficult to discern the roof vent through the trees, there appears to be a shadow on the western wall of the main block where the vent articulates with that wall and the louvers and skylights appear to be from the single, long ridge vent rather than the two smaller, separate vents. It is difficult to see the presence or absence of the two windows on the third story, but this photograph shows shutters present on all of the windows on the main block, as well as over the wide door in the center bay of the first floor. The whitewashed background of the "Price, Birch & Co" sign is more pronounced in this image than in the previous one, especially to the left of the P in Price. The presence of shutters and the condition of this whitewash suggests this image predates most of the other Civil War-era photographs and illustrations of the exterior of this building.



Figure 93. Slave Pen, Alexandria, Va.

William R. Pywell

Slave pen, Alexandria, VA. (Civil War time)

Library of Congress²⁸⁰

²⁸⁰ Library of Congress: <https://www.loc.gov/item/2018667034/>, <https://www.loc.gov/item/2018672038/>, and <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/cwpbh.03340/> (original negatives); see also <https://www.loc.gov/resource/ppmsca.12521/>, <https://www.loc.gov/item/2013651897/>; National Archives: <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/530401> (original negative) and <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/533276>.



Figure 94. Slave pen, Alexandria, VA, William R. Pywell, Civil War time.

This photograph, together with the previous two photographs, document many of the known Civil War-era changes to the Duke Street façade of 1315 Duke Street. These include the addition of three windows in the men's yard, replacement of the single, long roof ridge vent with two smaller, separate vents, the neglect/removal of the whitewash band around the Price, Birch & Co. sign, and the removal of two trees from in front of the men's yard.

The sequence of events documented by these images is problematic in that either the provided dates are all correct and some of these documented changes had to have been made and then reverted back to their previous configuration during the course of the war, or some of the given dates for at least one or two of these images are incorrect and these changes were made only once. The removal of these two trees (one large and one small) is one of the strongest pieces of evidence behind arguing for two given dates to be incorrect (the assumption being that a tree of this size was cut down and not planted) and the presence of black crepe likely placed following



Figure 95. Alexandria, Va., Price, Birch & Co., dealers in slaves, 283 Duke St.

the Lincoln assassination in April 1865 above one of the windows in this photograph is additional evidence that the provided date is incorrect.

There are many different copies of this photograph, frequently attributed to William R. Pywell, including at least two original negatives that appear to have been captured at or about the same time as each other. One version gives the address of this scene as 283 Duke Street (Figure 95), which may have been an address used by this parcel under an older numbering system (see below), or, is a typo and a misattribution of the address sometimes given to the building near the southwest corner of this block, 238 S. West Street. The two different versions of this image can be differentiated by the presence or absence of a person sitting in the first-floor window. In some editions of *Gardner's Photographic Sketchbook of the War, Volume I* (which was first published

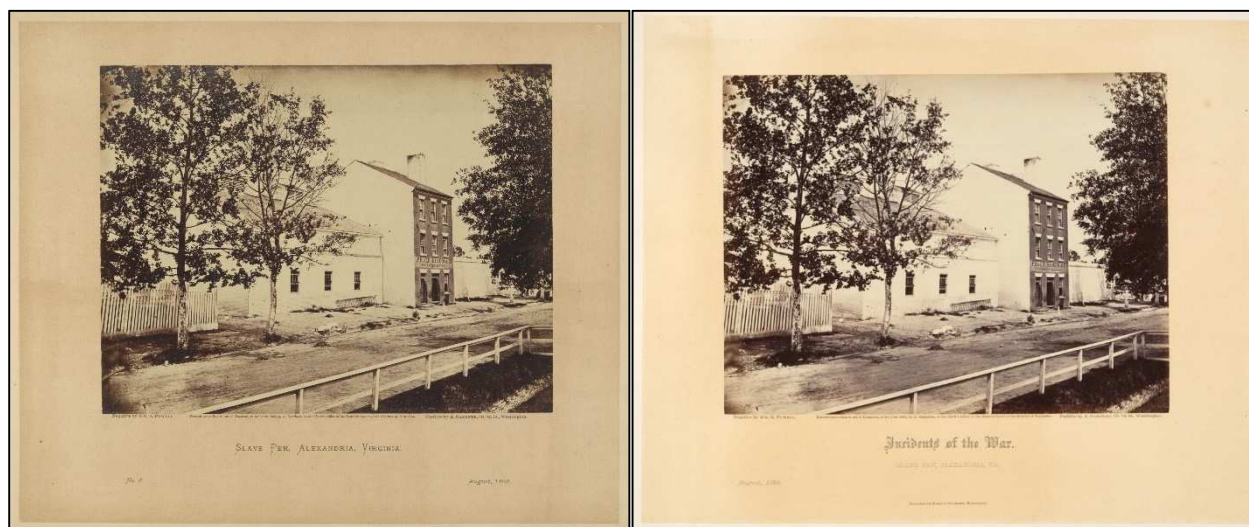


Figure 96. Slave Pen, Alexandria, VA. Photograph by William R. Pywell, appearing in *Gardner's Photographic Sketchbook of the War, Volume I*, 1866. One version of this text was produced with the image on the left appears and the date "August, 1862" while image on the right appears with the date "August, 1863".

in 1866), the date for this image is provided as August 1862 and in others, it is dated August 1863 (Figure 96).²⁸¹ At the very least, one of these two dates must be incorrect, however, neither of these seems likely given the likely sequence of changes noted above that would necessitate planting two trees in front of the prison and reverting the roof vent to a previous configuration and the presence of black crepe above one of the windows here. Furthermore, there exists an illustration by Robert Knox Sneden that appears to be heavily inspired by this photograph (Figure 98) (see more on the problems with dating Sneden's drawing below).

On the reverse of this image appearing in *Gardner's Photographic Sketchbook of the War* is the following printed text describing the site:

Slave Pen, Alexandria, Virginia

In many of the Southern cities the people had erected buildings of this kind for the confinement of slaves awaiting sale. The establishment represented in the photograph was situated in the western suburbs of Alexandria, near the depot of the Orange and Alexandria Railroad. The main building was used by the clerks of the firm and the overseers. The high brick wall enclosed a court yard, in which were stables and outhouses for the accommodation of planters who come in for the purpose of selling or purchasing slaves. The large building on the right was used for the confinement of the negroes. It had a number of apartments, in which the slaves could be kept singly or in gangs, and one large mess room, where they received their food. The establishment was essentially a prison. The doors were very strong, and were secured by large locks and bolts. Iron bars were fixed in the masonry of the windows, and manacles were frequently placed on the limbs of those suspected of designs for escape. Auction sales were regularly held, at which Virginia farmers disposed of their servants to cotton and sugar planters from the Gulf States. If a slave-owner needed money which he could not easily procure, he sold one of his slaves; and the threat of being sent South was constantly held over the servants as security for faithful labor and good behavior. Before the war, a child three years old, would sell, in Alexandria, for about fifty dollars, and an able-bodied man at from one thousand to eighteen hundred dollars. A woman would bring from five hundred to fifteen hundred dollars, according to her age and personal attractions.

In Pywell's photograph, the whitewashed band around the Price, Birch & Co sign has faded almost entirely, leaving just the dark lettering and the lighter drop shadow under it. This drop shadow and the white jack arches of the main block have not faded, nor has the white coloring on the other facades of this building, suggesting that this treatment on the sign was somehow different. This photograph provides one of the best views for the reconfigured pair of square cupula roof vents and windows in the men's yard. There still appear to be skylights of some sort, located at the top of the roof between the peaked cupulas. These vent structures appear similar to one depicted on an elevation view of a contraband quarter built on Mason's Island (now Theodore Roosevelt Island) several miles north on the Potomac River in Washington, D.C. (Figure 97).

²⁸¹ *Gardner's Photographic Sketchbook of the War*, 1866.

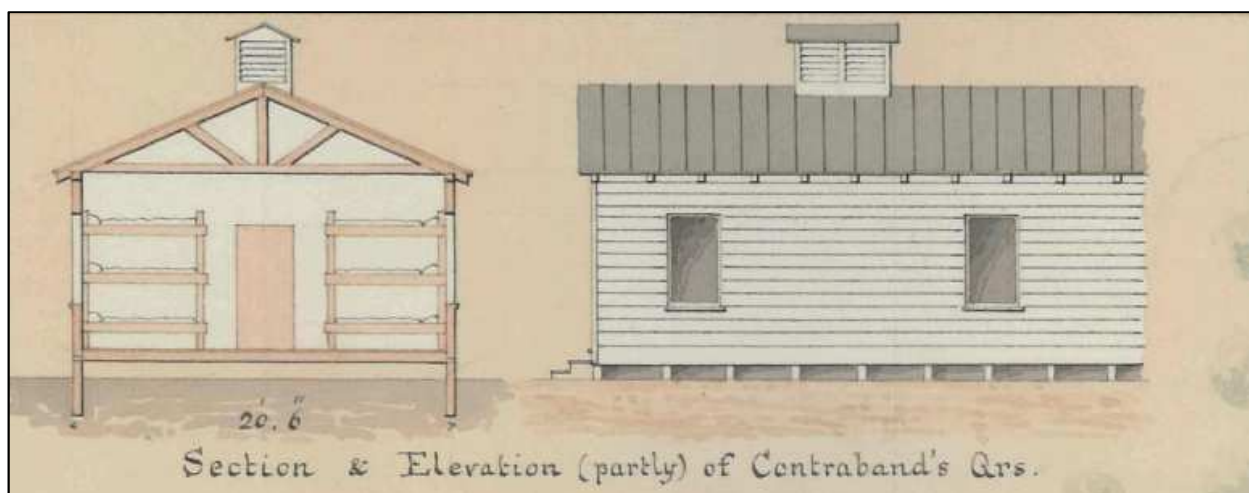


Figure 97. Detail from Map Showing Contraband Quarters on Mason's Island, Washington, D.C., Office of the Quartermaster General, showing a similar roof vent structure.

The sequence of the three windows in the front wall of the men's yard is a little uncertain, but the two photographs above (Figures 89 and 82) that clearly show the front wall of the men's yard also show a pair of trees (one large and one small) in front of the windowless wall. While there is a tree pictured at left here, this tree is clearly to the west of the southwest corner of the men's yard whereas the two trees visible in the previous photographs are to the east of this corner. Given neither of these trees appear in this photograph here (in their place appears to be a low bush and perhaps a stump), and given the way the lintels of these windows appear to be punched through the existing brickwork instead of the brickwork being placed around them, it is most likely that these windows they were added by the Union army at some point during the war. While the attempts to address the controversy over the conditions in the former slave jail that erupted in February 1862 seems a likely candidate for the reworking of this space, neither Russell's roundhouse photograph dated April 1863 (definitely dating to after the nearby fire of October 1862) and Merrick's sketch dated May 1863 show windows in the southern wall of the former men's yard, suggesting these windows were probably added sometime after the spring of 1863.

This photograph shows three small rectangular holes in the brickwork on the west façade of the main block at 1315 Duke Street just above the roofline of the men's yard (in one version, these holes appear to either be roughly patched or covered by coincidental damage to the negative). Given their location, they are either related to the floor joists of the third floor of the main block or the roofing system of the men's yard. Along with the photograph below of the interior of the men's yard (Figure 112), this photograph is the clearest photograph of the brickwork on this façade of the structure and can be compared to the current brickwork on the structure in order to determine the exact location where the men's yard abutted the main block of the 1812/3 house.

There is a downspout visible on the southwest corner of the main block and at least three drains or gutters (one below this downspout, one in the center of the men's yard, and one in the alley to

the west of the men's yard) connecting these to the gutter in the street. Along the street in front of the complex is what appears to be a carriage stone, hitching post, and a pile of circular rocks of unknown function. The Engineering Science archaeology report cites a reference that says "sales were made in the side yard to the west", and it is possible that these stones are the remains of an auction block located outside the slave pen at 1315 Duke Street.²⁸² No such stones exist in front of the property in the present.

In this photograph, the windows of the main block do not appear to be damaged and the two third-story windows that are missing in the other photograph of the structure are present. These must have been put back or repaired after they were shown to be damaged because otherwise the sequence of changes with the trees and whitewashed sign are reversed, backward, and much harder to explain. The two volumes of Gardner's with *Gardner's Photographic Sketchbook of the War* are roughly chronological in subject matter, with the first image of the first volume showing the Marshall House in Alexandria where Colonel Elmer Ellsworth was killed May 24, 1861, on the same day 1315 Duke Street was liberated by the Union Army and the final pages showing Appomattox and the dedication of a monument at Bull Run (Manassas). Given the proximity of Gardner's studio on 7th Street in Washington, D.C. and the publication date of 1866 corresponding to what appears to be a photograph taken some time after the Lincoln assassination on April 14, 1865, it is possible that both of the dates ascribed to this image by Gardner (August 1862 and August 1863) are incorrect.

Robert Knox Sneden

Slave Pen – Alexandria Virginia 1862²⁸³

Virginia Historical Society

Civil War diarist and illustrator Robert Knox Sneden draws this view (Figure 98) from the other side of Duke Street, from approximately the same location as the William R. Pywell photograph (Figure 94) near the intersection with West Street, looking to the northeast.

Assigning a date to this image is problematic. It is dated only with the year 1862, but in the first volume of his diary, it follows material from the fall of Fort Sumter (April 1861), the murder of Col. Ellsworth (May 1861), 1st Manassas or Bull Run (July 1861) and precedes more material from 1st Manassas/Bull Run (July 1861) and the construction of Fort Lyon (September 1861). If the diary is arranged chronologically, this page would date to the late summer of 1861, but this does not correspond to the date provided by Sneden.

²⁸² Artemel et al., 1987, p. 38. They cite Green 1901: NP, but no such reference appears in their bibliography. There is a single book by Green, Constance McLaughlin titled *Washington, A History of the Capitol 1800-1950*, published in 1962 by Princeton University Press, but it is not clear if this is the source of their reference.

²⁸³ Virginia Historical Society: <https://www.virginiahistory.org/collections-and-resources/how-we-can-help-your-research/researcher-resources/finding-aids/sneden-0>.



Figure 98. Slave Pen - Alexandria, Virginia, 1862.

The framing and content of the sketch (including windows, roof vents, and even ladder leaning against the exterior wall) is strikingly similar to the Pywell photograph above (Figure 94), which has been given both August 1862 and August 1863 as dates by its publisher; however, these dates seem inconsistent with the features depicted in the photograph and it probably dates to after the Lincoln assassination on April 14, 1865 (see discussion above). Further problematizing the date of this image, the trees are shown with no leaves, indicating a winter date (pre-March or post-October, of what Sneden claims is 1862), whereas the trees in the Pywell photograph have leaves on them. On September 3, 1862, Sneden writes in his diary, "I went over to the slave pen near here, found it deserted, very dirty and smelling abominable. Saw lots of shackles which were used to chain up the slaves in Alexandria in 1860 and before that if they were caught in the streets after 9 p.m. without a pass from their masters." It's not clear if this slave pen Sneden describes is the one at 1315 Duke Street or another one in the City, but it does fit with the 1862 date on the illustration, however early September is too early for there not to be leaves on these trees, further calling into question the 1862 date ascribed by Sneden.

In this sketch, Sneden draws the original 1812/3 house at 1315 Duke Street, the brick walled women's yard to the right (east), and the brick walled and roofed men's yard to the left (west). He shows these two walls as equal in height, even though period photographs show the men's wall several feet higher. In addition to the two smaller, square cupola roof vents, the men's yard has three barred windows along the Duke Street side. In front of the rightmost of these windows appears to be resting a ladder, which is also visible here in at least one Civil War-era photograph of the structure. Perhaps this ladder was used to access the roof and adjust the louvered windows that appear visible in some photographs. The angle of the roofline of the main structure as depicted by Sneden is shallower than in the photographs and the building appears shorter and squatter here than in photographs. Notably, Sneden misspells the name of the business over the door, writing "PIERCE, BIRCH & CO. DEALERS IN SLAVES".

In an attempt to better understand the relationship between Sneden's drawing and Pywell's photograph that appears in *Gardner's Photographic Sketchbook*, a cursory search of these two texts (Sneden's diaries and Gardner's book) reveal a number of strikingly similar images.²⁸⁴ Perhaps Sneden accompanied the photographers into the field and sketched these images at the same time as the photographs were originally produced from the same vantage points or perhaps Sneden illustrated important locations from the war after the fact, partially aided from these photographs, and inserted them into the appropriate place in his diary. Additional research with the Sneden diaries and sketchbooks may provide additional information about Civil War Alexandria, 1315 Duke Street, or the process by which Sneden created these images. See the discussion of the Pywell photograph above for further discussion of this sketch by Sneden.

Robert Knox Sneden

Headquarters of Major General Heintzelman, III Corps 1862²⁸⁵

Virginia Historical Society

Sneden produced a second illustration showing a slave pen in Alexandria (Figure 99). Seen here toward the right of this sketch of the Headquarters of Major General Heintzelman, III Corps, this slave jail is harder to identify. The version of this illustration published in *Eye of the Storm*²⁸⁶

²⁸⁴ See for example Gardner's "Antietam Bridge, MD" and Sneden's "The Sharpsburg Bridge. (No. 2) over the Antietam", dated 1887 and with the note "The houses were built since the Battle of Antietam"; "Battery No. 1, Near Yorktown, VA." and "Battery No 1 in front of Yorktown Va"; "Tunker [sic] Church, Battlefield of Antietam, MD" and "The Dunker Church – Battlefield of Antietam, MD"; "Fairfax Court House, VA" and "Fairfax Courthouse, Virginia", of which Sneden also appears to have a copy of a nearly identical photograph; "Gateway of Cemetery, Gettysburg" and "The Gate House at the Cemetery, Line of Defence [sic] of the 11th Corps, Gettysburg"; "Lacey House, Falmouth, VA" and "The Lacy House opposite Fredericksburg Va Headquarters of Genl Sumner during the Battle"; "Moore House, Yorktown, VA" and "The Moore House Yorktown, Va"; and "President Lincoln on Battlefield of Antietam" and a sketch of the same noted to have been drawn from a photograph.

²⁸⁵ <https://www.virginiahistory.org/collections-and-resources/how-we-can-help-your-research/researcher-resources/finding-aids/sneden-0>.

²⁸⁶ Bryan, Charles F. and Nelson D. Lankford, *Eye of the Storm: A Civil War Odyssey*, 2000.

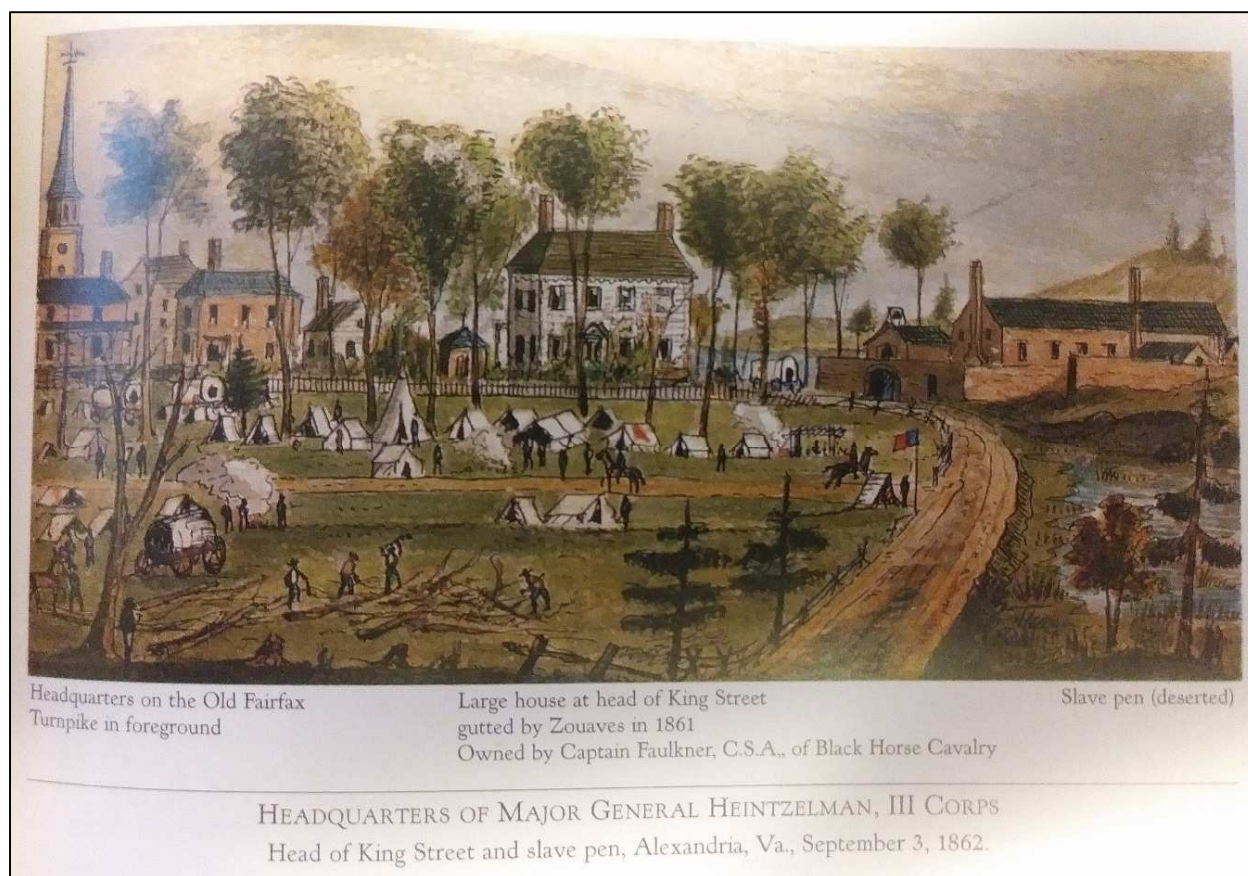


Figure 99. Headquarters of Major General Heintzelman, III Corps, Robert Knox Sneden, 1862.

notes it was drawn September 3, 1862 and the caption describes this scene at the “Head of King Street and slave pen”. On September 1st, 1862, Sneden wrote in his diary:

All being ready, the mules were hitched up and we started for Alexandria at 4 p.m., taking the gravel road by way of rear of Mount Vernon. [We] arrived at the head of King Street, Alexandria about 8 p.m. From telegraph headquarters at the Marshall house on King Street, we got information of where General Heintzelman could be found, which camps we were soon at, situated in a field on the old Fairfax Turnpike near the slave pen.

The structure on the right here labeled “Slave pen (deserted)” appears similar to the rear of the slave jail complex at 1315 Duke Street, however, as the label placing this scene on King Street suggests, it may also be one of the other known slave jails in the City. The position and orientation of this drawing are not as clear as Sneden’s illustration of the slave pen from the southwest (Figure 98); however, as the caption suggests, this scene generally appears to be drawn from the head of King Street looking back to the east toward the rest of Alexandria. The steeple on the left is not immediately recognizable, perhaps it is supposed to be the steeple of the Downtown Baptist Church or City Hall, but both of these are on the east side of Washington Street and neither would not appear as large or as prominent as they do here.

If this slave pen depicted here is 1315 Duke Street and the illustration is drawn from the head of King Street, then this view provides a look at the rear wall of the complex as well as a good look at the structure identified as the hospital or infirmary by Artemel et al. (1987). The rear wall or fence of the slave jail complex is visible in the background of at least one Civil War-era photograph (Figure 106 and 111) but there it appears as a predominantly wood picket fence with a roof sloped back over it to prevent escape. If this is showing the rear of 1315 Duke Street, the road on the right here would be Prince Street. While several years of tax records suggest George Kephart owned the entire block between Duke and Prince, Payne and West, the rear of the slave jail complex seems to only ever go back halfway between Prince and Duke Streets and not all the way to Prince as depicted here.

This view shows a large gate in the brick wall at the rear of this slave jail complex. It also shows what appears to be a bell on top of a small structure. If this is the 1315 Duke Street complex and not another slave jail complex, this would be the structure identified as an infirmary or hospital by Artemel et al. (1987). Also visible here to the right is a large structure with two chimneys on either end, possibly the original kitchen wing, a small, lower roofline closer to the west that may be the top of the roofed men's yard, and a continuation of that roofline to the south. This last feature may either be the passageway between the kitchen and the main house or perhaps Sneden's attempt at drawing the main block of the house at 1315 Duke.

It is difficult to determine if this slave pen drawn and identified by Sneden is the rear of the slave pen complex at 1315 Duke Street. Given the problems with rectifying the details of this view drawn from the head of King Street and the position of the depicted slave jail, other possibilities for this slave pen should be considered. These include Bruin's slave jail at 1707 Duke Street or the slave jail built by Edward Home on the south side of the 1500 Block of King Street and adjacent to the Virginia House Tavern. The latter is probably a more likely candidate than the one at 1707 Duke Street or 1315 Duke Street, although it is not as well-known as these other two. This property was excavated in 2009 by Thunderbird Archeology²⁸⁷ and additional work would need to be to attempt to match this illustration to the archaeological or historical record. If the slave jail depicted here is the one on the 1500 block of King Street, then the main road here is King Street, as the illustration is labeled. The wet, marshy area in the lower right of the illustration would then be Hooff's Run as it runs roughly parallel to Diagonal Road before it crosses under Duke Street. Given that Sneden identifies the house in the center of his illustration as belonging to a Captain Faulkner in the Confederate Army, it should be fairly easy to identify the location of this structure from deeds or other records (there is a Captain Josiah Faulkner that commanded Company D of the 19th VA, but records do not show a Captain Faulkner with the 4th

²⁸⁷ Mullen, John P., Boyd Sipe, Christine Jirikowic, Johnna Flahive and Edward Johnson, 2009 - Archeological Evaluation of the King Street Properties in Alexandria, Virginia: Phase I/II Archeological Investigations and Phase III Data recovery of Site 44AX0202. Thunderbird Archeology, Gainesville, Virginia.

VA Cavalry (Black Horse Cavalry).²⁸⁸ Perhaps Sneden is misinformed or Faulkner's service with the 4th was not recorded. No obvious match for this building (a white dwelling, with a hipped roof, two interior chimneys, and oriented east/west not north/south) can be identified the Civil War-era photographs taken of the area, including the panorama of the 44th New York camp and Alexandria from Shuter's Hill (Figure 100).

If this illustration is of the slave jail complex at 1315 Duke Street, this view is important in that it shows the rear of this complex, however, additional research is required before positively identifying this scene and relying on Sneden's depiction of an Alexandria slave jail as shown in this illustration.

Camp of 44th New York Infantry near Alexandria, Va. (1861-1865)
Library of Congress²⁸⁹



Figure 100. Camp of the 44th New York Infantry near Alexandria, Va. (1861-1865).

²⁸⁸ National Park Service, Civil War Soldier and Sailor Database: <https://www.nps.gov/civilwar/soldiers-and-sailors-database.htm>.

²⁸⁹ Library of Congress: <https://www.loc.gov/item/2013651953/>, see also <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/524564>.

This iconic photograph of Alexandria during the Civil War is one of a series taken from Shuter's Hill (Figure 100), forming a panorama looking east, back into the City of Alexandria. It shows the camp of the 44th New York regiment camped at the foot of Shuter's Hill.²⁹⁰ The Library of Congress catalog notes this photograph was taken at some time between 1861 and 1865, however, the actual date this photograph was taken can be determined.



Figure 101. Camp of 44th New York Infantry near Alexandria, Va., central arch showing engagements fought by the unit.

The 44th New York was organized in Albany starting August 8, 1861 and did not leave New York for Washington, D.C. until October 21, 1861. In March 1862, the 44th New York left the region for the Peninsula Campaign, before returning for engagement at Malvern Hill, Second Manassas, Antietam, Shepherdstown, Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, Gettysburg, Rappahannock Station, the Wilderness, and Spotsylvania Court House. After that, they left for

²⁹⁰ See also <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/524535>, <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/529187>, <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/529069>, <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/524616>, and <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/527548> for images from the top of the hill and <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/525779>, <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/524614>, .

the area around Richmond and were mustered out of service October 11, 1864.²⁹¹ Another photograph taken from the front of this encampment looking up the hill shows the front of the center arch over the encampment lists the unit's engagements (Figure 101).²⁹² These include Gettysburg (July 1-3, 1863), Rappahannock Station (November 7, 1863), and Mine Run (November 26-December 2, 1863) but do not include the Wilderness (May 5-7, 1864), Spotsylvania Court House (May 8-21, 1864), Cold Harbor (June 1-12, 1864), or Petersburg (June 16-October 11, 1864). Therefore, from this list of engagements, this series of photographs was mostly likely taken some time between December 1863 and May 1864, while the unit was assigned guard duties along the Orange and Alexandria Railroad.²⁹³ However, initially while on guard duty, the unit seems to have been posted between the north side of the Rappahannock River and Fairfax Court House and did not receive orders to relocate to Alexandria until January 24, 1864. The 44th New York arrived in Alexandria at 2 AM on January 25, 1864 and spend one or two days at Soldier's Rest, across Duke Street from the former slave jail complex at 1315 Duke Street before moving into their camp for the rest of the winter at the head of King Street.²⁹⁴ Eugene Nash describes this camp, writing:

The grounds were spacious and the camp was laid out with great regularity. It is not too much to say that when completed the camp was a model in all its details....

After the streets and tents of the regiment had been put in superior condition, a beautiful arch was erected at the foot of each street. All the arches, except the central arch, were of similar design and construction, elaborately and beautifully trimmed with evergreens, and the letter of the Company suspended from the center of the arch. The central street was wider than the other streets, its arch was higher than the other arches, with canvas attached to framework on which in larger letters were names of the different battles in which the regiment had been engaged. The officers' tents were placed at the head of the street, due regard being had to intervening space. As a whole, it was an ideal camp and maintained with scrupulous care. It was the pride of the whole regiment and did not require drastic orders to keep it in excellent condition.²⁹⁵

Nash dates these photographs taken of the Alexandria camp to April 1864, but after describing them, he notes:

On Sunday, the 20th day of March, an artist came from Brady's famous war-time picture gallery in Washington and took different impressions of the camp from which large pictures were made, many of which are still preserved by members and friends of the regiment. The picture showed the regiment faultlessly formed at dress parade, with the entire camp in the background. Another picture was taken showing the officers present with the regiment in full dress uniform, standing in the central arch. This, too, was an excellent picture, and many copies of it are preserved.²⁹⁶

²⁹¹ Phisterer, Frederick, *New York in the war of the rebellion, 1861 to 1865*, 1890, p.58.

²⁹² See also <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/524614>.

²⁹³ Nash, Eugene Arus, *A History of the Forty-fourth Regiment, New York Volunteer Infantry, in the Civil War, 1861-1865*, 1911.

²⁹⁴ *Ibid*, p. 178.

²⁹⁵ *Ibid*, pp. 179-181.

²⁹⁶ *Ibid*, p. 181.

From this description, it would appear that at least some of these photographs were taken March 20, 1864. Perhaps the photographers from Brady's studio returned to the camp at Shuter's Hill sometime in April to deliver the prints which Nash notes many of which were preserved or perhaps another round of photographs was taken in that month.

Easily recognizable in this photograph is the roundhouse at Wolfe and Henry Streets. Just to the left of the roundhouse is the slave jail complex at 1315 Duke Street, identifiable by the large whitewashed western wall and double chimney centered on the east facade. Directly in front of the house at 1315 Duke Street in this photograph is the whitewashed brick men's yard with a louvered, long rectangular roof vent. As seen in the earlier Civil War-era photographs of this structure, the roof vent over the men's yard is in a similar configuration.

Visible to the left of these two structures on Duke Street is the lower, original two-story kitchen wing. The articulation between the main house and kitchen is unclear from this view, as it is largely blocked by the men's yard and obscured by vegetation. The resolution of this print also makes it difficult to resolve any more detail from this photograph. Another photograph exists from approximately the same location that makes it possible to better see these features (Figure 105), but this photograph does not show the camp of the 44th New York and therefore the exact date on which this photograph was taken has not been determined.

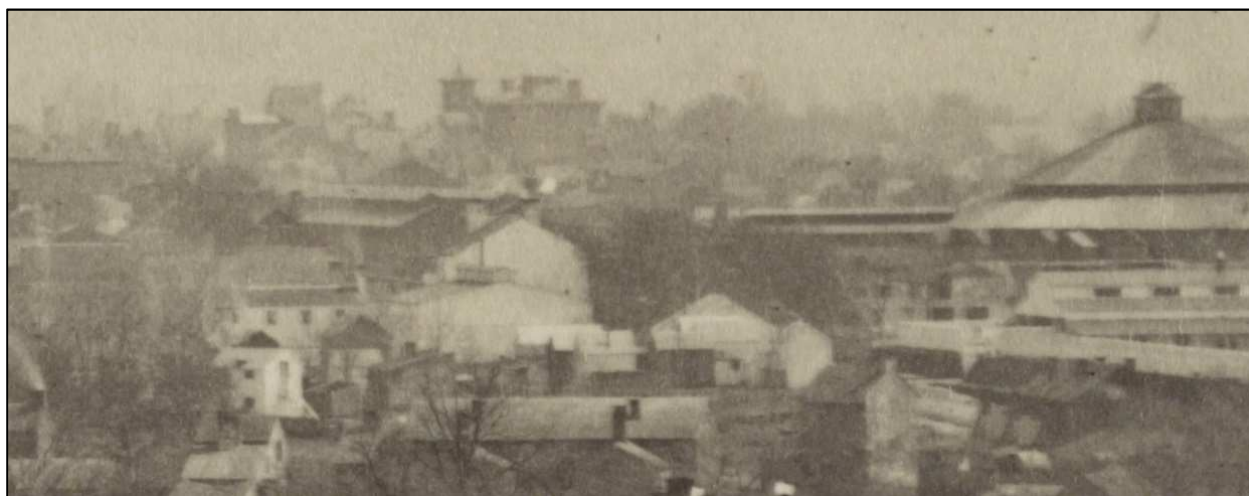


Figure 102. Detail from Camp of the 44th New York Infantry near Alexandria, Va. (1861-1865), probably taken March 20, 1864.

General view of the city of Alexandria, Va., April 15, 1864 **Library of Congress²⁹⁷**

Two other similar views exist of the City of Alexandria taken from near this vantage point on Shuter's Hill, looking east down into the City. The first clearly shows the same camp of the 44th

²⁹⁷ Library of Congress: <https://www.loc.gov/item/2004680107/>.



Figure 103. General view of the city of Alexandria, April 15, 1864.



Figure 104. Detail of General view of the city of Alexandria, April 15, 1864.

New York as pictured above and has been attributed to Andrew J. Russell (Figure 103). This

photograph is accompanied with the date April 15, 1864. Russell was working for the USMRR and not Brady's studio, so it is possible that he captured this view on that date, separately from Brady's photographers a month earlier. While the print is not the clearest, it is included here because it was taken from a perspective several hundred feet to the north of the previous view of the City and is accompanied by a specific date, approximately one month after Brady's studio's photograph. While more difficult to discern, the general details of the prison complex at 1315 Duke Street remain the same as in the Brady photograph.

Alexandria, Virginia (1861-1865)

Library of Congress²⁹⁸

This second photograph (Figure 105), like many others of Alexandria during the Civil War, is

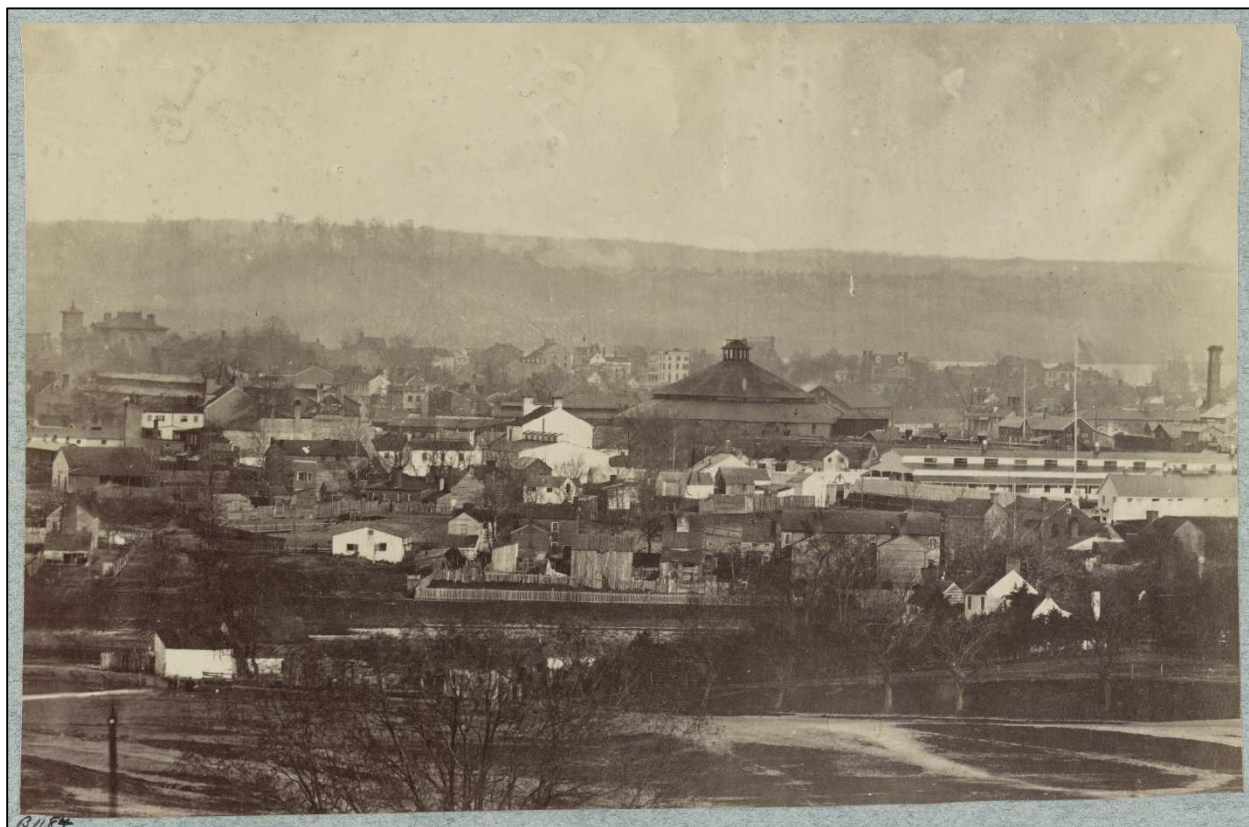


Figure 105. Alexandria Virginia (1861-1865).

accompanied by a date from the Library of Congress of 1861-1865. It is extremely similar to the one taken by Brady's studio from Shuter's Hill of the camp of the 44th New York looking east toward Alexandria (Figure 100), but from the perspective here, it appears that this one was taken from another location on the hill, several hundred feet to the south. Because the camp is not visible in this photograph, it is difficult to determine if this image was taken on either March 20, 1864 or April 15, 1864 like the other two similar views (Figures 100 and 103). Aligned roughly

²⁹⁸ Library of Congress: <https://www.loc.gov/item/2014645764/>. See also <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/529200>.



Figure 106. Detail from Alexandria Virginia (1861-1865).

with King or Prince Street, this photograph looks down into Alexandria to the east and across the Potomac River to Maryland. It appears to be taken with a longer, telephoto lens than the previous image, resulting in a more detailed view of this part of the city. The print is also a little sharper, making it possible to resolve details not visible in the previous photograph.

The side and rear main block of 1315 Duke Street can be seen here. There are no exterior windows on the western wall of this structure and there is a single tall window or door is on the northern-facing side of the third story. This opening is still visible in the brickwork in the back office on the third floor overlooking the rear hallway. The distinctive double split exterior chimney can be seen on the east side of the main block.

In front of this main block is the walled, roofed men's yard with the long, rectangular roof vent. In this photograph, the ridge vent is a long single element instead of the two smaller, separate ones. It appears to have louvered openings on its sides, but above each appears to be what may be a skylight or a vent opening in the roof itself. There appears to be a vent pipe or flue piercing the peak of this roof vent along the center of its length, indicating the presence of a stove or hearth in the interior of the space below. A similar vent can be seen piercing the center of the roofline in the women's yard in other photographs.

The step in the brickwork on the outside between the first story of the men's yard and the raised wall and roof can just be made out on the southwest corner of this structure. The extra height and roof are not visible in the earlier 1836 depiction of the slave pen complex and were probably added after the yard was originally built, perhaps in response to an escape attempt.

The original kitchen wing of the 1812/3 house is present to the left of the main block of the house at 1315 Duke Street. Visible are three windows on the west side of the second story of this structure as well as a small interior end chimney on the north side of the building and a larger exterior end chimney on the south end of the building. There may be a door or window on the first floor, between the first and second windows on the left, but it is difficult to discern openings on the first floor of the west façade or the north façade. It is also difficult to discern whether or not there is a built passage connecting the original kitchen and the main block, but perhaps it is the white extension to the right of the original kitchen and between it and the main house, or, perhaps this is an extension of the eastern wall of the men's yard that serves to enclose the area behind the main block of 1315 Duke Street.

Visible to the east behind the left side of this original kitchen structure is the long, low two-story building offset from Payne Street along the eastern end of the slave pen complex. Its west and north façades are partially visible here and the east façade is much better documented by other photographs.

**View from Ft. Farnsworth (or from south shore of Hunting Creek) looking North
Alexandria Library, Special Collections [?], 1861-1865²⁹⁹**

This panorama view of the City shows portions of the outskirts of the City of Alexandria during the Civil War and is taken from across a body of water, identified in the caption as Hunting Creek (Figure 107). The unfinished railroad embankment that runs along what would be the southern ends of Payne, West, and Peyton Streets and terminates at the mouth of Hoof's Run can be seen on the right side of the image as can the southern end of the City's cemetery complex above and to the left of it. The upper stories of the original 1812/3 house at 1315 Duke Street can be seen here above the railroad embankment, as can the roof of the men's yard. The first story of the building is obscured here. The print is not as sharp as it could be and details are difficult to make out, but it is included here because this view of the complex is unique. Additional research may further refine the date of this photograph.

²⁹⁹ Copy of this image at Alexandria Archaeology, believed to have come from Alexandria Library, Special Collections.

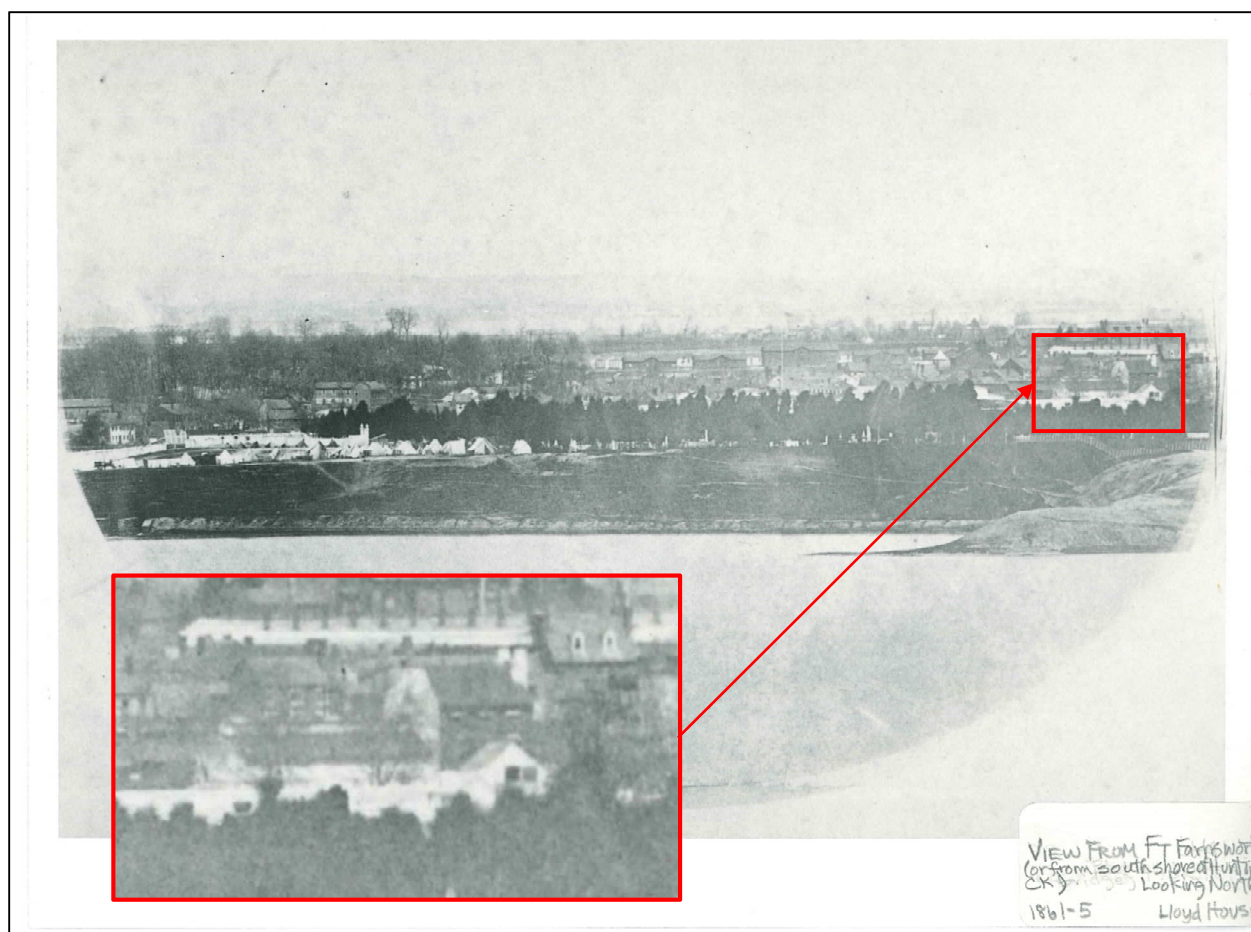


Figure 107. View from Fort Farnsworth.

Birds Eye View of Alexandria, VA Charles Magnus³⁰⁰

This Birds Eye view of the City of Alexandria is dated 1863 and shows the City from a vantage point over the Potomac River looking west over the town (Figure 108). Several versions of this view exist, with differences in the coloring making brick buildings obvious in one and extremely subtle in another. The east/west streets are clearly identifiable here and two buildings can be seen in the approximate location of 1315 Duke Street, both with the same distinctive double chimneys, and oriented the same direction. It is not clear which of these two is intended to be 1315 Duke Street. The one closer to the viewer has a low, one story brick structure in front of it with a low half-gable or flounder-style roof. This could represent the women's yard, which would be visible from this vantage point, but unlike other depictions of the eastern yard, the roof covers the entire yard space (not only the northern portion) and slopes down to the north (not to

³⁰⁰ Library of Congress: <https://www.loc.gov/item/81694373/> and <https://www.loc.gov/item/2003671583/>.



Figure 108. Birds Eye View of Alexandria, VA, Charles Magnus, 1863.

the south). Given that depicted on this same block is a long, white barrack, probably the Contraband barracks located on Payne Street, this may be the structure formerly belonging to Robert Windsor on Duke between Fayette and Pane which burns in October 1862.

One block to the west of this structure is another large structure with the same distinctive double chimney as

1315 Duke Street. Located along the cross street (Payne Street) is the long, low, two-story building seen in other Civil War-era depictions of the property. The details are difficult to



Figure 109. Detail from Birds Eye View of Alexandria, VA, Charles Magnus.

discern here, but Magnus appears to show an open courtyard behind 1315 Duke Street and a few small, low buildings between it and Commerce Street, one block west of West Street.

Slave pen of Price, Birch and Co., Alexandria, Va National Archives³⁰¹

Not reproduced here is an image held by the National Archives. The title purports it to be the Slave pen of Price, Birch and Co. located in Alexandria, Virginia, however, it appears to be a photograph of the First African Baptist Church, located on Broad Street in Richmond, Virginia. The catalog information for this image notes this misattribution and care should be taken not to attribute this image to 1315 Duke Street.

Interior Views

The last of the Civil War images discussed here are taken from inside the slave pen complex. These photographs show evidence of reworking of the building at 1315 Duke Street both for use as a slave jail and then later as a military prison and can be useful for examining the building in the present for evidence of these past uses.

Alexandria, Virginia. Slave pen. Exterior view Library of Congress³⁰²



Figure 110. Alexandria, Virginia. Slave pen. Exterior view.

³⁰¹ National Archives: <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/529226>.

³⁰² Library of Congress: <https://www.loc.gov/item/2018670637/>.

Of all of the images of the slave jail complex at 1315 Duke Street, this stereograph pair of images of a woman standing under a small tree holding a basket is perhaps the most evocative (Figure 110). It is also the most difficult image to place.

From the windows visible here and the other elements in this scene, it would appear that this image was taken in the main yard at the former slave jail complex, located immediately to the east of the passageway and original kitchen wing and north of the former women's yard. This is the only view of this portion of the complex and that makes placing this image more difficult. Assuming this is even the slave jail complex at 1315 Duke Street as labeled, it is clearly not the Duke Street façade. Because the building seen in the center here behind the woman is a two-story building, it could be either the original kitchen wing of the original 1812/3 house or the two-story building set back from Payne Street. It is not the rear of the main block of the original 1812/3 house, which was

then three-stories tall. The roofline of the kitchen addition runs north/south and there is no gable end visible in the center portion of the brick structure here so this is not the northern façade of the kitchen addition or the southern façade, unconnected to a passageway to the main house. This is clearly not the eastern façade of the building offset from Payne Street, which is clearly visible in several other Civil War-era photographs, and as seen above (Figure 83 and 89), the western façade of the original kitchen wing has only three windows spaced further apart than the ones seen here, so it cannot be the west side of the original kitchen. That leaves as possibilities the western wall of the building along Payne Street or the eastern wall of the original kitchen Wing.

The righthand image from this stereopair shows detail of a fence line located to the far right of this scene that the left-hand image does not (Figure 111). It appears to be a board fence, set back from the brick wing or block behind the woman to the right with the two soldiers standing in the

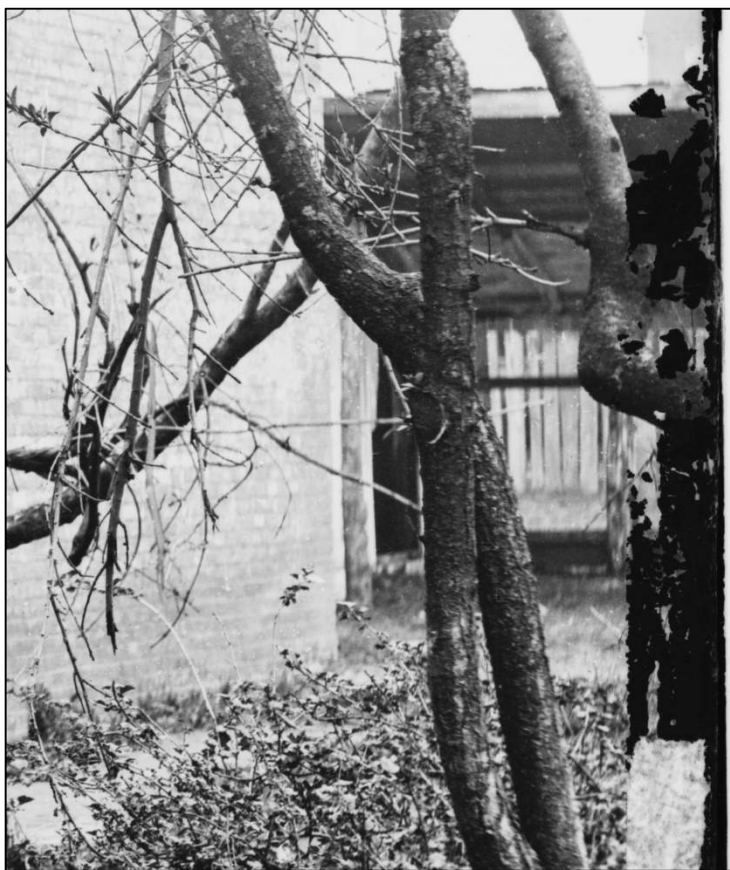


Figure 111. Detail of Alexandria, Virginia. Slave pen. Exterior view, showing covered fence to the rear of the complex.

iron grated door, and enclosed with a shed roof over it to prevent scaling the fence. While no known photographs show the rear of the building offset from Payne Street and its articulation with the rear of the women's yard, there is no such gap between the women's yard and the main block of 1315 Duke Street, no such fence line is visible along Duke Street, and no large brick building can be seen standing immediately to the north of the building offset from Payne Street, all ruling out the possibility that this photograph shows the rear of that building. The claim for damages submitted by Solomon Stover to the United States Congress following the war asks for (among other things), \$250 for damage to “fences”, which appear to have come down shortly after the liberation of the structure by Union troops in 1861.³⁰³

If this photograph shows 1315 Duke Street at all, then it must show the east façade of the original kitchen wing. This wing is currently encapsulated inside the present structure at 1315 Duke Street in a mid-1980s addition. This façade is five bays wide. In this photograph of the woman in the yard, three bays are clearly visible on the second story and one barred window and two bricked-in openings are visible in the first floor before it disappears behind the unknown brick structure on the left. Each of these windows is topped by a brick jack arch. At the base of this façade are vent holes, suggesting the absence of a basement. Behind the block on the left is what appears to be a cellar door.

The brick structure on the left then is not the main block of 1315 Duke Street as it currently stands. If this is the west façade of the original kitchen wing behind the women, then this structure on the left is either a previously unseen portion of a passage or wing connecting the original kitchen with the main block of the house or part of the brick wall at the rear of the women's yard, possibly related to the addition with the sloping roof seen between the two chimneys and extending northward into the yard. While the historic maps from this period do not agree on the configuration of the slave jail complex during the Civil War (as some maps appear to be more accurate than others and the layout likely changed during the war), the Quartermaster map shows an elongated main block and only one connected wing to the rear that would approximate this view if taken with ones back to the wall of the women's yard (Figure 119). If so, the structure to the right of the woman in which two soldiers can be seen behind an iron grated door would be where Artemel et al. (1987) places a hospital or infirmary, and in the present-day alley behind the property. The window openings of the kitchen wing still exist inside 1315 Duke Street (although some have been converted to doors inside the 1980s rear addition) and the brickwork can be compared to that seen here to further confirm the location of this view. It is currently unknown if the brick cornice still exists between the second and third floors of this original kitchen wing or if it was damaged or removed when the third story was added in the early 20th century.

³⁰³ Senate Committee on Claims, Solomon Stover, 41st Congress, 2d. Session, Report No. 104, April 14, 1870.

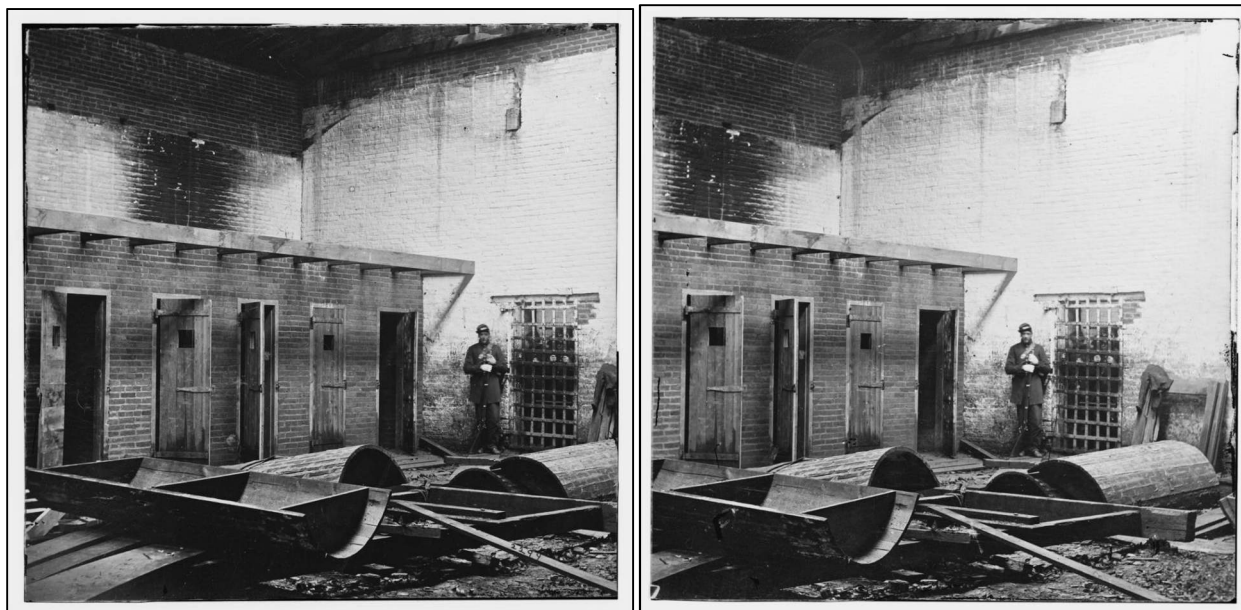


Figure 112. Alexandria, Virginia. Slave pen, Interior View.

Alexandria, Virginia. Slave pen. Interior view
Library of Congress³⁰⁴

This view is also from stereopair of images taken from inside the enclosed, covered men's yard located on the west side of the slave complex (Figure 112). The tall, two-story brick wall on the right side of the photograph forms the east side of the men's yard and the rear of the west side of the passageway or wing between the main block at 1315 Duke Street and the kitchen addition. The shallow, sloping roofline of this yard can be seen at the top of the frame. The apex of this slope and centerline of the yard space (at the rightmost side or just off the right side of this image) is roughly aligned (although offset a few feet to the south of) the north edge of the main block of the original 1812/3 Robert Young house. The door visible in this wall would have been located immediately behind the main block of the original 1812/3 house, in the passageway between it and the original kitchen wing. The brick wall seen on the left behind the individual cells would have been the rear or northern wall of the men's yard.

In addition to the bricked-in opening visible in the photograph approximately 8 or 10 feet above the head of the soldier seen here (there is a similar bricked-in ghost window on the western wall of the structure today), there should be additional surviving evidence in this wall of the features seen in this photograph, including the barred doorway on the right, roof support system seen at the top, articulation with the rear brick wall of the yard, the articulation with the brick cells and wooden beam, and changes in whitewash near the top of the wall. The portions of the wall visible here span from approximately the rear of the original block of 1315 Duke Street on the

³⁰⁴ Library of Congress: <https://www.loc.gov/item/2018670634/>.

right of the image to the beginning of the kitchen wing at the rear corner of the yard space in the middle left of the image.

On the rear wall of this enclosed space at the top of the whitewashed portion of the brick wall are a series of holes in the brick wall. These are either vent holes, or, given the diagonal line coming down on the adjacent wall parallel to the existing roof support, mortise holes where a previous, lower roof structure was attached. It appears that this whitewash line lines up approximately with the step-back of the brickwork seen on the exterior of the men's yard. This would suggest that the men's yard was once lower than it is here, similar to the 1836 engraving (Figure 28) and, as an intermediate step between the 1836 engraving and this photograph, perhaps completely covered, before the roof was raised in height. In an earlier configuration, the holes in the brick could have supported a similar shed or lean-to roof as seen in the women's yard or were used to support the Civil War-era roof configuration on the lower wall. Adjusting the contrast of this image, another horizontal joist is visible above the second hole from the right, showing the support structure for the roof.

In other photographs of the exterior of the men's yard, a single pipe or vent can be seen emerging from the top of the roof near its center and a similar pipe or chimney pot can be seen against the back wall of the shed or lean-to roof of the women's yard. While no stove is visible here, the blackened section of the whitewashed wall here might indicate a similar chimney or hearth here in a previous configuration of this space. Such a contained fire was noted in several of the primary accounts of this space (for example, see Leavitt 1834 and Abdy 1835). The roof timbers visible in the top of this photograph are consistent with the roof structure of the men's yard seen from the exterior in other images, and from the other elements visible here, this photograph could be of no other known interior space at 1315 Duke Street.

Perhaps the most striking feature in this photo of the interior of the men's yard are the individual cells lining the rear wall of the space. It is unclear if the cells seen here are related to the use of the structure as a slave jail or as were constructed during its use as a military prison. There are no pre-Civil War descriptions of these cells and the Engineering Science archaeology report concludes they were built during the war.³⁰⁵ However, as described above, the regimental history of the 88th Pennsylvania, which occupied the site from October 1861 through February 1862, notes the presence of cells which had been used to detain enslaved people.³⁰⁶ While the report does not describe the analysis used to reach its conclusion, the brick is not whitewashed like the rest of the space, the brick is regularly laid and even, and it has a general neatness about it. None of the visitors to the slave jail complex describe individual jail cells such as these in any of their accounts of this space, although the account of the prison by Vautier of the 88th Pennsylvania explicitly describes cells for the enslaved. Perhaps these cells were added in the late 1850s or early 1860s as a part of the renovations carried out by Price, Birch & Co., or perhaps the cells

³⁰⁵ Artemel et al., 1987, p. 47.

³⁰⁶ Vautier, John D., *History of the 88th Pennsylvania Volunteers in the war for the Union, 1861-1865*, 1894, p. 20.

briefly mentioned in the history of the 88th Pennsylvania were the underground space seen by Haviland (which may correspond to Features 100 and 134 excavated by Engineering Science in 1984, Figure 113). Regardless of whether or not the brick cells themselves were built before or after May 24, 1861, it can be shown that the doors of these cells continue to undergo changes that can be documented in these photographs of this space. Here, they are all pictured without bars over the small windows. In what must be later photographs (Figures 114 and 116), some are pictured with bars and some without bars, and then in a third photograph, all are pictured with bars. Examining their construction closely, adding these bars required four grooves to be cut into the wood door around the windows so that the fronts of the horizontal pieces sit flush with the face of the door, a physical alternation not present in this photograph. Therefore, at the very least, if these cells predate the Civil War, either these bars are a Civil War-era addition to the space or the doors



Figure 113. Brick-vaulted drainage channel, AX75_FR_238A.

were entirely replaced by the army. Given the neatness and uniformity of the brickwork in contrast to the rest of the interior space seen here and the lack of pre-Civil War descriptions of these cells, they would appear to be a Civil War addition or were built shortly before the Civil War, perhaps during renovations by Price, Birch, & Co, starting in 1859.

An additional Civil War-era modification to 1315 Duke Street can be seen in the foreground of this image. The arched wooden forms scattered in the foreground of this photograph are probably wooden forms to build brick vaults or arches. Given their size and presence here, these have either been used to build a brick vault over each of the cells seen here, or alternatively, they were used to construct a brick drainage channel under the alley to the east of the original 1812/3 house. As there is no structure above these brick cells, no load-bearing arch is needed here, although perhaps they were used to harden the tops of these cells and make them more difficult from which to escape. Archaeologists excavating in that alley near the southern chimney on the east side of 1315 Duke Street encountered a similar brick drainage channel (Feature 107) that appears to be roughly the same size as these forms and were comprised of several surviving courses of brick in a possible arch or vault.

Alexandria, Virginia. Slave pen. Interior view

Library of Congress³⁰⁷

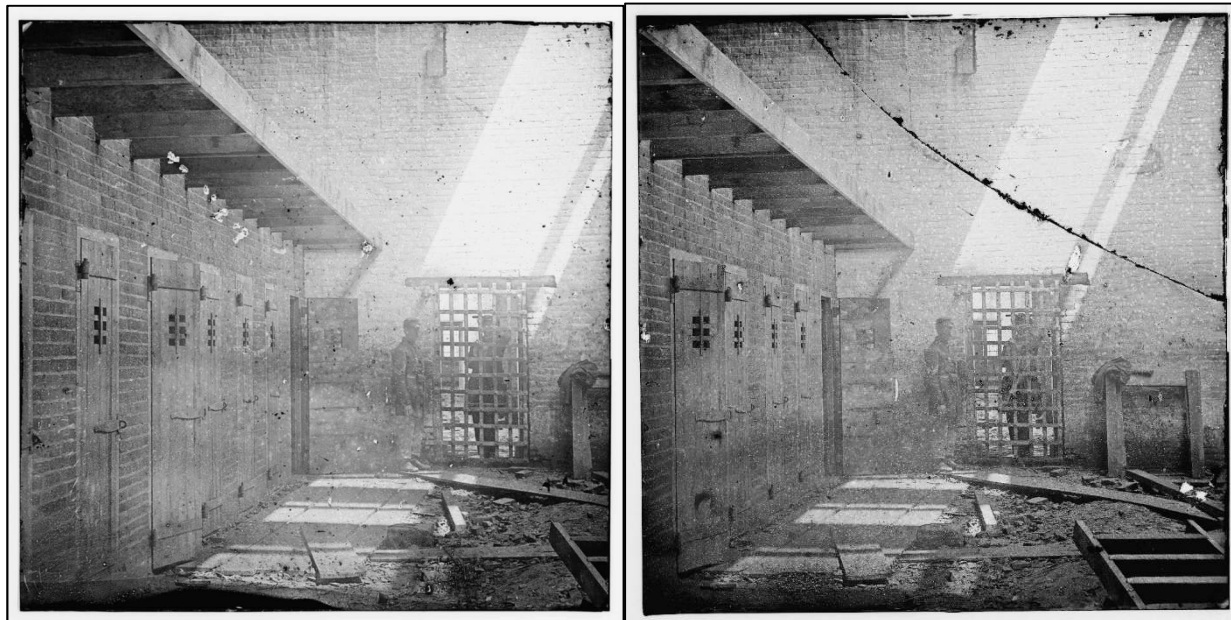


Figure 114. Alexandria, Virginia. Slave pen. Interior view.

This stereopair image is similar to the previous one but is taken facing east, perpendicular to the west wall of the main house and passageway addition at 1315 Duke Street (Figure 114). There are at least two different versions of this image, and they can be differentiated by the pose of the soldier inside the yard, closest to the viewer (Figure 115). On the reverse of the version with his hand in front of the iron door is the text:

BRADY'S ALBUM GALLERY.

No. 284

SLAVE PENS, ALEXANDRIA, VA.

Entered according to act of Congress, in the year 1862, by M. B. BRADY, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the District of Columbia.

This view is similar to the previous one, but useful in that it shows the door in the men's yard, an interior space behind it, and what appears to be a window or doorway beyond it. Given the location of this door to the rear of the main block in the passageway between the original 1812/3 house and the original kitchen wing, this other window or door seen behind it would have to be

³⁰⁷ Library of Congress: <https://www.loc.gov/item/2018670633/>, for other versions, see: <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2011648598/>, <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2004682788/>, and <http://www.getty.edu/art/collection/objects/88759/mathew-b-brady-slave-pens-alexandria-va-american-1862/>.

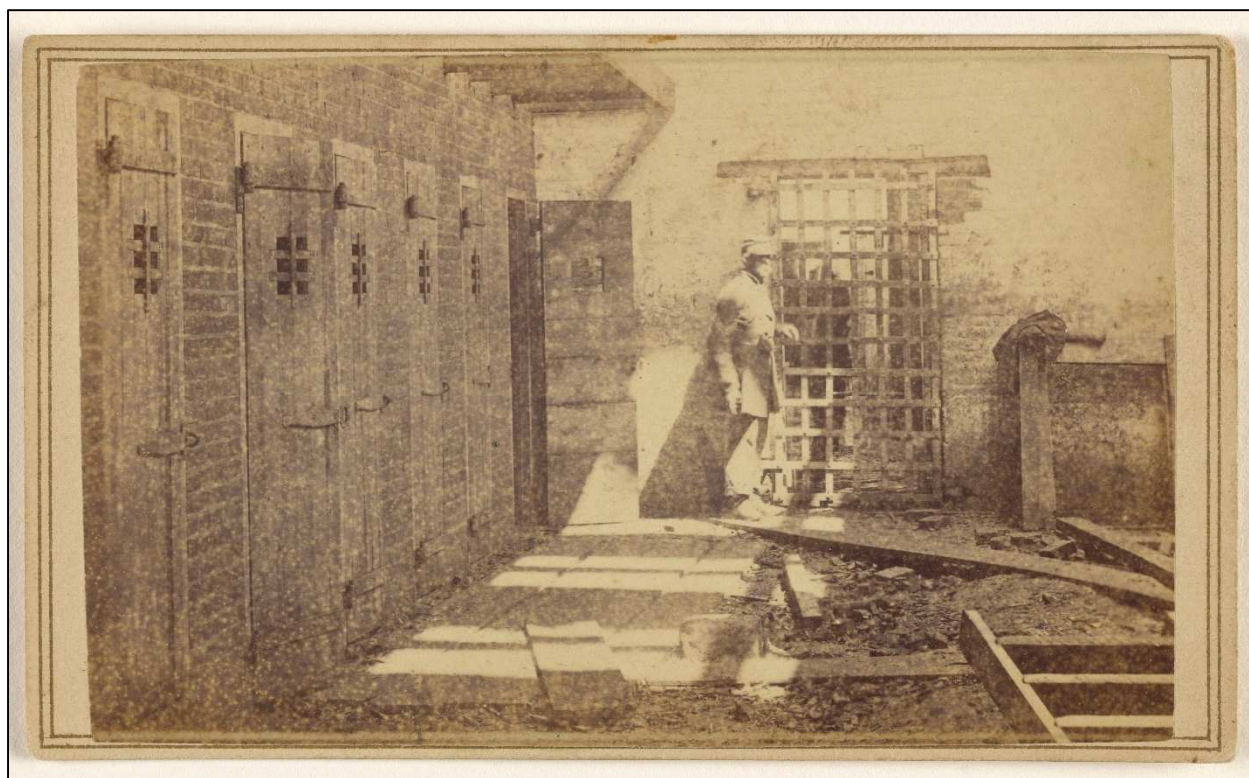


Figure 115. Slave Pens, Alexandria, Va.

on the eastern wall of the passageway, and opening into the women's yard. There is currently a window along the western wall of 1315 Duke Street, behind the staircase and in front of the restroom on the first floor approximately where this closer doorway is in this view, and a brick arch that is now a doorway but was previously a smaller window prior to the 1985 renovation where the doorway behind the iron door is here.

Leavitt saw this space during his February 1834 visit and described it in his letter (repeated here):

We were first taken into a paved yard 40 or 50 feet square, with a very high brick wall, and about half of it covered with a roof. The wall was whitewashed, and the pavement perfectly clean. A pump in the centre furnished an ample supply of water. In the covered part was a long table set with tin plates, each containing an allowance of bread and boiled meat, apparently wholesome in quality, and sufficient in quantity for persons confined to a space so limited, without labor. This yard is appropriated to the men, the two sexes being *entirely* separated, except at their meals.³⁰⁸

Abdy also describes this space when he saw it in April 1834, writing, "The sexes are separated by a passage, into which the iron gratings of their doors look. These last are doubly locked, and strongly secured. The yards, which are sufficiently spacious, are surrounded by high walls. Everything looked clean and in good order."³⁰⁹

³⁰⁸ Leavitt, 1834.

³⁰⁹ Abdy, 1835.

The primary account by Andrews also describes the men's yard (in July 1835 still only with a partial roof), the space between the men's yard and the women's yard, and the woman's yard (again, repeated here):

We passed out at the back door of the dwelling-house, and entered a spacious yard nearly surrounded with neatly white-washed two story buildings, devoted to the use of the slaves. Turning to the left, we came to a strong grated door of iron, opening into a spacious yard, surrounded by a high, white-washed wall. One side of this yard was roofed, but the principal part was open to the air. Along the covered side extended a table, at which the slaves had recently taken their dinner, which, judging from what remained, had been wholesome and abundant. In this yard, only the men and boys were confined. The gate was secured by strong padlocks and bolts; but before entering we had a full view of the yard, and everything in it, through the grated door. The slaves, fifty or sixty in number, were standing or moving about in groups, some amusing themselves with rude sports, and others engaged in conversation, which was often interrupted by loud laughter, in all the varied tones peculiar to the negroes....

After a short time, spent in walking around this yard, and examining the appearance of the slaves, we “passed out by the iron gate,” and crossing over to the right, we came to a similar one, which admitted us into a yard like that which we had just left. Here we found the female slaves, amounting to thirty or forty.³¹⁰

These accounts describe the men's and women's yards as being similar, separated by a space or passageway, and secured by a set of iron grated door like the one pictured here. While this space was only partially covered when it was seen in 1834 and 1835 and in the 1836 broadside image (Figure 28), these accounts place a long table used for meals where the cells are seen in this photograph against the back wall of the yard.

In this photograph, unlike the previous one, the iron bars over the cell door windows are clearly present and are installed on every visible door. The two horizontal bars are placed into recesses cut into these doors, a feature not present on the previous photograph of the same cell doors above, indicating that at the very least the bars (if not the whole cells themselves) were added at some point during the Civil War.

Also visible in this photograph is sunlight coming in through openings in the roof vent. The spacing of these three, equally spaced illuminated areas corresponds to the window or skylight configuration of the single, long roof vent, not the window or skylight configuration of the two smaller roof vents, which was not equally spaced, and were installed at some point later in the war. The 1862 date on the reverse of this image further supports this vent configuration, which appears in photographs until at least April 15, 1864, but was reconfigured at some point prior to the Pywell photograph (Figure 94), which was taken some time after April 15, 1865.

Alexandria, Virginia. Slave pen. Interior view
Library of Congress³¹¹

³¹⁰ Andrews, 1836.

³¹¹ Library of Congress: <https://www.loc.gov/item/2018670632/>.

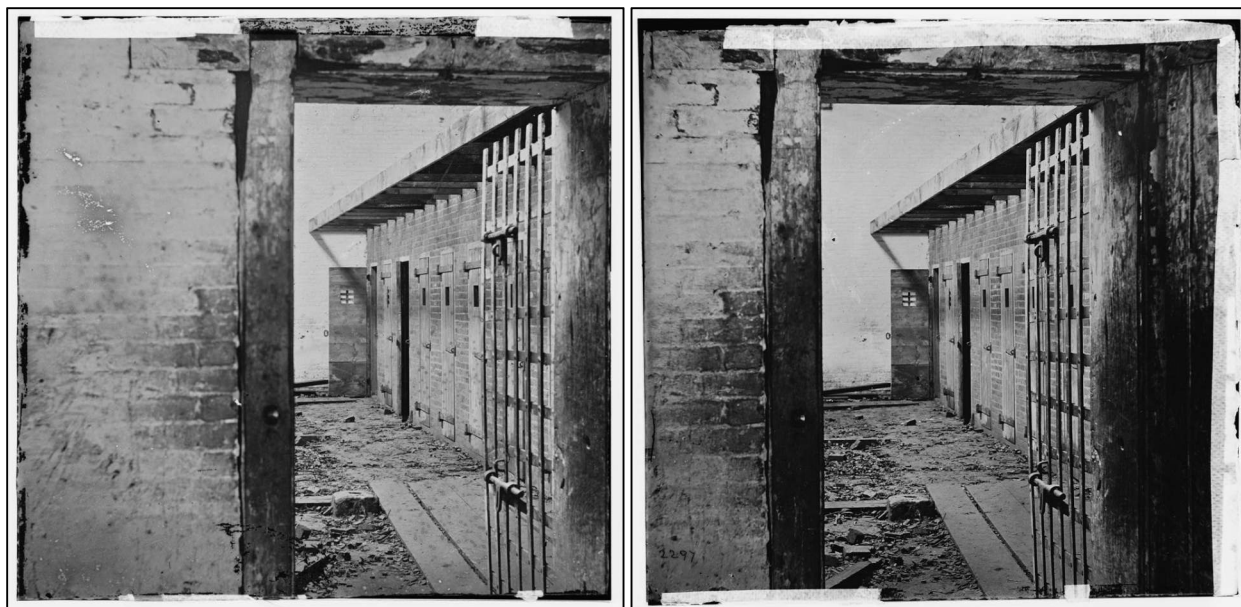


Figure 116. Alexandria, Virginia. Slave pen. Interior view.

This final photograph of the interior of the slave jail complex is taken from inside the passageway separating the men's and women's yard at about where the soldier was standing behind the iron grated door in the previous photograph, looking toward where that camera was positioned (Figure 116). It provides a look at the far end of the brick cells as well as a detailed view of the door frame construction. The brickwork seen in the foreground here can be compared to surviving brickwork in this location in the hallway behind the main stairs.

Notably, in this photograph, some of the cell doors have iron bars over the windows, but not all of them do. The ones that do not have iron bars do not have cut outs around the windows where the bar would be set flush with the front of the door. Together, with the other two photographs of the interior of this space, this shows that these bars were added sometime during the Civil War.

Visible in the open doorway are at least one, and potentially two or three, stones or post bases. At least one of these is also visible in the previous photograph. Archaeologists excavating at 1317 Duke Street encountered a series of evenly spaced post holes running down the center of the men's yard that they hypothesized would have been either an interior partition or supports for the earlier lean-to roof like the one that can be seen in the women's yard (Features 109, 110, 115, and 120).³¹²

Cartography

³¹² Artemel et al., 1987, p. 119.

These photographs and illustrations are not the only Civil War-era depictions of the slave jail complex at 1315 Duke Street. The Union Army's liberation of Alexandria during the Civil War also corresponds to the period of the first detailed maps that show the slave jail complex at 1315 Duke Street. However, working with historic maps requires several disclaimers. First, these maps represent cultural interpretations of the built and natural environment. They were produced by specific individuals for specific purposes (which were rarely "historical research by future scholars"). As such, any use and interpretation of them should take these factors into account when deciding how much faith to place in any specific line or feature as depicted by the original cartographer. Just because a feature is on a map does not necessarily mean that it was ever built and just because something is missing from a map does not necessarily mean that it did not exist. Some features are generalized, some are inaccurate, and others are just plain incorrect. It takes experience working with historic maps in general, experience working with specific historic maps, comparison to other contemporary maps and historic data sources, and physical ground truthing through archaeology, comparison with period photographs, and other methods to characterize the accuracy of what we see on historic maps. The historic maps presented here should be approached only as a rough outline or starting point for historic research at this property and every depiction should be treated cautiously until it or portions of it can be shown to be reliable, especially when confronted with multiple, contradicting depictions.

In terms of spatial coverage, the Civil War is the first time widespread, block and building-specific cartographic coverage comes to Alexandria, and by the end of the first quarter of the 20th century almost all structures in the developed part of the City larger than a shed or one-car garage are mapped. Prior to the Civil War, coverage is far from universal and is largely dependent on early fire insurance policies or one-off maps or plats produced as a part of court proceedings or land transactions. Unfortunately, there does not appear to be any known or surviving pre-Civil War maps of the slave jail complex or any fire insurance policies associated with the property; however, there are Mutual Assurance Fire Insurance policies for the Bruin Slave Jail located several blocks to the west at 1707 Duke Street.

An 1840 map drawn by George Mason of Hollin Hall related to slave patrols that covers the southern portion of Alexandria between Jones Point and out beyond Cameron Mills shows the boundary line between Alexandria (then Alexandria, D.C.) and Fairfax County, Virginia as well as present day Duke Street (labeled Turnpike to Fairfax Court House) but does not show the slave pen complex at 1315 Duke Street.³¹³ While not proper maps, George Kephart places advertisements in the local newspaper in both 1851 and 1853 offering his property for sale (including the 1315 Duke Street parcel) in which he describes proposed subdivisions of these lots (see above for digitized versions of these proposed subdivisions, Figures 64 and 65).

³¹³ Library of Virginia: "Office of the Governor, Thomas W. Gilmer, Accession 43419, Box 1 folder 5 and Box 4 folder 1; Petitions, correspondence, and map concerning the death sentences of slaves Alfred and Spencer in Fairfax County, 20 May 1840. Location Box 1, 4/B/93/8/6 and Box 4, 4/B/93/8/7).

The maps presented in this document have been georectified, that is, they have been assigned real-world coordinates and are superimposed with modern parcel and street data in order to facilitate their interpretation. The scale of most of these maps prohibit their reproduction in full here, so only those portions relevant to the north side of the 1300 block of Duke Street are presented in the figures below with modern parcel lines and street names superimposed.

Plan of Alexandria

U.S. Coast Survey, 1864³¹⁴

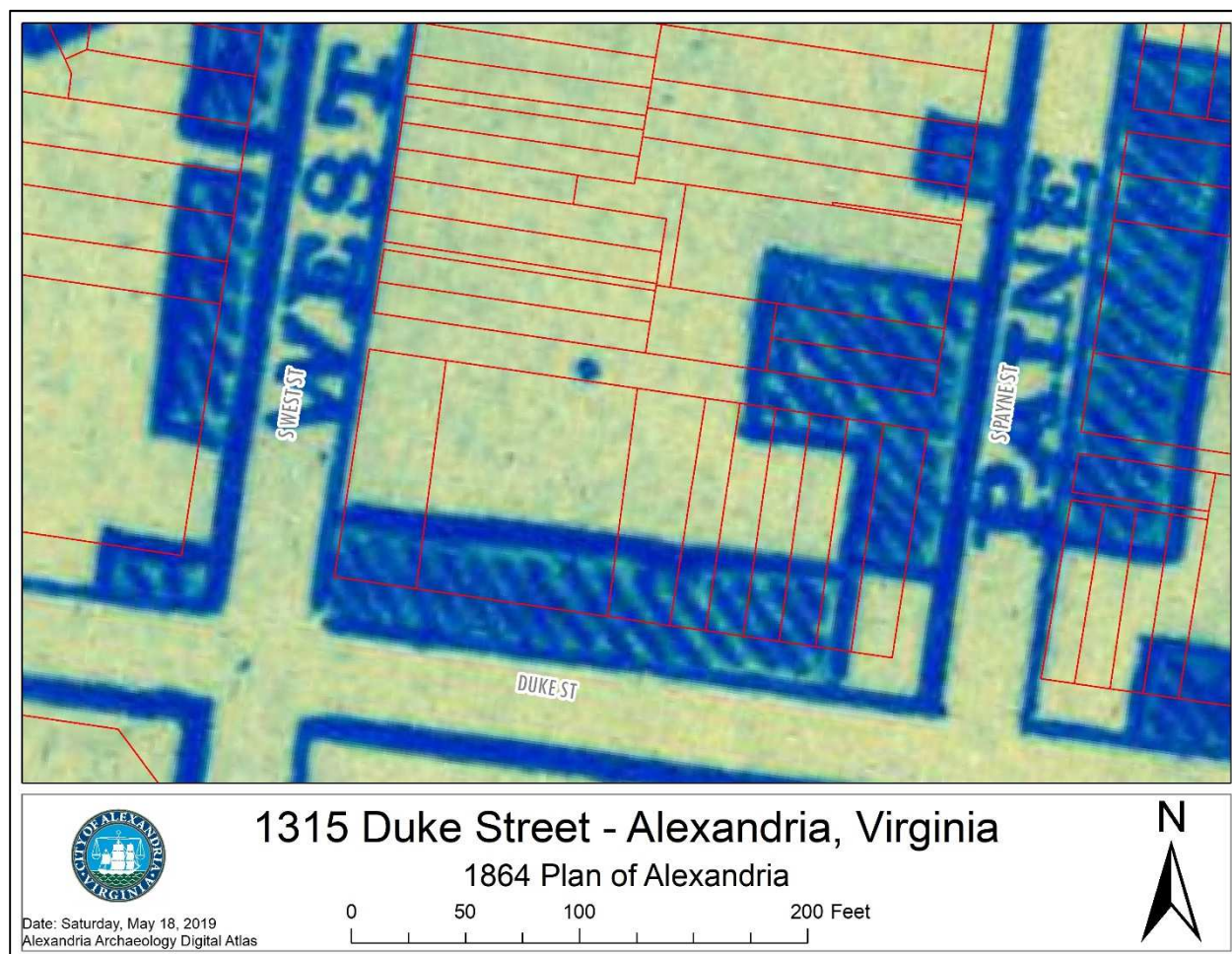


Figure 117. 1864 Plan of Alexandria.

This map (Figure 117) is clearly a derivative or update of the 1862 *Plan of Alexandria* (not reproduced here) published by the U.S. Coast Survey in 1862 (sometimes cited as U.S. Sanitary Commission) and held by the Library of Congress³¹⁵, except that the coloration is different (likely caused during digital reproduction) and the addition of many more structures.

³¹⁴ US Coast Survey: <https://historicalcharts.noaa.gov/image=32-1-1864>.

³¹⁵ See <https://www.loc.gov/item/89692513/> for this 1862 map. It is not reproduced here because it does not show structures throughout much of the City, including on this block.

Here, the complex at 1315 Duke Street is represented by only a long rectangle along Duke Street and an L-shaped block along Payne Street. Unfortunately, as with many of the buildings shown on this 1864 map, the ones here on the 1300 block of Duke Street are representational and not actual in their footprints, and generally only suggest the presence or absence of structures on a particular block or block face, rather than the specific shapes of those buildings.

This map is therefore not very useful beyond determining the general presence or absence of a structure on a specific block, and even then, it is difficult to rely on this depiction without checking additional sources. This map is notable, however, in that it represents the earliest cartographic depiction with full coverage of Old Town Alexandria and represents most of the City with the same mapping conventions.

**Map of the U.S. Military Railroad Station at Alexandria, VA
From Actual Survey by Wm. M. Merrick. War Department, Office of the Chief of
Engineers, Record Group 77³¹⁶**

This depiction of the slave pen (Figure 118) comes from a larger survey of the US Military Railroad depot and complex located in the area roughly bounded by Duke, Washington, Gibbon, and West Streets and published after the war in September 1865 (Figure 81). The survey was conducted by William M. Merrick, the same author as the sketch of the Slave Pen dated May 14, 1863. This depiction is a little different than the others included here, but the general details are the same, including a main block, two wings or enclosed yards to the sides of this main block, and two long additions toward the rear of the complex. The two-story structure along Payne Street is shown as attached to the rest of the complex, but separated from it by a solid line, indicating it is a separate structure from the women's yard. A large open space can be seen behind the main block and women's yard, enclosed on the east and west by these two-story structures.

This railyard map also shows a fortified bastion named Fort Clough in the intersection of Payne and Duke Streets. In the same collection of sketches as Merrick's "A Peculiar Institution" sketch, there is another one drawn from what appears to be the same location, but oriented in the opposite direction showing Fort Clough (Figure 80).³¹⁷

³¹⁶ National Archives: <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/305670>.

³¹⁷ See Cromwell 1989, The Phase III Mitigation of the Bontz Site (44AX103) and the United States Military Railroad Station (44AX105), p 147.

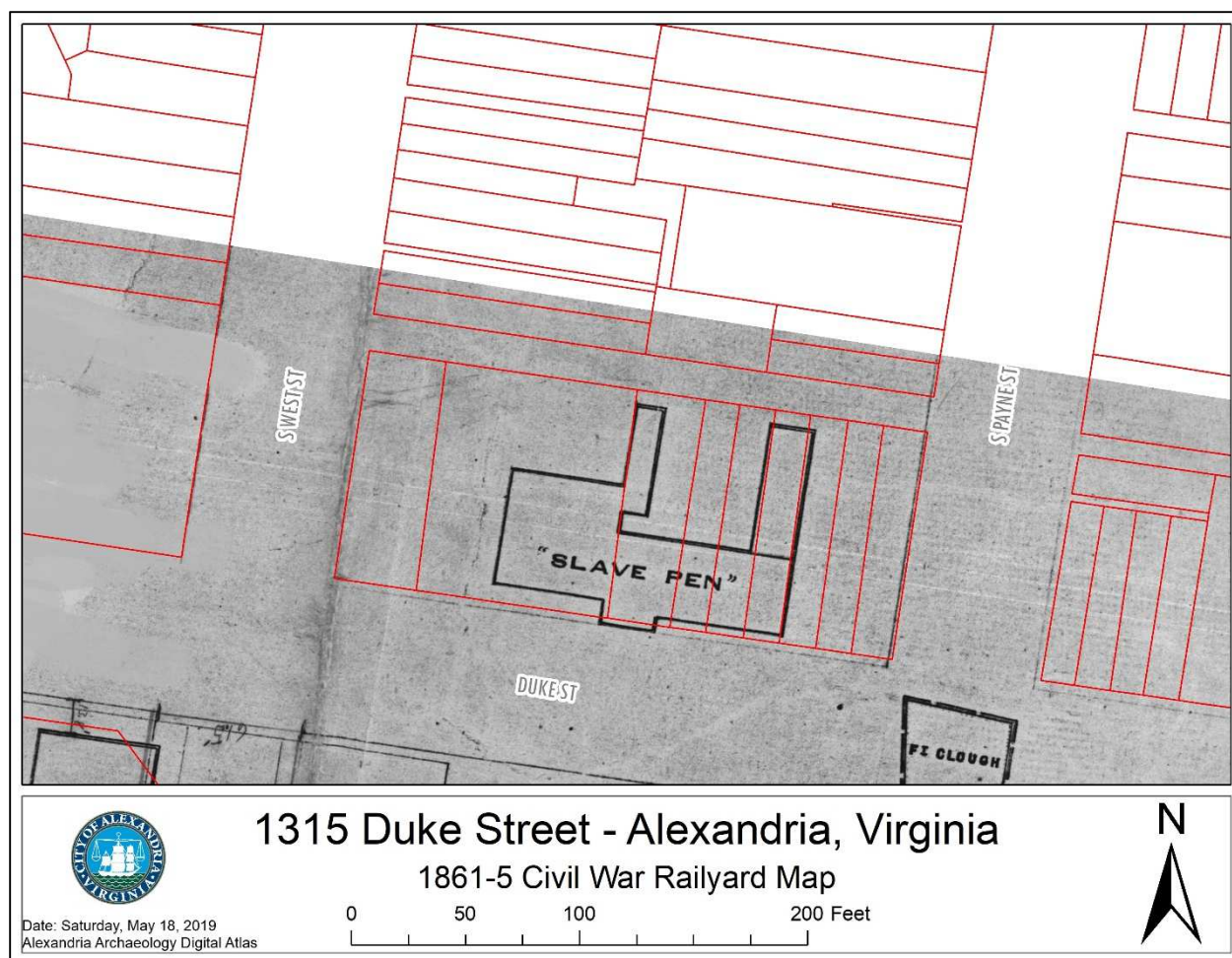


Figure 118. 1865 Railyard Map.

**Plans for Soldiers Rest, Alexandria VA
Map 111, Sheet 5, War Department, Office of the Quartermaster General, Post and
Reservation Maps 1820-1905. Record Group 92³¹⁸**

This map is part of the Office of the Quartermaster General Post and Reservation Map series housed as Record Group 92 at the National Archives (Figure 119). This and the several adjacent sheets show Solder's Rest and Union Army activities in the surrounding area on upper Duke Street. North is oriented to the bottom of the ungeoreferenced page (south is up in the original sheet prior to being rotated and scaled and overlaid with modern parcel lines here), and the Slave Pen is labeled here by a "W". Visible is the main block of 1315 Duke Street along with the kitchen addition on the rear of the structure. In this map, the main block appears to be slightly elongated and the passageway connecting the kitchen to the main house is not differentiated from the kitchen wing. To the west of 1315 Duke Street are two large squares, one clearly in the location of the enclosed and covered men's yard and the other to the rear of it is probably an

³¹⁸ National Archives: <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/109182998>.

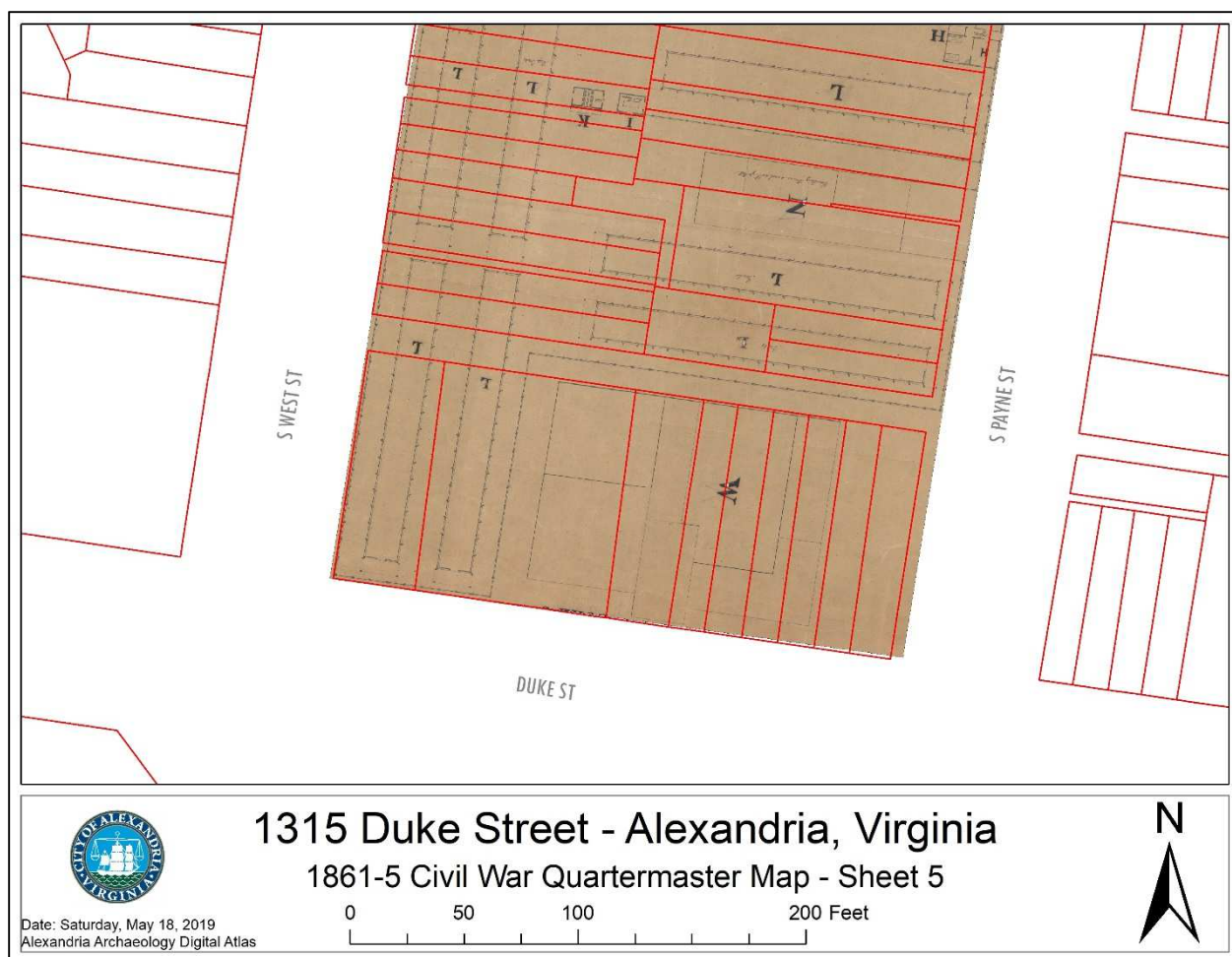


Figure 119. Civil War Quartermaster Map, Sheet 5.

open, but still enclosed yard space, either separated by a fence like the one seen in the far right of the photograph of the woman in the yard (Figure 111) or another brick wall. To the east is an L-shaped feature that corresponds to the location of the enclosed women's yard. Photographs showing the exterior of this space suggest this yard is rectangular and not L-shaped, and behind it, parallel to Payne Street but approximately 35 or 40 feet offset, is the other two-story structure also seen in these photographs.

No fence is depicted as bounding this complex; however, one is present adjacent to the west and north boarding the L'Ouverture Hospital complex on the rest of the block and separating it from the military prison at the former slave jail complex. This hospital complex extends beyond the original property line and includes several rows of tents labeled "L". These plans obviously date to the Civil War (1861-1865) but additional work would need to be done to narrow the date of the creation of this map to a specific date within that window. Generally, they seem to have been created later in the war. Construction began on the hospital here in 1863 and it opened in February 1864³¹⁹. The hospital as depicted here does not appear to be visible in any of the Civil

³¹⁹ L'Ouverture Hospital: <https://www.alexandriava.gov/historic/civilwar/default.aspx?id=73499>.

War-era photographs of the property, so that dates any photograph that clearly shows the absence of this complex to before February 1864 and this map to after February 1864, although the exact development of this complex is not fully understood. Generally, there is a textual description on each or an adjacent sheet, but the caption explaining the labels on this sheet has not been identified.

L'Ouveture Hospital, Contraband Barracks, etc.

Map 111, Sheet 20, War Department, Office of the Quartermaster General, Post and Reservation Maps 1820-1905. Record Group 92³²⁰

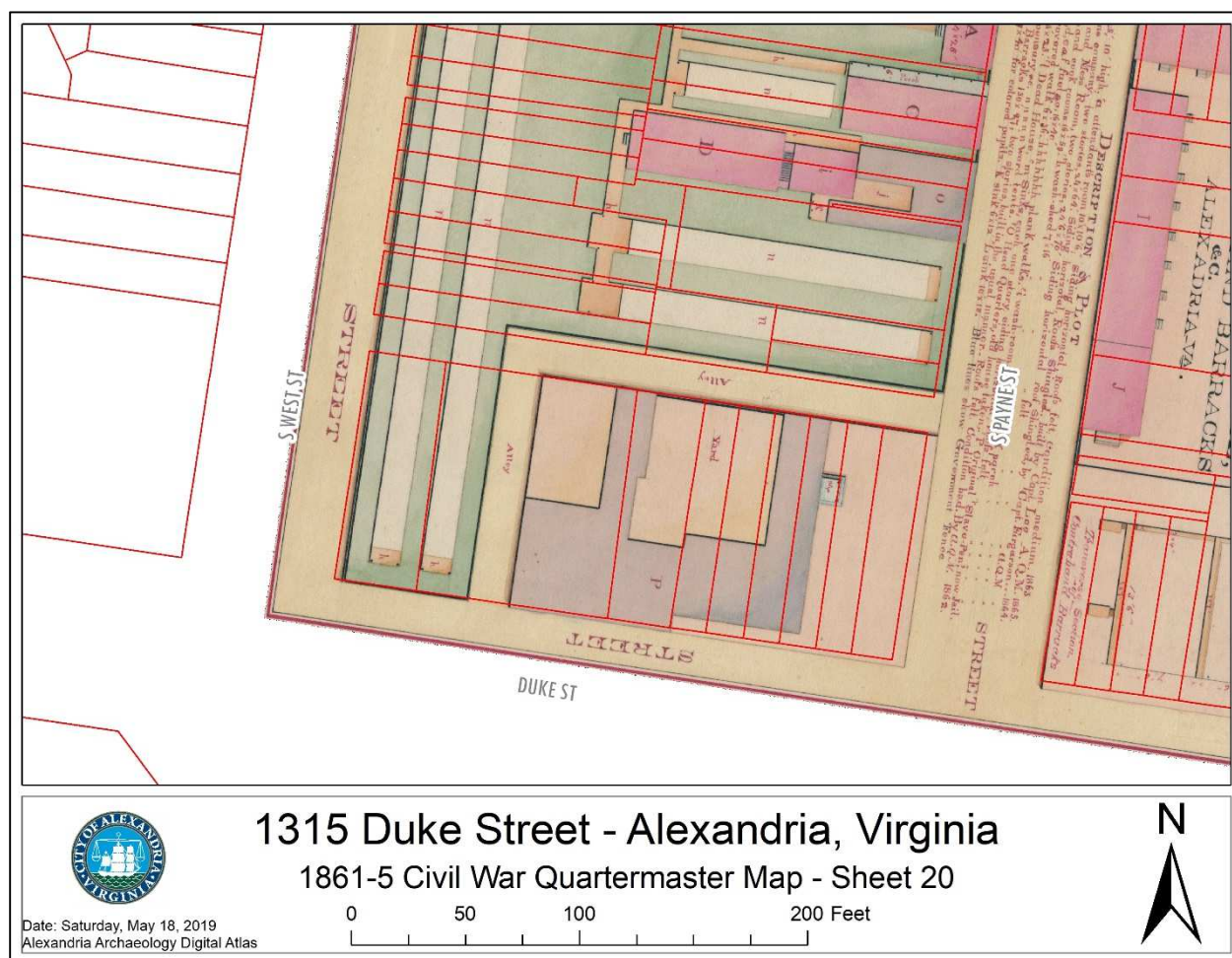


Figure 120. L'Ouveture Hospital, Contraband Barracks, etc. Sheet 20.

Here in this map (Figure 120), the complex at 1315 Duke Street is labeled “P”, which the map legend explains is the “Original ‘Slave Pen’, now Jail”. The main structure and original kitchen wing are visible, although shifted slightly to the west and connected by another wing or

³²⁰ National Archives: <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/109182952>.

passageway. The enclosed, covered men's yard is visible with an open space to the north of it. The L-shaped feature to the east that is the women's yard and adjacent two-story building are also visible along with its prominent porch or "step" as it is labeled here. The main house block and the men's yard appear flush with the street face while the women's yard is set back several feet. Behind 1315 Duke Street and between the kitchen addition and this two-story structure is an enclosed yard, descriptively labeled "yard". Bounding the complex on the north and west and separating it from the hospital and barracks that take up the rest of the block is an alley.

The presence of this hospital complex dates the map to post February 1864 and a note in the legend notes the presence of a structure built in 1865. Like with the previous Quartermaster map and most of the images depicting this space during the Civil War, there is not a fence here surrounding the complex; rather, there is one surrounding the hospital.

BOARDING HOUSE AND TENAMENT (1866-1984)

The former slave jail complex remained under military control until May 1st, 1866 when the property was turned back over to civilian control. A small item in the *Alexandria Gazette* stated, “THE SLAVE PEN.”—In consequence of the discontinuance of the military post of Alexandria, Va., the slave pen has been turned over to the civil authorities” (Figure 121).³²¹

On May 28, 1866, the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen and Abandoned Lands returned the property to Solomon Stover. Prior to being returned, Brevet Lieutenant Colonel J.G. C. Lee of the Quartermaster’s Office noted, “Its present condition is considered as good as it was when taken” (Figure 122).³²² Stover apparently did not agree with this assessment, because on February 3, 1868, Stover files a petition to the United States Congress, claiming the premises were returned “in a ruinous condition, great damage having been inflicted upon them by the troops.”³²³ Stover’s original petition has not been found, but the printed Senate report ultimately denying his claim notes that Stover asked for damages in the amount of \$7,450; \$1,000

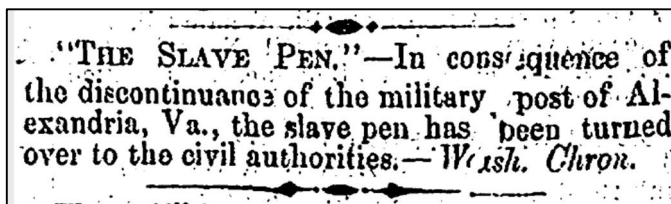


Figure 121. Alexandria Gazette, May 1, 1866.

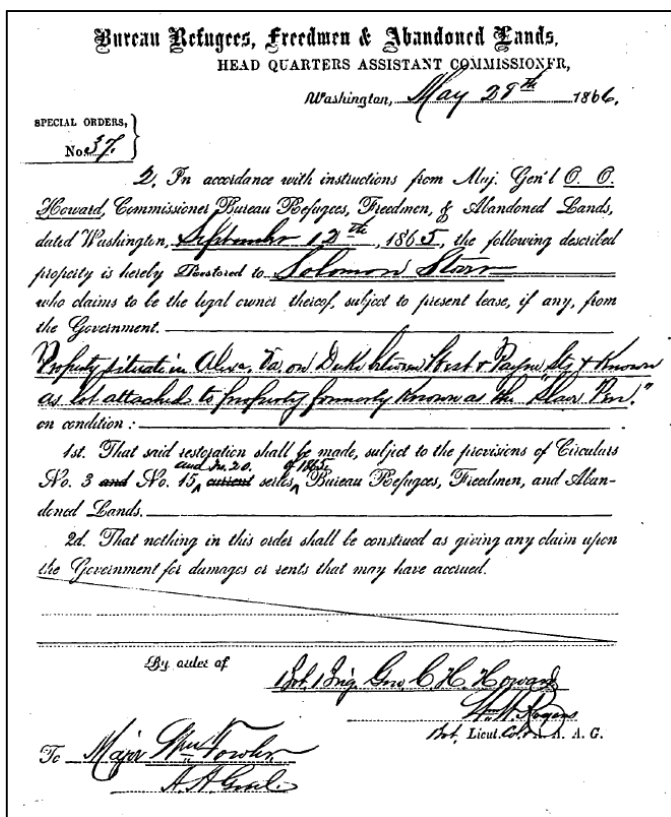


Figure 122. Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, May 28, 1866, cited in Artemel et al., 1987.

For rent of premises from June 1, 1861, to May 29, 1866, being five years, at \$1,000 per year.....	\$5,000
Stables all destroyed entirely.....	1,200
Fences.....	250
Damage to the dwelling-house.....	1,000
Total rent and damages.....	7,450

Figure 123. Claim for damages submitted to the United States Senate by Solomon Stover, February 3, 1868.

³²¹ *Alexandria Gazette*, May 1, 1866.

³²² Chief Quartermaster’s Office, January 20, 1866, cited in Artemel et al., 1987, p. 51.

³²³ Senate Committee on Claims, Solomon Stover, 41st Congress, 2d. Session, Report No. 104, April 14, 1870.

rent per year for five years, \$1,200 for stables which had been destroyed, \$250 for fences, and \$1,000 for damage done to the dwelling house (Figure 123). Ultimately, this claim was denied, not because there was no damage to the property (as the photographs taken during the Civil War clearly show), but because the property was occupied by Confederate forces, owned by Price at the time it was captured, and was under adverse possession by the United States throughout the war.

Less than a month after getting the property back from the United States government, Stover advertised in the *Alexandria Gazette* (Figure 124):

FOR SALE OR RENT.—A large BRICK HOUSE AND HALF SQUARE OF GROUND, situated on Duke street, between West and Payne streets, known as the “Slave Pen,” will be sold at a bargain. Apply to SOLOMON STOVER, Cor. 21st and I streets, Washington City, Or, SAMUEL HEFLEBOWER, Alexandria, Va.³²⁴

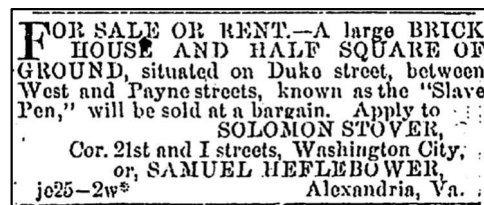


Figure 124. *Alexandria Gazette*, June 25, 1866.

Following the war, the property must have been vacant or underused for several years as a string of thefts, vandalism, destruction, and other crimes and incidents indicative of unoccupied property are reported in the newspaper. These include the following items:

NEGROES ARRESTED.—A large number of negroes were arrested last night, and this morning by the Police Officers, for complicity in the demolition and defacement of, and the robberies lately committed at, the negro jail, called the “slave pen.” It is supposed that over one thousand dollars worth of damages has been sustained by this property. A portion of the iron gratings, gas and water fixtures, &c., stolen from there have been recovered.³²⁵

J. O’Leary, for receiving junk, knowing it to have been stolen from the slave pen, was held in security for his appearance at court.³²⁶

BROKE JAIL.—A negro man named Lemon, committed to jail about two months ago, for stealing iron from the building, of late known as the Slave Pen, and to be tried at the next term of the Quarterly Court, escaped from that prison last night, before ten o’clock, by breaking through the ceiling of the room in which he was confined. He reached the roof of the building through the trap door, and from it jumped to the top of the kitchen, and from thence to the ground. He is still at large, and his track has not been discovered.³²⁷

DEAD INFANT FOUND.—Yesterday, about twelve o’clock, a little colored boy named Angus Brown, while playing in the lot of the building known as the slave pen, near the depot of the Orange, Alexandria and Manassas R.R., discovered, lying against the Western fence of the lot, a dead mulatto baby, apparently about three or four weeks old, wrapped in a linen sack, and without other clothing.—He told his mother,

³²⁴ *Alexandria Gazette*, June 25, 1866.

³²⁵ *Alexandria Gazette*, November 7, 1866.

³²⁶ *Alexandria Gazette*, November 8, 1866.

³²⁷ *Alexandria Gazette*, April 4, 1867.

Alice Brown, living in the vicinity, about what he had found, and through her the Coroner was informed of the circumstance, and held an inquest upon the body—the verdict of the jury being that the infant came to its death from causes unknown to them.³²⁸

WATCH REPORT.—Nights beautiful. Atmosphere bracing. Sunday night five lodgers at the watch house—last night three—all strangers. Town very quite. A ball at the “Slave Pen” last night, which broke up early, and without disturbance.³²⁹

MAGISTRATE’S OFFICE.—Lewis Madella, colored, committed to jail last week, for stealing the fencing around the property, known as the slave pen, was discharged with an admonition.³³⁰

WATCH REPORT.—....A colored girl named Lucy Williams who had been arrested in the building known as the old slave pen, for stealing \$7 from a lady residing near the corner of King and Alfred streets, with which she had purchased a dress skirt and sack, was put in the watch house, but released after the goods she had bought with the stolen money had been recovered—and they were found by the watch in a den, the like of which was not supposed to exist in this city....³³¹

WATCH REPORT.—Night clear and moon shining brightly. There were no disturbances, and no arrests. A colored ball was in progress at the old slave pen, but it was conducted very quietly....³³²

THE BOTTOM OF MEANNESS.—Some thief last night entered the building known as the “Slave Pen,” at the upper end of Duke street, and robbed its denizens, who are acknowledged to be the poorest and most squalid of the colored people of this city, of all the visible property they had, which was a very scanty supply of worn out bed clothing. The sufferers were searching the junk dealers shops to-day for the stolen articles.³³³

Curiously, in March 1869, a notice appears in the *Alexandria Gazette* that the property had been sold to a Mr. Josiah Ford for \$3,300 (Figure 125):

PROPERTY SALE.—The property at the upper end of Duke street, once known as Kephart’s Jail, and, latterly, as the Slave Pen, has been sold by Messrs. Green & Wise, real estate agents, to Mr. Josiah Ford, for \$3,300. Attached to the building is a half square of ground, which was included in the sale. The property will in future be the site of a Wheelwrights’s establishment³³⁴

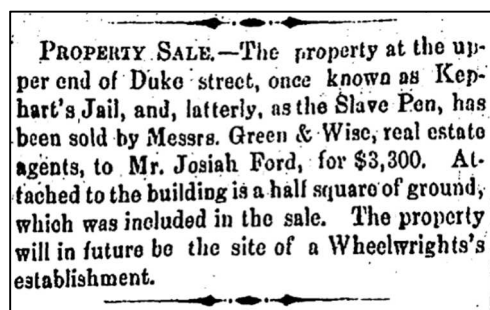


Figure 125. *Alexandria Gazette*, March 23, 1869.

This transaction, however, does not appear to have been recorded in the Alexandria deed books and Solomon Stover seems to retain ownership through November 4, 1869 when he sells the property to Thomas William Swann for \$3,100.³³⁵ A notice in the *Alexandria Gazette* associated with this second transaction

³²⁸ *Alexandria Gazette*, March 11, 1868.

³²⁹ *Alexandria Gazette*, December 2, 1868.

³³⁰ *Alexandria Gazette*, December 12, 1868.

³³¹ *Alexandria Gazette*, May 12, 1869.

³³² *Alexandria Gazette*, May 21, 1869.

³³³ *Alexandria Gazette*, August 4, 1869.

³³⁴ *Alexandria Gazette*, March 23, 1869.

³³⁵ Alexandria County Deed Book 23, p. 593.

noted that, “The property is now in a dilapidated condition, but it is the intention of the purchaser to repair and convert it next spring into a handsome residence” (Figure 126).³³⁶

On April 9 of the following year, it was noted in the newspaper that “The six new two story brick buildings commenced by Mr. Thomas Swann on the site of the prison known during the war as the “Slave Pen” on Duke Street, are in rapid progress of erection” (Figure 127).³³⁷

The six new buildings referred to here are the structures currently standing at 1301-1311 Duke Street, placed to the east of the current 1315 Duke Street, which as will be seen below, was previously numbered 131 3 Duke (the caption of a Civil War-era photograph also lists the address as 283 Duke, which, given the pre-1887 numbering system, is certainly possible as an address³³⁸). The following month, it was noted that, “The brick work of the six new buildings erected by Mr. Thomas Swann, on the site of what during the war was known as the Slave Pen, was completed on Friday evening last, and was topped off with the usual accompaniments. Mr. John Haynes was the builder” (Figure 128).³³⁹ It should be

noted that in order to build these six new buildings on the southeastern portion of the former slave pen lot, the brick women’s yard, the two-story brick building set back from Payne Street, and the one-and-a-half-story, brick, shed-like addition built between the two chimneys on the east façade of the original 1812/3 house would have needed to be removed, as 1305, 1307, 1309, and 1311 appear from the historic maps to at least partially stand on the footprints of these structures. In his proposed 1853 property subdivision, Kephart suggests the walls of his complex contain at least 150,000 bricks, with the implication that they can be repurposed (see above).³⁴⁰ The claim is uncited, but it has been said that these new residences were constructed using brick from the recently demolished portions of the slave jail complex. Likewise, the now-plastered-over interior brick dividing walls in the northern-most section of the first floor of the original kitchen wing exhibits irregularly-laid and mismatched

PROPERTY SALE.—The property at the head of Duke street, in former years known as “Kephart’s Jail,” and during the war as the “slave pen” has been sold by Mr. Solomon Stover to Mr. Thomas W. Swann for \$3,100. The property is now in a dilapidated condition, but it is the intention of the purchaser to repair and convert it next spring into a handsome residence.

Figure 126. *Alexandria Gazette*, November 8, 1869.

The six new two story brick buildings commenced by Mr. Thomas Swann on the site of the prison known during the war as the “Slave Pen,” on Duke street, are in rapid progress of erection.

Figure 127. *Alexandria Gazette*, April 9, 1870.

The brick work of the six new buildings erected by Mr. Thomas Swann, on the site of what during the war was known as the Slave Pen, was completed on Friday evening last, and was topped off with the usual accompaniments. Mr. John Haynes was the builder.

Figure 128. *Alexandria Gazette*, May 23, 1870.

³³⁶ *Alexandria Gazette*, November 8, 1869; much of this language was picked up and ran in the *Jackson Citizen Patriot*, November 11, 1869.

³³⁷ *Alexandria Gazette*, April 9, 1870.

³³⁸ See Library of Congress: <https://www.loc.gov/item/2018667034/> for title listing address as 283 Duke Street; *Washington Star*, July 27, 1887 for “The Numbering Process” of renumbering City addresses. See also an advertisement in the *Alexandria Gazette*, July 10, 1869, placed by J.C. Milburn noting a house and not numbered 318, also between Payne and West, but two blocks north on King.

³³⁹ *Alexandria Gazette*, May 23, 1870.

³⁴⁰ *Alexandria Gazette*, December 12, 1853.

brickwork, some bricks whitewashed and some not, also supposed to have been built from these repurposed bricks after this date (Figure 129).

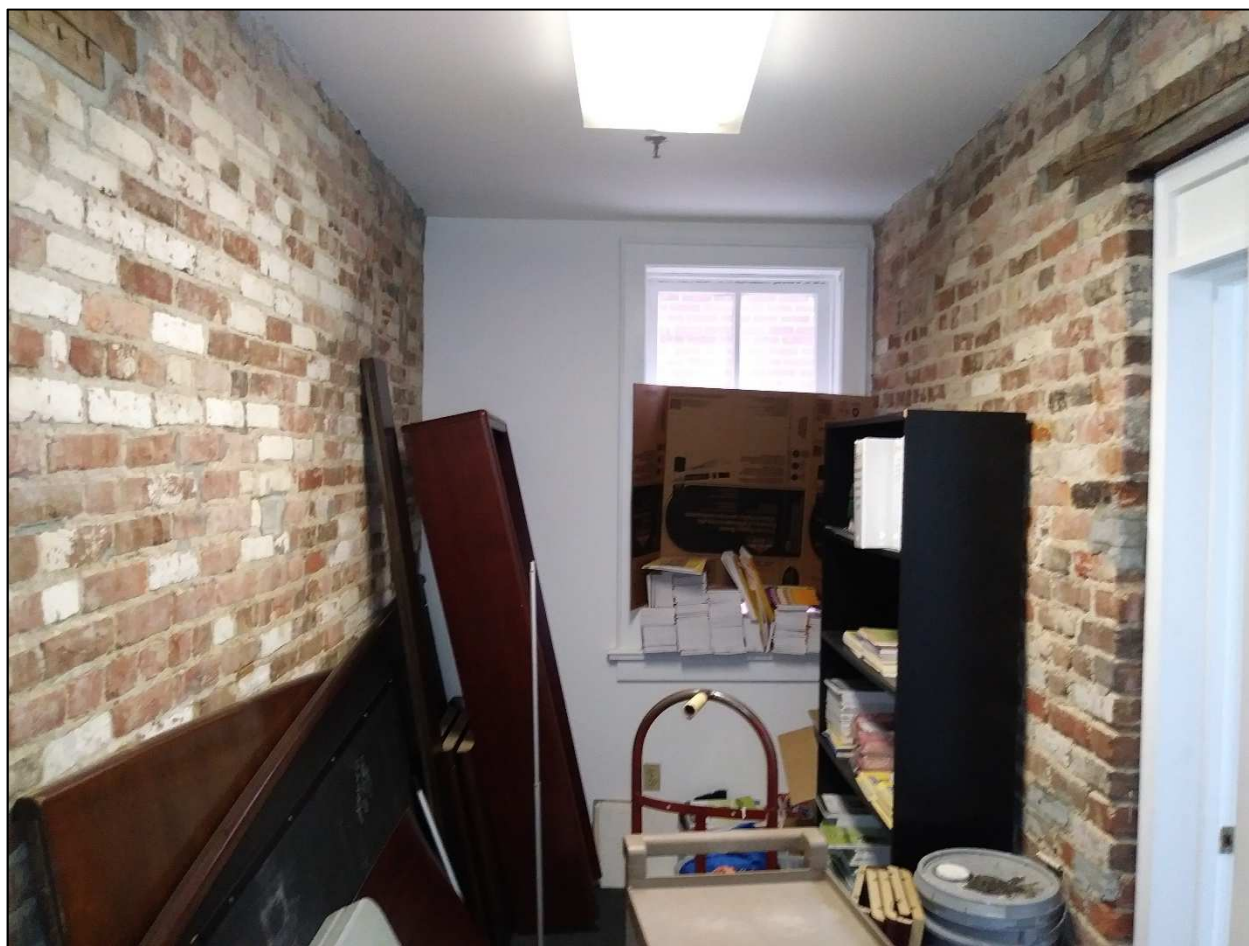


Figure 129. Interior dividing walls, mismatched whitewashed brick supposed to have been salvaged from slave jail complex walls.

Therefore, in order for Swann to construct these new dwellings between 1315 Duke Street and Payne Street, the women’s yard, two-story building offset from Payne Street, and the shed-like addition attached to the exterior of the two chimneys on the east façade of the original 1812/3 house would have had to have been demolished sometime prior to the early Spring of 1870.

In 1870, Julia Susan Wheelock (later Freeman) published her Civil War account of her time as a nurse in and around Washington, D.C. In it, she describes the Slave Pen as “another place of interest” in Alexandria and notes, at least as of her writing in November 1869, “It still bears the name of him who once trafficked in flesh and blood. ‘Rice & Co., Dealers in Slaves,’ may to this day be seen—though dimly—over the main entrance. A fresh coat of paint has been added, as if ashamed to stand out boldly in the pure light of liberty.”³⁴¹ Seen in multiple Civil War-era photographs and described by several authors, the sign above the door of 1315 Duke Street

³⁴¹ Julia Susan Freeman, *The boys in white; the experience of a hospital agent in and around Washington*, 1870, pp. 112-3.

clearly reads “PRICE, BIRCH & CO/DEALERS IN SLAVES”. However, from Wheelock’s description published in 1870, it would appear that the lettering on the front of 1315 Duke Street was not removed following the Civil War; rather, it was left to fade and then simply painted over. The possibility exists that this painted sign “Price, Birch & Co./Dealers in Slaves” exists under the existing exterior paint.

Either at the same time as this construction to the east or shortly thereafter, Swann makes repairs to 1315 Duke Street and begins renting it. At the beginning of December 1871, Swann advertises 1315 Duke Street for rent, writing in the paper (Figure 130):

FOR RENT—A THREE-STORY
BRICK HOUSE, with thirteen rooms, on
Duke street, between Payne and West, with
water and gas. It has been thoroughly repair-
ed. Apply to
THOMAS W. SWANN.³⁴²

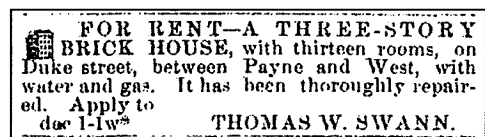


Figure 130. *Alexandria Gazette*, December 5, 1871.

It would appear that at some point, a Mrs. Bright responded to this advertisement and ran a boarding house at 1315 Duke Street. On September 12, 1873, Swann again advertises it for rent (Figure 131):

FOR RENT—A THREE-STORY
BRICK HOUSE, with a large back build-
ing, containing thirteen rooms and large cellar,
with water and gas, on Duke street, between
Payne and West streets, lately occupied by Mrs.
Bright as a large boarding house. Apply to
THOMAS W. SWANN.³⁴³



Figure 131. *Alexandria Gazette*, September 11, 1873.

If the men’s yard, hospital, or any other portions of the slave jail complex other than the original 1812/3 house, its original kitchen wing, and the passageway connecting these two structures existed beyond the construction of the new residences at 1301-1311 Duke Street in the spring of 1870 or the repair of 1315 Duke Street in the winter of 1871, it would appear that these are also demolished at some point before September 1874. A letter appearing in the *Janesville Gazette* and republished in the *Alexandria Gazette* noted:

...the old slave pen which stood some years after the war closed, has disappeared. I remember this as a large, low building, with white washed walls and several rooms large and small. In some of these, the evidence of the arrangements for the punishment of refractory “chattles” still remained, over which the visitor wondered and commented, expressing belief or unbelief in their actual use.³⁴⁴

³⁴² *Alexandria Gazette*, December 5, 1871.

³⁴³ *Alexandria Gazette*, September 12, 1873.

³⁴⁴ *Alexandria Gazette*, September 4, 1874, republishing a letter in the *Janesville Gazette*, Wisconsin.

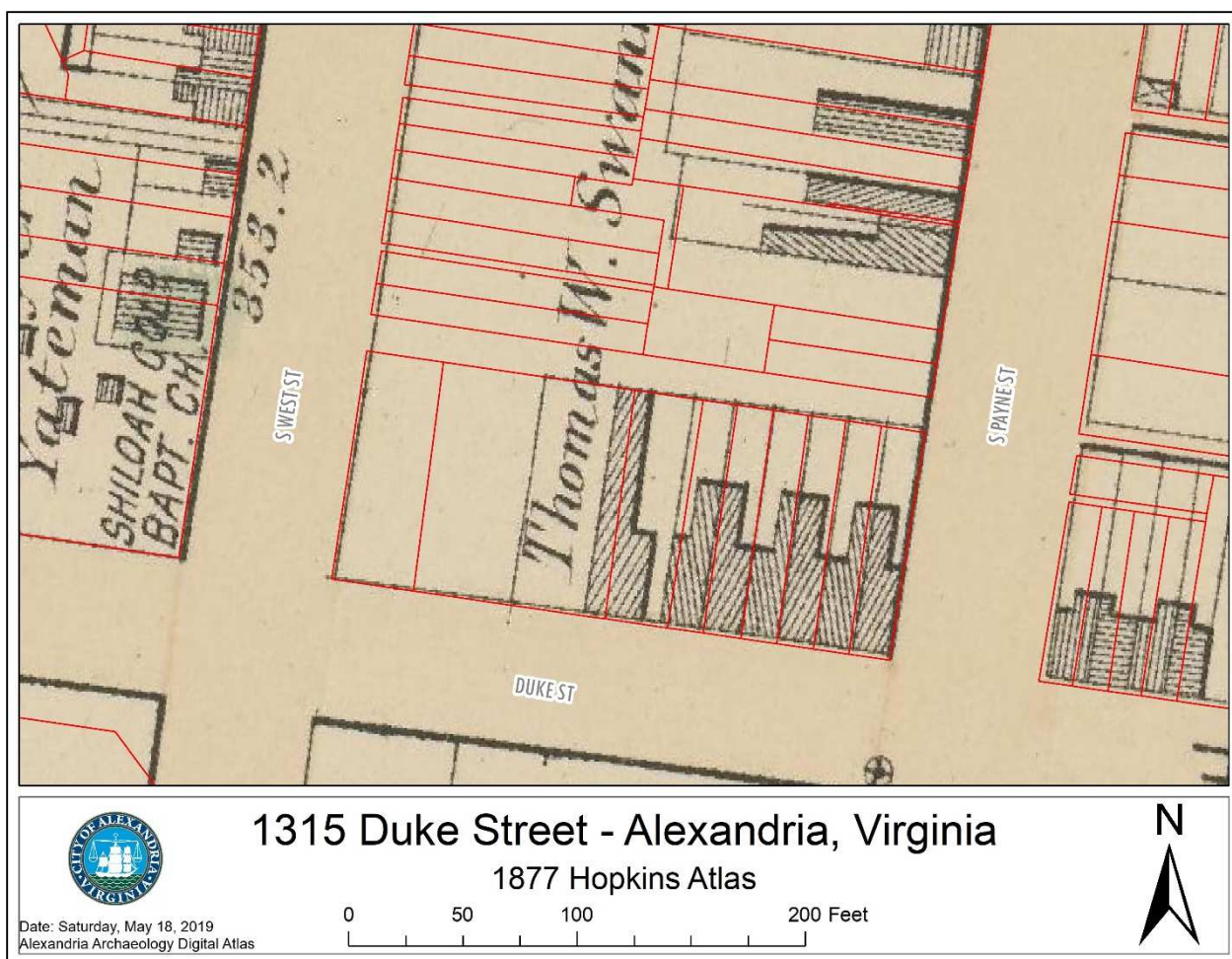


Figure 132. 1877 Hopkins Atlas of Alexandria, Virginia.

The 1877 *City Atlas of Alexandria Virginia* by Griffith Morgan Hopkins, Jr. confirms the removal of most of the slave jail complex by the mid-1870s (Figure 132).³⁴⁵ It shows six brick rowhouses placed back to back at 1301-1311 Duke Street and the brick building at 1315 Duke Street consisting of the main block and a single long wing running back to the present alley and separated from the residences to the east by a narrow alley. No buildings are visible to the west of 1315 Duke Street on this block and no other evidence of the slave jail complex exists on this map. The owner of the entire square from Duke to Prince is noted as Thomas W. Swann. See Appendix B for a conjectural plan of the site following the demolition of most of the slave jail complex and the construction of 1301-1311 Duke Street.

The Engineering Science report notes that the Alexandria Hospital moved to 1315 Duke Street and remained there until 1885, but no citation to this claim is provided and it is not clear from where this information originates.³⁴⁶ An institutional timeline produced by Inova Alexandria

³⁴⁵ *City Atlas of Alexandria Va: From Official Records, Private Plans, and Actual Surveys, Based Upon Plans Deposited in the Dept. of Surveys*, Griffith Morgan Hopkins, Jr., 1877.

³⁴⁶ Artemel et al., 1987, p. 52.

Hospital identifies the Alexandria Infirmary as the predecessor institution to the Alexandria Hospital, which was renamed in 1902.³⁴⁷ A pair of items appearing in the *Alexandria Gazette* in early 1902 supports this claim, but notes that the name was first changed to the “Belle Haven Hospital, of Alexandria, Va.” before becoming the “Alexandria Hospital” a month later.³⁴⁸

An act to incorporate the Alexandria Infirmary was approved by the state legislature December 23, 1872.³⁴⁹ In early January, 1873, the managers of the Infirmary rented a “large and commodious” house on the southwest corner of Duke and Fairfax Streets “for the reception of patients,”³⁵⁰ and on March 1, 1873, the Alexandria Infirmary was opened for patients.³⁵¹

At a meeting of the managers of the Alexandria Infirmary held on January 13, 1874, it was decided to leave this property at Duke and Fairfax Streets and find another more suited to the institution’s needs,³⁵² and on February 11, 1874, the Alexandria Infirmary moved to a new building on the north side of King Street, “two doors west of the Railroad Hotel” and “three doors west of Fayette street” (now the 1200 block between Fayette and Payne Streets).³⁵³

In December 1877, it appears that the Infirmary again was outgrowing its space and it was reported in the local newspaper that, “A larger and more convenient house than that now occupied by the Infirmary has been greatly desired by the lady in charge, and if funds sufficient could be obtained to purchase one the amount paid for annual rent might be used to extend the benefits of their refuge to more helpless ones.”³⁵⁴ No contemporary announcement has been located to show the Alexandria Infirmary moved from their King Street location at this time.

A brief notice in the newspaper announcing the death of a Mrs. O’Neale noted she was “a long time an inmate of the infirmary, upper end of Duke street”.³⁵⁵ In late 1881, plans were announced to attach a Dispensary to the Infirmary.³⁵⁶ It is not clear if the Infirmary is still located on King Street at this time, nor is it clear if the Dispensary is a physical structure or a kind of clinic run from the institution’s existing building, wherever it may be.

By early 1883, it would appear that the Alexandria Infirmary was again looking for a new location, and the Orphan Asylum building was identified as a suitable candidate.³⁵⁷ In January, a “grand Fair and Festival” was held to raise funds for the purchase of a new building.³⁵⁸ In late

³⁴⁷ Inova Alexandria Hospital, *A History of Health Care Excellence*, accessed at <https://web.archive.org/web/20180321130321/https://www.inova.org/upload/docs/Patients%20and%20Visitors/IAH/IAH-131th-anniv.pdf>.

³⁴⁸ *Alexandria Gazette*, January 11, 1902; February 17, 1902.

³⁴⁹ *Alexandria Gazette*, December 27, 1872; see *Alexandria Gazette*, January 30, 1873 for text of charter.

³⁵⁰ *Alexandria Gazette*, January 13, 1873.

³⁵¹ *Alexandria Gazette*, March 1, 1873.

³⁵² *Alexandria Gazette*, January 14, 1873.

³⁵³ *Alexandria Gazette*, February 10, 1874; February 11, 1874; March 10, 1874.

³⁵⁴ *Alexandria Gazette*, December 8, 1877.

³⁵⁵ *Alexandria Gazette*, August 31, 1880.

³⁵⁶ *Alexandria Gazette*, November 24, 1881.

³⁵⁷ *Alexandria Gazette*, January 15, 1883.

³⁵⁸ *Alexandria Gazette*, January 6, 1883.

February, it was announced that they would rent the Asylum and Widow's Home buildings at Pitt and Wolfe Streets³⁵⁹ and they opened at this new location June 21, 1883.³⁶⁰ Efforts were made to secure the deed to this property at this time, but these did not move forward and the transfer was not completed until April 24, 1886.³⁶¹

If the Alexandria Infirmary occupied 1315 Duke Street, it would appear that it would have been between late 1877 (or 1878 as the Inova Alexandria Hospital institutional timeline suggests) and 1883 when they move into the Asylum and Window's Home on Pitt and Wolfe Streets. While no contemporary evidence has been discovered to place the Alexandria Infirmary at 1315 Duke Street, several near-contemporary institutional histories were published, frequently as part of the Infirmary's Annual Report. The report for 1882 notes:

For six years [the infirmary] was continued quietly, but effectually in a small house at the upper end of King street, where it was thought advisable, in accordance with the wishes of some of the physicians, to enlarge the work of the institution by taking a house in which, in addition to its wards for the poor, rooms could be provided where, at a moderate board, any physician could place such patient as needed skillful nursing and at attendance.³⁶²

If the Alexandria Infirmary's location King Street opened in February 1874, this places them there until 1880 (1874 plus six years).

Another reads in part:

Miss [Juliana A.] Johns, with the assistance of several other ladies, conducted the institution for some time, with very little outside support, in a small brick residence on King street, near Fayette. This building having proved too small, Miss Johns succeeded in getting possession of the old slave pen at the head of Duke street. Early in 1883 a festival was given by the different churches of Alexandria for the benefit of the infirmary, and the sum of \$1,616.05 was netted. This was placed at the disposal of Miss Johns as a building fund. Shortly after transferring the infirmary to the orphan asylum building, and while waiting for the legislature to transfer the property permanently, Miss Johns died.³⁶³

A 20th century article appearing in the *Alexandria Gazette* about the history of the Alexandria Hospital notes:

The small institution struggled along and at times it seemed that this worthy scheme must be given up. After several years of the bitterest struggle it removed to a small house on upper King street. Here its affairs began to brighten and several years later it was again removed to upper Duke street to the old Slave Pen. (An apartment house now marks the spot) In the Slave Pen quarters the medical staff was enlarged by the addition of Dr. George Klipstein and Dr. Wm. M. Smith. This was in 1881.

In 1884 the institution was moved into the "Orphanage" and "Widows' Home" at Wolfe and Royal Streets...³⁶⁴

³⁵⁹ *Alexandria Gazette*, February 28, 1883.

³⁶⁰ *Washington Daily Critic*, June 22, 1883.

³⁶¹ *Alexandria Gazette*, January 21, 1884; April 24, 1886.

³⁶² *Alexandria Gazette*, February 17, 1883.

³⁶³ *Washington Daily National Republican*, March 6, 1884.

³⁶⁴ *Alexandria Gazette*, March 31, 1922.

From these reports in the newspapers, it is still not clear when (or even if) the Alexandria Hospital moved into 1315 Duke Street. The timeline produced by Inova Alexandria Hospital suggests the hospital moved to 1315 Duke Street in 1878 and purchased the Orphan's Asylum in 1886, but this is without citations.³⁶⁵ Furthermore, it erroneously notes that 1315 Duke Street is between Henry and Fayette Streets, not Payne and West Streets. Additional research into the use of the site by the Alexandria Hospital is recommended.

The earliest Sanborn Map and Publishing Company Atlas of Alexandria, Virginia was published in 1885; however, the property at 1315 Duke Street is not mapped in detail until 1902. In this first edition of the atlas, the block bounded by Duke, Prince, Payne, and West is only abstracted on the index page, noting "Coal & W[ood] Yard, 2 BR DW, 2 FR DW, 1 FR STA, BR ROW, FR ROW, FR GRO, FR [SAI]". One of the two BR DW [Brick Dwellings] is 1315 Duke Street and the BR ROW is 1301-1311 Duke Street (Figure 133).³⁶⁶ The index to this atlas, published prior to the renumbering campaign of 1887 also notes that the addresses 218-240 Duke Street fall west of Patrick Street, giving credence to the Civil War photo caption that lists the address of the slave jail complex as 283 Duke. Sanborn atlases published in 1891 and 1896 also exist for Alexandria, but these depict neither the north side of the 1300 block of Duke Street nor do they abstract the buildings on the block like the 1885 atlas.

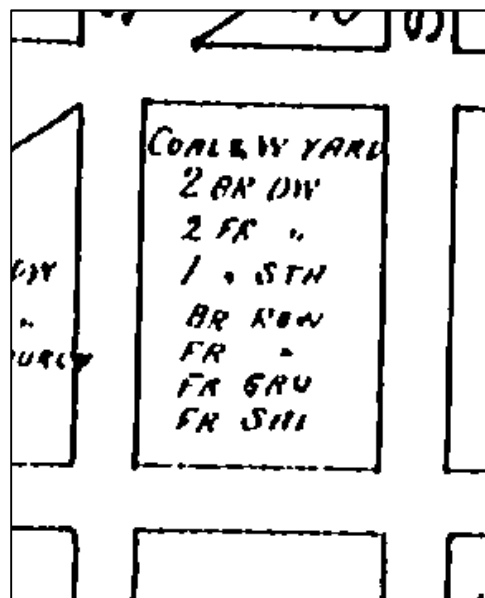


Figure 133. Sanborn Map and Publishing Company, Alexandria, Virginia, 1885, Index Page.

The 1984 excavations carried out by Engineering Science in advance of renovations and construction at 1315 and 1321 Duke Street were not the first "archaeology" conducted at this site. A report in the newspaper in December 1894 reported that, "A colored man on Saturday in cleaning out the old well at what was known as the "slave pen" before and during the war found a number of relics, such as handcuffs, &c." (Figure 134).³⁶⁷ It is not clear if the well referred to here is the well excavated by archaeologists in the basement of 1315 Duke or the

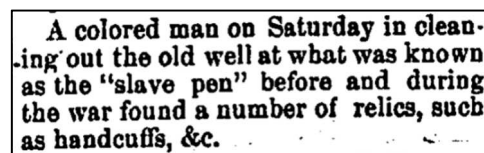


Figure 134. Alexandria Gazette, December 3, 1894.

³⁶⁵ Inova Alexandria Hospital, *A History of Health Care Excellence*, accessed at <https://web.archive.org/web/20180321130321/https://www.inova.org/upload/docs/Patients%20and%20Visitors/IAH/IAH-131th-anniv.pdf>.

³⁶⁶ 1885 Sanborn Map and Publishing Company Atlas of Alexandria, Virginia.

³⁶⁷ *Alexandria Gazette*, December 3, 1894.

brick shaft located to the rear of the property, or perhaps another well located elsewhere on the block (see Artemel et al., 1987).

On July 1, 1895, Thomas W. Swann died.³⁶⁸ He left the property at 1315 to his wife, Helen Mary Chapman Swann, during her life and then to his daughter Susan P. A. Calvert.³⁶⁹ Less than two weeks after his death, the house at 1315 Duke (then 1313 Duke) was again advertised for rent (Figure 135):

FOR RENT.—A LARGE THREE-STORY
BRICK HOUSE, 1313 Duke street, be-
tween West and Payne, with large side yard;
suitable for a boarding house or large family,
for \$14 per month. Key next door.³⁷⁰

**FOR RENT.—A LARGE THREE-STORY
BRICK HOUSE, 1313 Duke street, be-
tween West and Payne, with large side yard;
suitable for a boarding house or large family,
for \$14 per month. Key next door.
jy10 tf**

Figure 135. *Alexandria Gazette*, July 12, 1895.

Four months later, on November 6, 1895, Helen Mary Chapman Swann also died, and the property at 1315 Duke Street passed on to Swann's daughter Susan P. A. Calvert.³⁷¹

A similar advertisement ran the following year (Figure 136):

FOR RENT.—A large comfortable DWELL-
ING containing 14 rooms; suitable for a
boarding house or a large family. Latrobes
and bath room. Price only \$15 per month.
No. 1313 Duke street. Key next door.³⁷²

**FOR SALE OR RENT.
FOR RENT.—A large comfortable DWELL-
ING containing 14 rooms; suitable for a
boarding house or a large family. Latrobes
and bath room. Price only \$15 per month.
No. 1313 Duke street. Key next door.
oct23 tf**

Figure 136. *Alexandria Gazette*, October 27, 1896.

An image only dated c. 1900 exists of 1315 Duke Street, taken from across Duke Street and showing the western façade of the original 1812/3 structure at 1315 Duke and the western facades of its original kitchen wing and passageway connecting the two structure (Figure 137). This image is notable in that it shows the building following the removal of the slave jail complex (especially the men's yard, which would have blocked the view of most of this structure from this view) but prior to the addition of the fourth story and mansard roof to the main block of the structure and third floor to the rear wing sometime between 1902 and 1907 (see below).³⁷³

³⁶⁸ *Alexandria Gazette*, July 2, 1895.

³⁶⁹ Colton, Robert, 2013, Chain of Title, 1315 Duke Street, on file with Alexandria Archaeology, no Will Book citation given.

³⁷⁰ *Ibid.*; *Alexandria Gazette*, July 12, 1895.

³⁷¹ *Alexandria Gazette*, November 7, 1895.

³⁷² *Alexandria Gazette*, October 27, 1896.

³⁷³ See Artemel et al., 1987, plate 10. The source for this image is not cited in the archaeology report, although it was probably reproduced from a copy held by the Alexandria Library Special Collections. It is not yet known if the copy held there is of higher quality than this one, but it should be consulted as this c. 1900 image is the only known depiction that shows the property after the slave jail complex structures come down but before the third and fourth stories are added and the roofline is reworked as a mansard roof. If the quality of the original is better than this reproduction, it may be possible to compare the brickwork shown here to the Civil War-era photographs of the interior of the men's yard.

A dark, grainy photograph of the Alexandria Slave Pen, a large, multi-story building with a prominent chimney, viewed from across a street. A fence runs across the middle ground, and several figures are visible in the foreground. The image is labeled 'Plate 10' and '1315 Duke Street, ca. 1900.'

The 1900 U.S. Census for Alexandria, Virginia shows eight people in only one household residing at the boarding house at 1313 Duke Street (Figure 138). William Karick and his wife

T-224.

TWELFTH CENSUS OF THE UNITED STATES.

SCHEDULE No. 1.—POPULATION.

State Virginia County Albemarle Supervisor's District No. 8 Sheet No. 111
 Enumeration District No. 97

Township or other division of county Albemarle Township Name of Institution, _____
 Name of incorporated city, town, or village, within the above-named division, Albemarle City Ward of city, Part 4
 Enumerated by me on the 4 day of June, 1900, John T. Hunter, Enumerator.

LOCATION.		NAME.		RELATION.		PERSONAL DESCRIPTION.		NATIVITY.		CITIZENSHIP.		OCCUPATION, TRADE, OR PROFESSION.		EDUCATION.		PREVIOUS RESIDENCE.	
IN OTHER.	IN THIS.	OF EACH PERSON WHOSE PLACE OF ABODE ON JUNE 1, 1900, WAS IN THIS FAMILY.	EXCEPT REMOTE PLACES, LIST THE ABOVE UNDER THE FOLLOWING HEADS: Foreign born living on June 1, 1900. Those children born June 1, 1900.	RELATIONSHIP OF EACH PERSON TO HEAD OF FAMILY.	Color of skin.	Age.	Sex.	Married.	Single.	Married.	Single.	Place of birth of this person.	Place of birth of father.	Place of birth of mother.	Place of birth of person.	Place of birth of father.	Place of birth of mother.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18

35
36
37
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40
41
42

Figure 138. 1900 U.S. Census for 1313 Duke Street, Alexandria, Virginia.

1315 Duke Street – Building and Property History
BOARDING HOUSE AND TENAMENT (1866-1984)

Annie E. Karick appear to run the boarding house here in that year with six boarders, all of whom worked for the railroad.

The 1902 Sanborn Atlas shows the main, three-story block and two-story kitchen addition at 1315 Duke Street, labeled here “1313” (Figure 139).³⁷⁴ The roof of the main block of the building is constructed of slate or tin and the roof over the lower wing to the rear is made from wood shingles. It also shows a small one-story shed against the rear property line and alley (usually automobile garages are labeled “A”, so this might be an outhouse or privy). George Kephart (and Price and Burch as tenants) obtain a water company permit on November 11, 1859 to pipe water to their building (also listed at 1313 Duke Street). While running water does not preclude an outhouse at the rear of the property, having running water at a property would seem to be necessary before one can fill in a privy. Similar structures can also be seen behind 1301-1311 Duke Street, behind 1323 Duke Street, and in the large empty lot between present-day 1315 and 1323 Duke Street. Archaeologists excavating behind 1315 Duke Street encountered a brick-lined shaft in this location and interpreted it as a dry well or privy (Feature 3) (see Figure 140).³⁷⁵

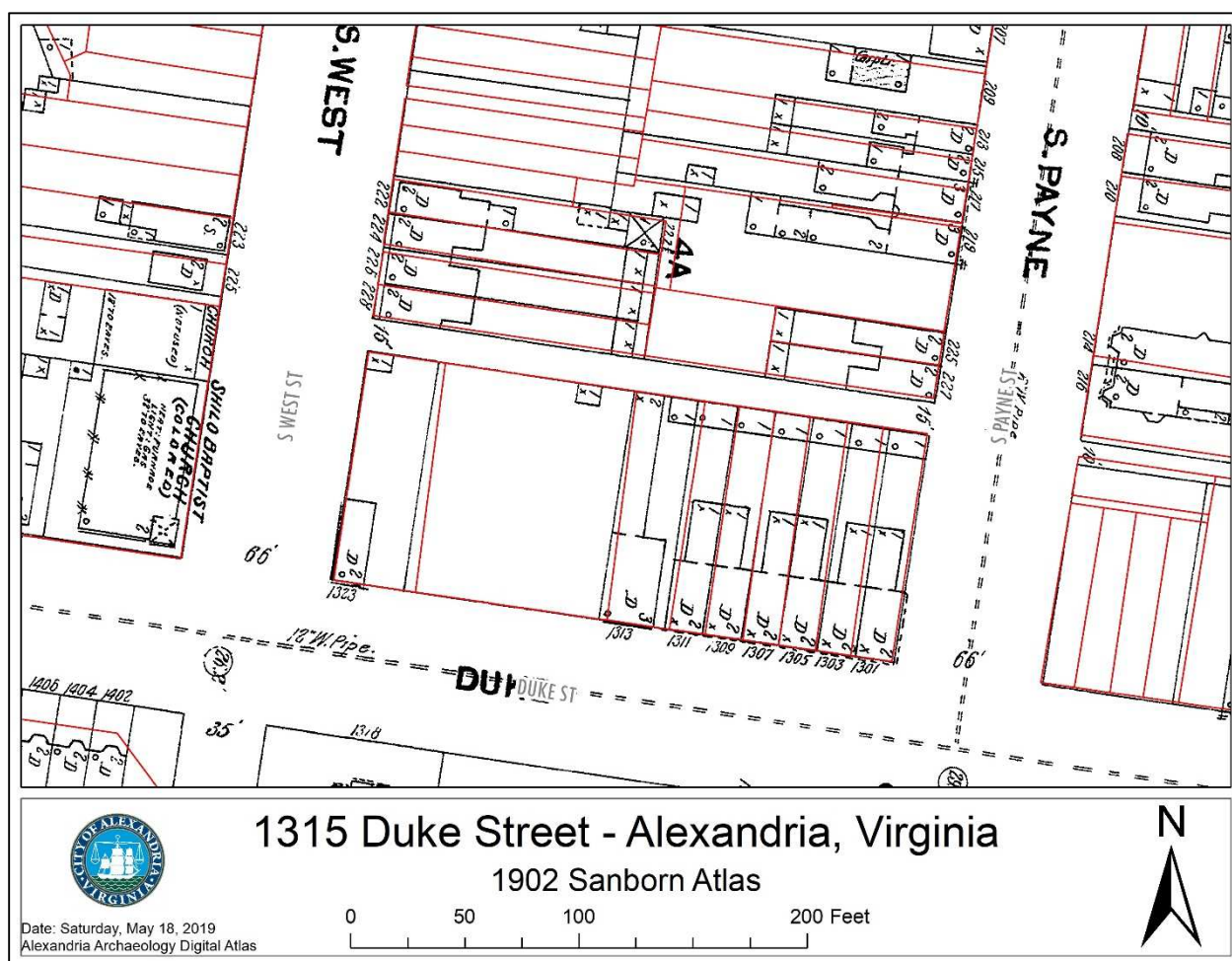


Figure 139. Sanborn Atlas, 1902.

³⁷⁴ 1902 Sanborn Map Co. Atlas of Alexandria, Virginia.

³⁷⁵ Artemel et al., 1987, See Feature 3.

The alley previously seen to the north of the parcels along Duke Street now extends across the entire block from Payne to West Streets. With the exception of the more modern buildings at 1321 Duke and 219 S. Payne Street, the current building stock of the half-block along Duke between Payne and West seems to be standing by 1902.

A 1902 item in the *Washington Evening Star* discusses the theft of a watch from “W. S. Weaver, whose boarding house is 1313 Duke Street”.³⁷⁶ It is not immediately clear from this if Weaver is running the boarding house or if he they are just tenants, but it would appear to be suggesting the former. In either case, the building here is clearly still being used as a boarding house at this time.

On July 21, 1905, Susan P. A. Calvert and her husband George E. Calvert mortgaged the parcel containing 1315 Duke Street and the parcel containing 1301-1311 Duke Street to C. S. Taylor Burke, trustee for \$6,000.³⁷⁷ Along with another property elsewhere in the City, this deed refers to 1315 Duke Street as a “three story brick dwelling”, but so does the following deed in the year 1915, by which time the fourth story has clearly been added to the main block of the building. It is not clear if the fourth story under the mansard roof has been added by 1905 or if it is not counted as a story because it is under the roof, but in either case, it is built by 1907 (see below).

Shortly after this transaction, On September 28, 1905, an advertisement appeared in the *Alexandria Gazette*, advertising (Figure 141):

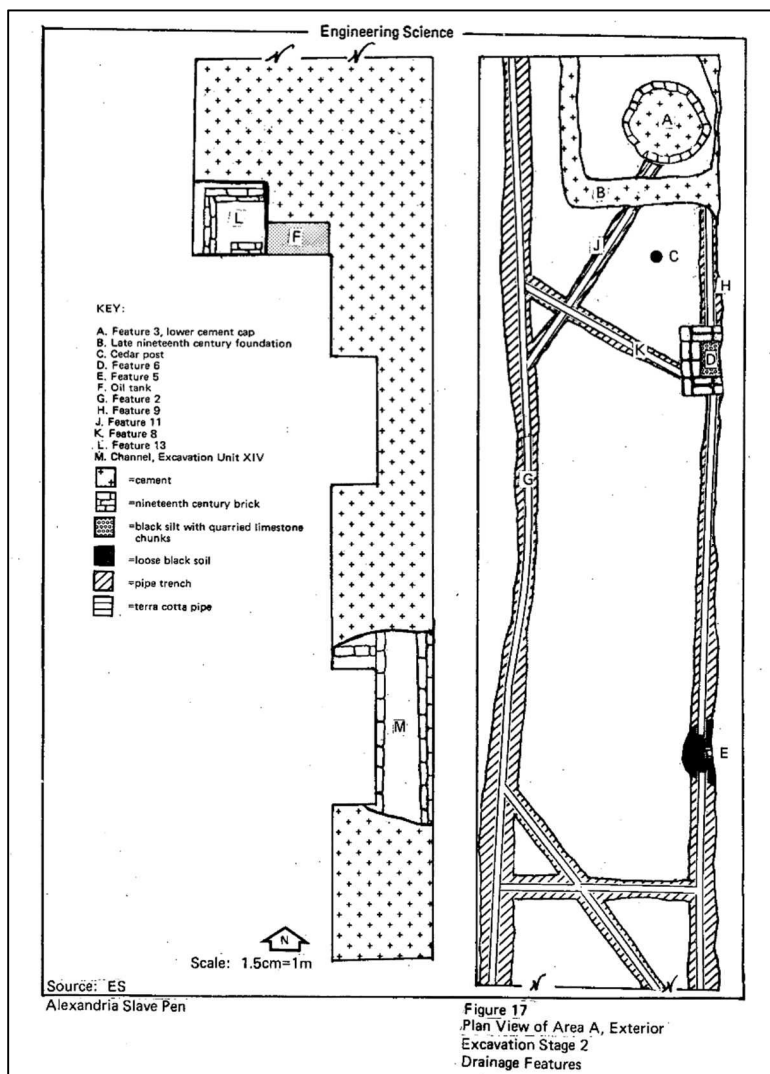


Figure 140. Engineering Science excavations to the east and north of 1315 Duke Street.

³⁷⁶ *Washington Evening Star*, August 15, 1902.

³⁷⁷ Alexandria County Deed Book 54 p. 146.

1315 Duke Street – Building and Property History
BOARDING HOUSE AND TENAMENT (1866-1984)

THE SWANN,
1315 DUKE STREET.

Flats for light housekeeping. Three, four and five large rooms, with bath and water, large side yard and good sheds, \$8, \$10 and \$12 per month to good tenants. Reference required. No others need apply. Flats open from 5 to 7 p. m.

Apply on the premises.

GEO. E. CALVERT³⁷⁸

THE SWANN,
1315 DUKE STREET.
Flats for light housekeeping. Three, four and five large rooms, with bath and water, large side yard and good sheds, \$8, \$10 and \$12 per month to good tenants. Reference required. No others need apply. Flats open from 5 to 7 p. m. Apply on the premises.
sep22 1w
GEO. E. CALVERT.

Figure 141. Alexandria Gazette, September 28, 1905.

The 1907 Sanborn Map Company atlas shows the structure currently at 1315 Duke Street (here labeled as 1313), and the other dwellings at 1301-1311 Duke Street (Figure 142).³⁷⁹ It notes they are of brick (colored pink). The small buildings at the rear of these lots, referred to as sheds in the above advertisement for rooms at The Swann, are built of wood (colored yellow). In 1907, the structure at 1315 Duke Street is listed as a boarding house. It is also marked here as being a four-story structure where as in 1902 it was only three. In

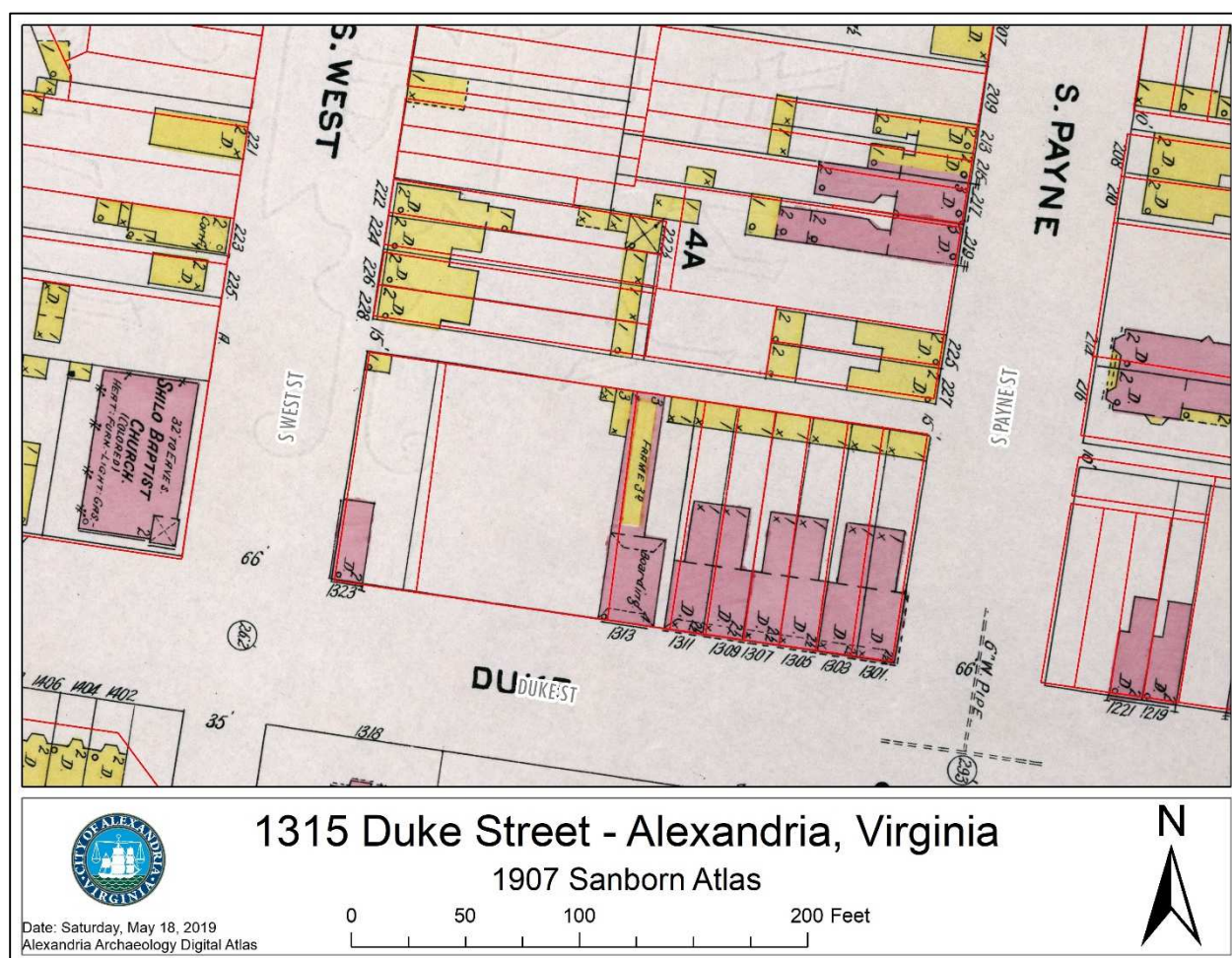


Figure 142. Sanborn Atlas, 1907.

³⁷⁸ Alexandria Gazette, September 28, 1905.

³⁷⁹ 1907 Sanborn Map Company Atlas, Alexandria, Virginia; https://www.loc.gov/item/sanborn08968_005/.

addition to the number “4” indicating the added story, the dashed lines at the front and rear of the main block suggest it has done so by the construction of its current mansard roof configuration by this date. Furthermore, the original brick kitchen wing and passageway attached to the rear of the main block has had a frame story added on top of it by this date as well, as indicated by the label and the pink outline and yellow fill of this outline. The roof covering over the main block remained slate or tin and the covering over the rear wing remained wood shingles after these changes. While the roof over the main block was radically reconfigured during this period, it is unknown if the roof over the rear wing is of new construction dating to this period or was raised by one story and reused. It is also unknown what features remain between the current second and third floors related to the original roof construction such as the brick cornice or remnants of the framing system for the former roof.

A small three-story frame structure of unknown function (possibly a separate stair entrance for use by the boarding house tenants) has been added on the northwest corner of the addition. This structure was not present on either the 1902 Sanborn atlas or the circa 1900 photograph of 1315 Duke Street. The Alexandria Library Special Collections has a collection of historic building and repair permits that cover this time period. The collection index indicates that permits exist for 1301-1311 Duke Street for Mrs. Rosenfeld dated August 11, 1908 and S.P.A. Calvert dated June 20, 1927. These dates may be reversed as the Susan P. A. Calvert does not sell the property to Max Rosenfeld until 1915. A permit for 1313 Duke Street for N.[orman] Rosenfeld dated June 20, 1927 is known to exist but has not yet been acquired by City staff. The index does not state what alternations the permits covered, but perhaps the impetus behind the building or repair permit dated August 1908, an item in the *Washington Evening Star* dated May 14, 1908 noted a small fire that had broken out on the rear porch of 1313 Duke Street that was extinguished prior to the arrival of the fire department.³⁸⁰

Along with the building’s initial conversion for use as a slave pen in 1828, the major phase of construction of most of the slave jail architecture in early or the mid-1830s, and the removal of this slave pen architecture sometime around 1870, this renovation between 1902 and 1907 represents one of the most impactful modifications to this structure.

The 1910 U.S. Census identifies twenty-five people in four households residing at 1315 Duke Street, all white (Figure 143).

The 1912 Sanborn atlas is nearly identical to 1907 atlas with only a few exceptions (Figure 144).³⁸¹ The label over 1315 Duke Street has changed from “Boarding” to “Tenement”, the address 1313 is now noted in parentheses under the current address 1315 (perhaps this is to provide the old address as reference or to indicate that both addresses being used by the boarding house concurrently, one for the main block and one for the rear addition), the roof covering of the shed or privy structure at the rear of the properties along Duke Street changes from wood

³⁸⁰ *Washington Evening Star*, May 14, 1908.

³⁸¹ 1912 Sanborn Map Company Atlas, Alexandria, Virginia.

STATE		DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND LABOR - BUREAU OF THE CENSUS		THIRTEENTH CENSUS OF THE UNITED STATES: 1910 - POPULATION		SUPERVISOR'S DISTRICT NO. 8		SHEET NO. 4766	
COUNTY		NAME OF INCORPORATED PLACE		WARD NO. 9		INCORPORATION DISTRICT NO. 17 A		4766	
TOWNSHIP OR OTHER DIVISION OF COUNTY		NAME OF INSTRUCTION		ENUMERATED BY ME ON THE 25		DAY OF April		YEAR 1910	
AGE	SEX	RELATION	PERSONAL DESCRIPTION	CITIZENSHIP	EDUCATION	INDUSTRY	RECEIPTS	RECEIPTS	RECEIPTS
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40
41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50
51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60
61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70
71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80
81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90
91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100
101	102	103	104	105	106	107	108	109	110
111	112	113	114	115	116	117	118	119	120
121	122	123	124	125	126	127	128	129	130
131	132	133	134	135	136	137	138	139	140
141	142	143	144	145	146	147	148	149	150
151	152	153	154	155	156	157	158	159	160
161	162	163	164	165	166	167	168	169	170
171	172	173	174	175	176	177	178	179	180
181	182	183	184	185	186	187	188	189	190
191	192	193	194	195	196	197	198	199	200
201	202	203	204	205	206	207	208	209	210
211	212	213	214	215	216	217	218	219	220
221	222	223	224	225	226	227	228	229	230
231	232	233	234	235	236	237	238	239	240
241	242	243	244	245	246	247	248	249	250
251	252	253	254	255	256	257	258	259	260
261	262	263	264	265	266	267	268	269	270
271	272	273	274	275	276	277	278	279	280
281	282	283	284	285	286	287	288	289	290
291	292	293	294	295	296	297	298	299	300
301	302	303	304	305	306	307	308	309	310
311	312	313	314	315	316	317	318	319	320
321	322	323	324	325	326	327	328	329	330
331	332	333	334	335	336	337	338	339	340
341	342	343	344	345	346	347	348	349	350
351	352	353	354	355	356	357	358	359	360
361	362	363	364	365	366	367	368	369	370
371	372	373	374	375	376	377	378	379	380
381	382	383	384	385	386	387	388	389	390
3									

1315 Duke Street - Alexandria, Virginia
1912 Sanborn Atlas

Date: Saturday, May 18, 2019
Alexandria Archaeology Digital Atlas

shingles to slate or tin, and the rear wings of 1301-1311 Duke Street are now covered in composition shingles.

At some point in or just prior to 1915, Susan P. A. Calvert defaulted on a note secured by the property at 1315 Duke Street and on May 22, 1915, the property was sold by C. S. Taylor Burke, Trustee at public auction to Douglass Stuart for \$3,900.00, who assigned his purchase to Max Rosenfeld on June 3, 1915.³⁸²

Following the sale of the property to Rosenfeld, it would appear that for some period of time 1315 Duke Street was not rented as a boarding house. Several month later, in August 1915, the following (quite large) advertisement appears in the *Alexandria Gazette* (Figure 145):

For Rent
That entire building No. 1315
Duke Street known as
The Old
Slave Pen
suitable for factory or storage
Very Low Rent
GRAHAM & OGDEN
529 King Street Alexandria, Virginia.³⁸³

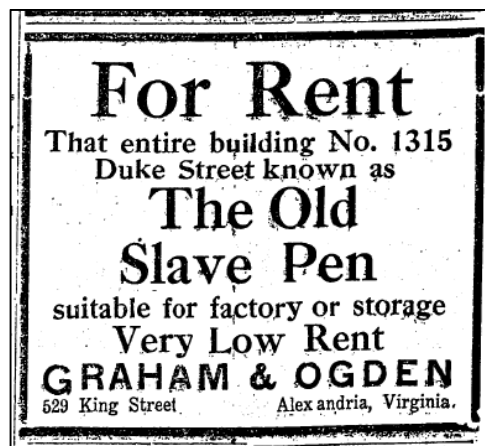


Figure 145. *Alexandria Gazette*, August 11, 1915.

Then, in May 1917, an issue regarding 1315 Duke Street, apparently vacant, came before City Council:

Councilman Ballenger introduced a resolution asking for relief for Max Rosenfeld to prevent the further destruction of his unoccupied house on the north side of Duke street between Payne and West streets, formerly known as the old “Slave Pen.” Mr. Ballenger explained that the property recently had been greatly damaged. The matter was referred to the committee on police with instructions to take immediate action.

Councilman Desmond suggested drastic action for such vandalism to vacant property which he declared causes property owners considerable loss at time.

Councilman Ballenger also directed attention to children who frequently mutilated newly painted fences and houses with chalk marks.³⁸⁴

Several weeks later, an update was published under the heading, “ACTS OF VANDALISM”:

On the 8th instant Max Rosenfeld addressed a communication to the City Council calling attention to the fact that what was formerly the old “slave pen” property on the north side of Duke street, between Payne and West, now owned by him, was gradually being wrecked by parties unknown to the petitioner. This property is at present unoccupied, and like some other houses in the city which are minus tenants, is being defaced and damaged by mischievous persons.

Council referred the communication to the committee on police, and last night Aldermen Brill presented their report as follows: “Your committee met with the Police Commissioners and recommended that the police be instructed to make a careful investigation of the within petition and report to their chief.”

³⁸² Alexandria County Deed Book 64 p. 381; see also Alexandria County Deed Book 64, p. 483.

³⁸³ *Alexandria Gazette*, August 11, 1915.

³⁸⁴ *Alexandria Gazette*, May 9, 1917.

The Aldermen adopted the report, but the Common Council refused to concur in their action and appointed a committee of conference. During the interchange of opinion between the joint committees of the two boards it was suggested that it was the duty of the police force that when they see property is being defaced or damaged to use proper efforts to ascertain who commits such acts of vandalism, and when identified to bring them before the Police Court.

It may be said truthfully that the perpetrators of such outrages take care not to engage in their diversions while policemen are in the neighborhood, and that the officers of the law are not gifted as was Argus with many eyes. The joint committee, however, expressed the opinion that when the officers see what has been done, they should use efforts to ascertain the names of the vandals.

The joint committee finally agreed to report that “the matter be referred to the Mayor and Police Commissioners with the recommendation that action be taken as facts warrant.”

The owners of tenantless property in different sections of the city are often exasperated when they discover that lead and other pipes have been removed by thieves. Such acts are generally traced to boys. A year ago the Gazette directed attention to the law in such cases. It provides that any person found in possession of such plunder be sent to the penitentiary. If there were no buyers of such junk there would be no sellers.³⁸⁵

By August 1918, it would appear that 1315 Duke Street was again occupied and had at least one tenant. A list of men registered with the local draft board published in the *Alexandria Gazette* on August 27, 1918 included, the name “William Bryan Gentry, 1315 Duke Street”.³⁸⁶

By 1920, Max Rosenfeld may have been considering selling his property on the 1300 block of Duke Street. In April, an advertisement for “Homes for Sale” listed, “1300 block Duke Street. Seven brick houses. All pay good rentals and have good tenants. Fine investment” (Figure 146).³⁸⁷ There do not appear to be seven brick buildings on the south side of the 1300 block of Duke Street, and the similarity in the tenants listed here with the following advertisement strongly suggests these seven brick houses are the six between 1301-1311 Duke Street and 1315 Duke Street.



Figure 146. *Alexandria Gazette*, April 7, 1920.

The 1920 U.S. Census lists 24 people living in six households at 1315 Duke Street. All 24 people were white (Figure 147).³⁸⁸

In July 1920, another advertisement appeared in the *Alexandria Gazette*, informing the public that 1315 Duke Street would be sold at public auction to settle an estate (Figure 148). It read:

³⁸⁵ *Alexandria Gazette*, May 23, 1917.

³⁸⁶ *Alexandria Gazette*, August 27, 1918.

³⁸⁷ *Alexandria Gazette*, April 7, 1920.

³⁸⁸ 1920 U.S. Census, Alexandria, Virginia.

Auction Sale

of
Valuable Investment Property
In City of Alexandria, Va.

To settle an estate, I will sell at public auction, on the premises, on Saturday, July 17th, 1920, at 2 p. m., the following property, to wit:

The Norman Apartment house, No. 1315 Duke street, containing seven apartments, all rented.

Six two and a half story brick houses, Nos. 1301 to 1311 containing seven rooms each, and adjoining the Norman, on the east, these properties are good renters, and are all rented.

One large building lot, adjoining the Norman, on the west, 83x100 feet, to a wide alley.

This is the best investment property in the city, and is in good repair.

This entire property will be sold in part, or as a whole, to the highest bidder.

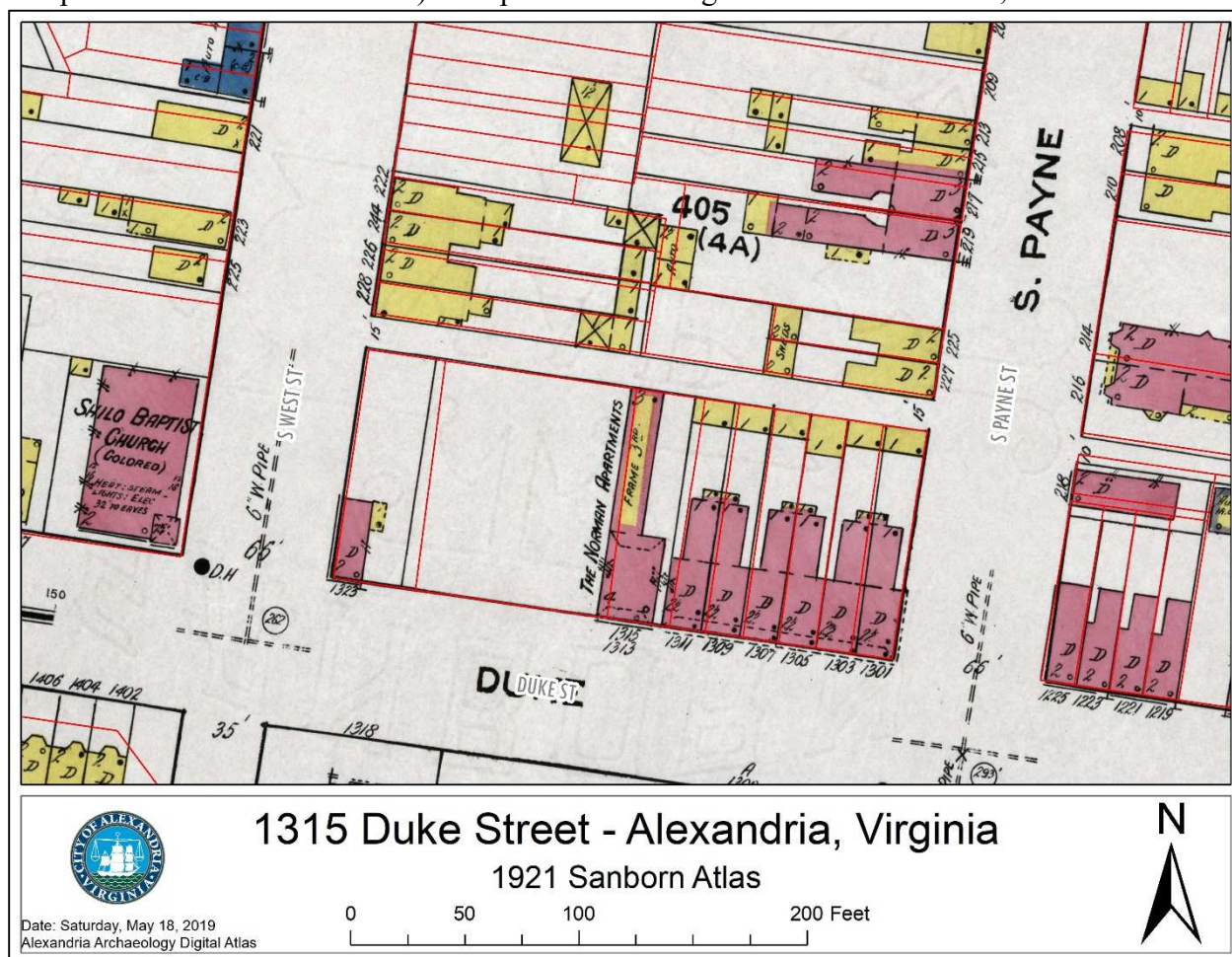
Terms: One third cash, or all at the option of the purchaser, \$500.00 cash on day of sale, and terms to be complied with in ten days.

164-6t THOMAS L. CARTER, Auctioneer.

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Case class.	NAME	RECEIVED	PERSONAL INFORMATION	RESIDENCE			EDUCATION	OCCUPATION	EXERCISES	OTHER INFO.	REMARKS
				Place of birth and present address of subject.	Place of birth of father.	Place of birth of mother.					
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36
37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48
49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60
61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72
73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84
85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96
97	98	99	100	101	102	103	104	105	106	107	108
109	110	111	112	113	114	115	116	117	118	119	120
121	122	123	124	125	126	127	128	129	130	131	132
133	134	135	136	137	138	139	140	141	142	143	144
145	146	147	148	149	150	151	152	153	154	155	156
157	158	159	160	161	162	163	164	165	166	167	168
169	170	171	172	173	174	175	176	177	178	179	180
181	182	183	184	185	186	187	188	189	190	191	192
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205	206	207	208	209	210	211	212	213	214	215	216
217	218	219	220	221	222	223	224	225	226	227	228
229	230	231	232	233	234	235	236	237	238	239	240
241	242	243	244	245	246	247	248	249	250	251	252
253	254	255	256	257	258	259	260	261	262	263	264
265	266	267	268	269	270	271	272	273	274	275	276
277	278	279	280	281	282	283	284	285	286	287	288
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313	314	315	316	317	318	319	320	321	322	323	324
325	326	327	328	329	330	331	332	333	334	335	336
337	338	339	340	341	342	343	344	345	346	347	348
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385	386	387	388	389	390	391	392	393	394	395	396
397	398	399	400	401	402	403	404	405	406	407	408
409	410	411	412	413	414	415	416	417	418	419	420

The 1921 Sanborn Atlas also reflects this name change and labels the tenement at 1315 Duke Street “The Norman Apartments” (Figure 150).³⁹¹ The wood shingles over the rear wing have been replaced by composite shingles and it is noted that there are five windows on both the east and west façade of the main block (however, the inventory of windows appears to be far from complete or uniform in this atlas). The parentheses are gone from around 1313, but both



³⁹⁰ 1910 US Census, Alexandria, Ward 2.

³⁹¹ 1921 Sanborn Map Company Atlas, Alexandria, Virginia.

addresses are still listed, suggesting that both are still used and 1313 is not listed for reference as a legacy address. Also gone from this depiction is the small three-story structure, interpreted possibly as an enclosed, exterior staircase, located adjacent to the northwest corner of the rear addition.

Max Rosenfeld died on May 27, 1926.³⁹² In his will, dated August 29th 1924, he bequeathed to his wife, Jennie E. Rosenfeld, “all the rest and residue of my property, real personal and mixed, of whatsoever kind and nature and wheresoever located, to be her own absolutely and in fee simple and to do with as she pleases.”³⁹³

The 1927 aerial photograph series for Washington, D.C. and the surrounding area shows a similar arrangement as the earlier 1921 Sanborn map (Figure 151).³⁹⁴ The main block at 1315 is difficult to see, but still discernable with its mansard roof, as is the long gable-roofed addition on the rear. The square-shaped lot to the west is still vacant in 1927. This lot appears to be grass

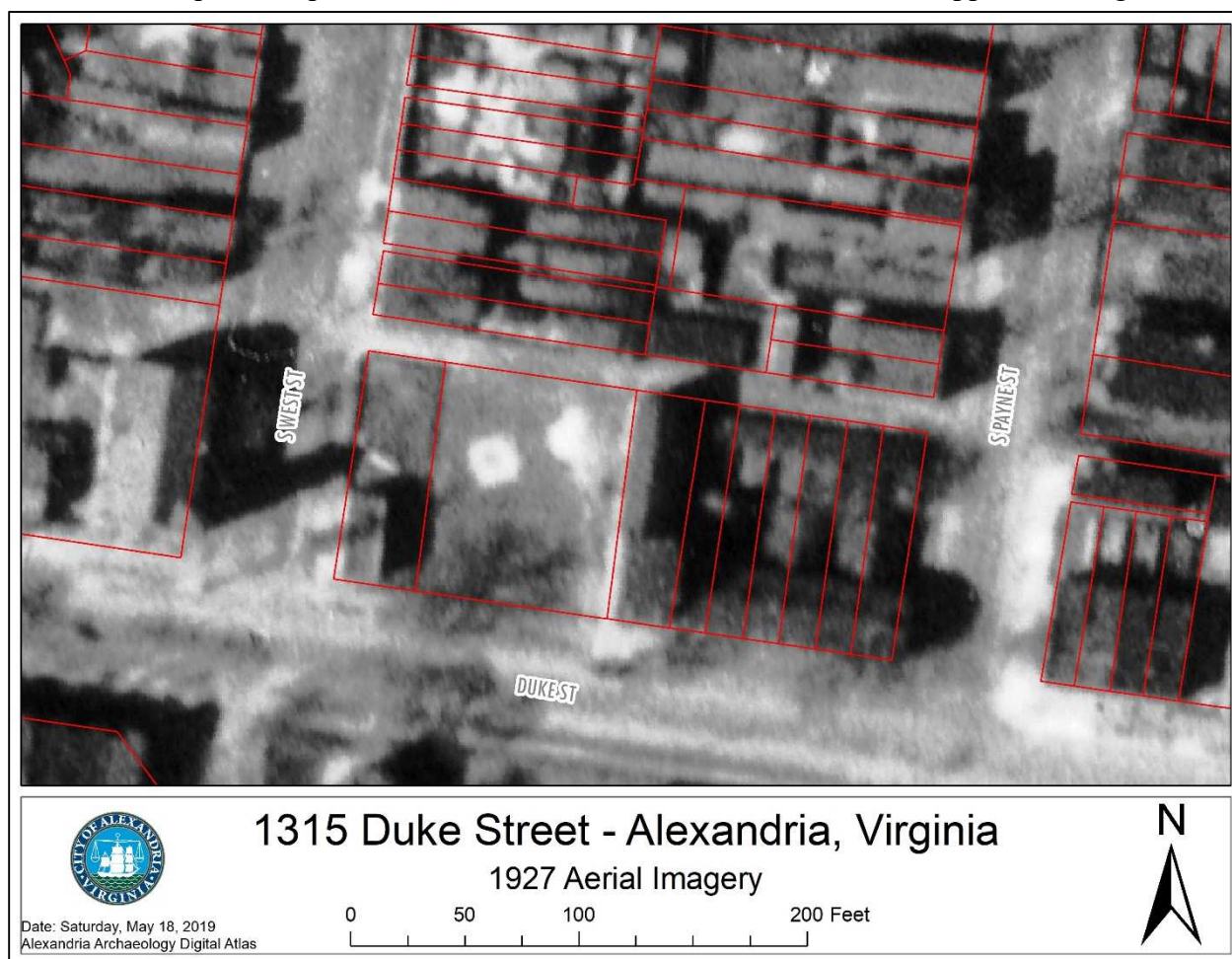


Figure 151. 1927 Aerial Imagery.

³⁹² Death Certificate, Max Rosenfeld, May 27, 1926, certificate number 1926011367.

³⁹³ Alexandria County Will Book 4, p. 311.

³⁹⁴ National Capital Park and Planning Commission, Record Group 328, <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/305955>, on file with Alexandria Archaeology.

1315 Duke Street – Building and Property History
BOARDING HOUSE AND TENAMENT (1866-1984)

with two patches of exposed dirt in the center and north east corners. The lot is a little small for it at approximately 100 feet by 85 feet, but similar grass lots with and dirt patches are readily identifiable in this aerial series as informal baseball fields (some much more clearly than others).

The 1930 U.S. Census identifies 33 people in ten households living at the property in that year, all identified as white (Figure 152). The address given is 1313 Duke Street.

Figure 152. 1930 U.S. Census, 1313 Duke Street, Alexandria, Virginia.

The 1931 edition of the Sanborn Atlas for Alexandria, Virginia has not yet been consulted for this study, but it is recommended as this may shed light on some of the changes identified between the 1921 and 1941 editions, especially the roof material (see below).

The 1937 aerial imagery for Alexandria is much sharper and at a higher resolution than the 1927 aerial photograph series (Figure 153).³⁹⁵ No major changes at 1315 Duke Street appear in this image. Dormers in the fourth floor of the main block are visible and the mansard roof is much clearer in this image. Also visible are the chimneys on the main block and kitchen addition. From the shadow cast by it, a picket fence can be identified along the alley in the back of these lots on Duke Street. The one-story privy or shed at 1315 Duke Street no longer appears in this scene. The one-story privies or sheds behind 1301-1311 Duke Street have been replaced or modified to be larger automobile garages fronting on the alley behind these parcels. It is not clear if this change had been made by the 1927 aerial, but it appears penciled in on the physical copy of the Sanborn Atlas originally published in 1921 held by Alexandria Archaeology. These may be the garages that currently exist behind these structures. The vacant lot to the west has an unidentified T-shaped feature in the center, perhaps this is a garden. Along Duke Street there exists what appears to be a tall, two-story tall, three-sided wall, billboard, or screen. This does not appear on

³⁹⁵ 1937 Aerial Imagery. Farm Service Agency, FG Series. National Archives, RG 145.8.

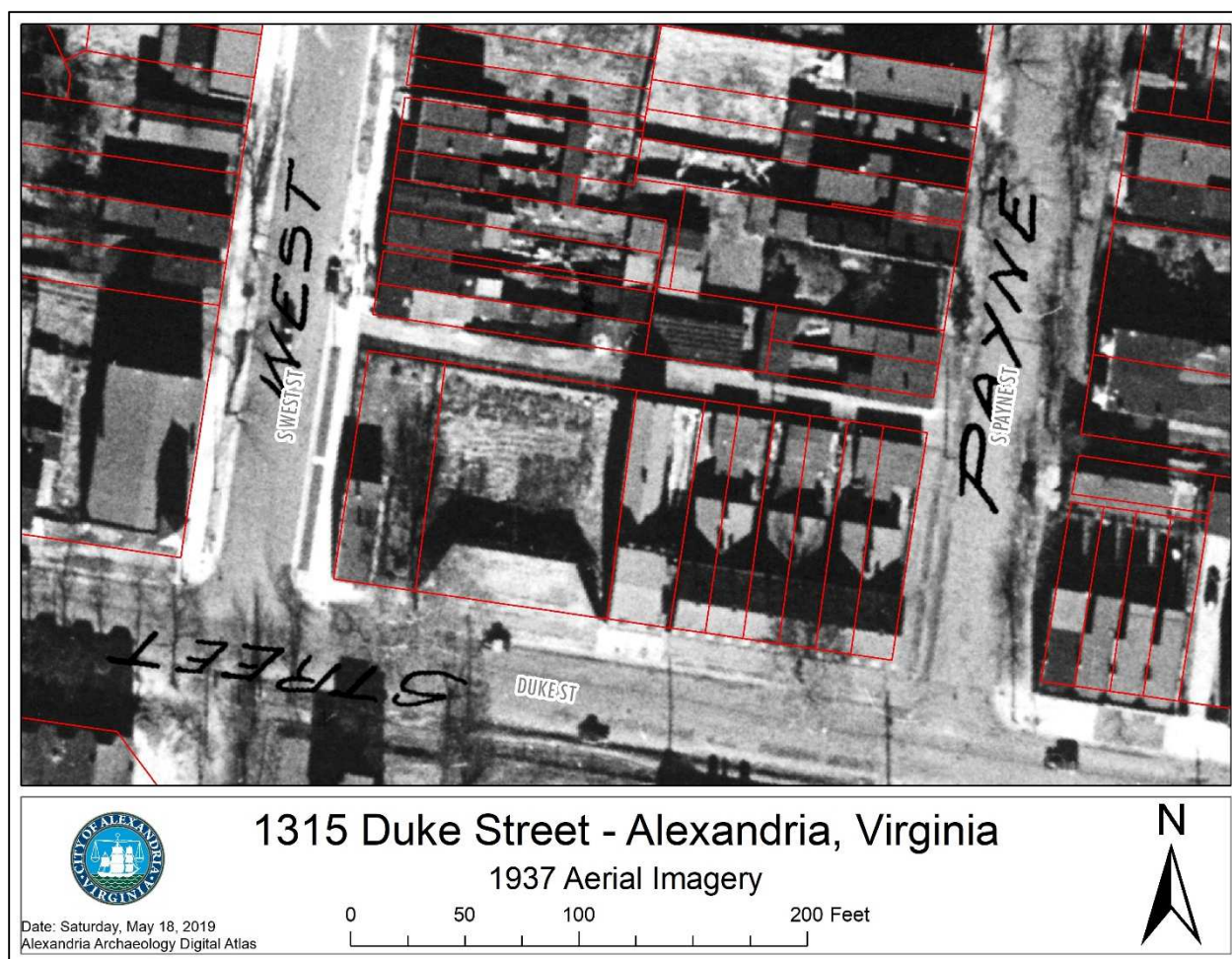


Figure 153. 1937 Aerial Imagery.

the 1927 aerial nor does it appear on any of the Sanborn atlases, and it is not clear what this feature represents.

The 1940 U.S. Census for Alexandria, Virginia names 33 people living at 1315 Duke Street in seven different households, all were identified as white (Figure 154).³⁹⁶

The 1941 Sanborn atlas has removed the name “Norman Apartments” from 1315 Duke Street and replaced it with “AP’TS” (Figure 155). The roof material over the rear wing has changed to slate or tin as well.³⁹⁷

On October 13, 1941, Jennie E. Rosenfeld, the widow of Max Rosenfeld who inherited the property upon his death, sells 1315 Duke Street and 1301-1311 Duke Street to B. [Benjamin] G. Mendelson, Norman Mendelson, Howard Mendelson, and Mary Mendelson.³⁹⁸

³⁹⁶ 1940 U.S. Census, Alexandria, Virginia.

³⁹⁷ 1941 Sanborn Map Company atlas, Alexandria, Virginia.

³⁹⁸ Alexandria Deed Book 180, p. 233.

1315 Duke Street – Building and Property History
BOARDING HOUSE AND TENAMENT (1866-1984)

Figure 154. 1940 U.S. Census, 1315 Duke Street, Alexandria, Virginia.

No changes to 1315 Duke Street appear in the 1958 edition of the Sanborn atlas except for a minor subdivision of the garage behind 1301 Duke Street (Figure 154).³⁹⁹

Sometime between the 1958 Sanborn Atlas and the 1964 aerial imagery (Figure 155), a low, one-story commercial structure appears on the formerly vacant lot to the west of 1315 Duke Street. This is visible on a 1964 aerial photograph and is not the current structure at 1321 Duke Street. It appears to have been demolished sometime just prior to the 1984 archaeological investigations at 1315 Duke Street (Figure 158) and replaced by the building currently at 1321 Duke Street, which was built in 1985.⁴⁰⁰

On November 28, 1973, the Board of Directors of Mendelsons' Properties, Inc. voted to liquidate the corporation and distribute its assets to its stockholders. On December 3, 1973, they transferred title to the property (described as Parcel F) to Mendelson Properties Limited Partnership.⁴⁰¹ On July 11, 1975, Mendelson Properties Limited Partnership sold the property to Edward J. Hunter and James B. Knox, Jr.⁴⁰² They then sold the property to Iran D. Black and Niloufar Leibel on May 20, 1977.⁴⁰³

No major changes are visible in the 1977 edition of the Sanborn Atlas (Figure 159).⁴⁰⁴

³⁹⁹ 1958 Sanborn Map Company atlas, Alexandria, Virginia.

⁴⁰⁰ 1964 aerial photograph, on file, Alexandria Archaeology.

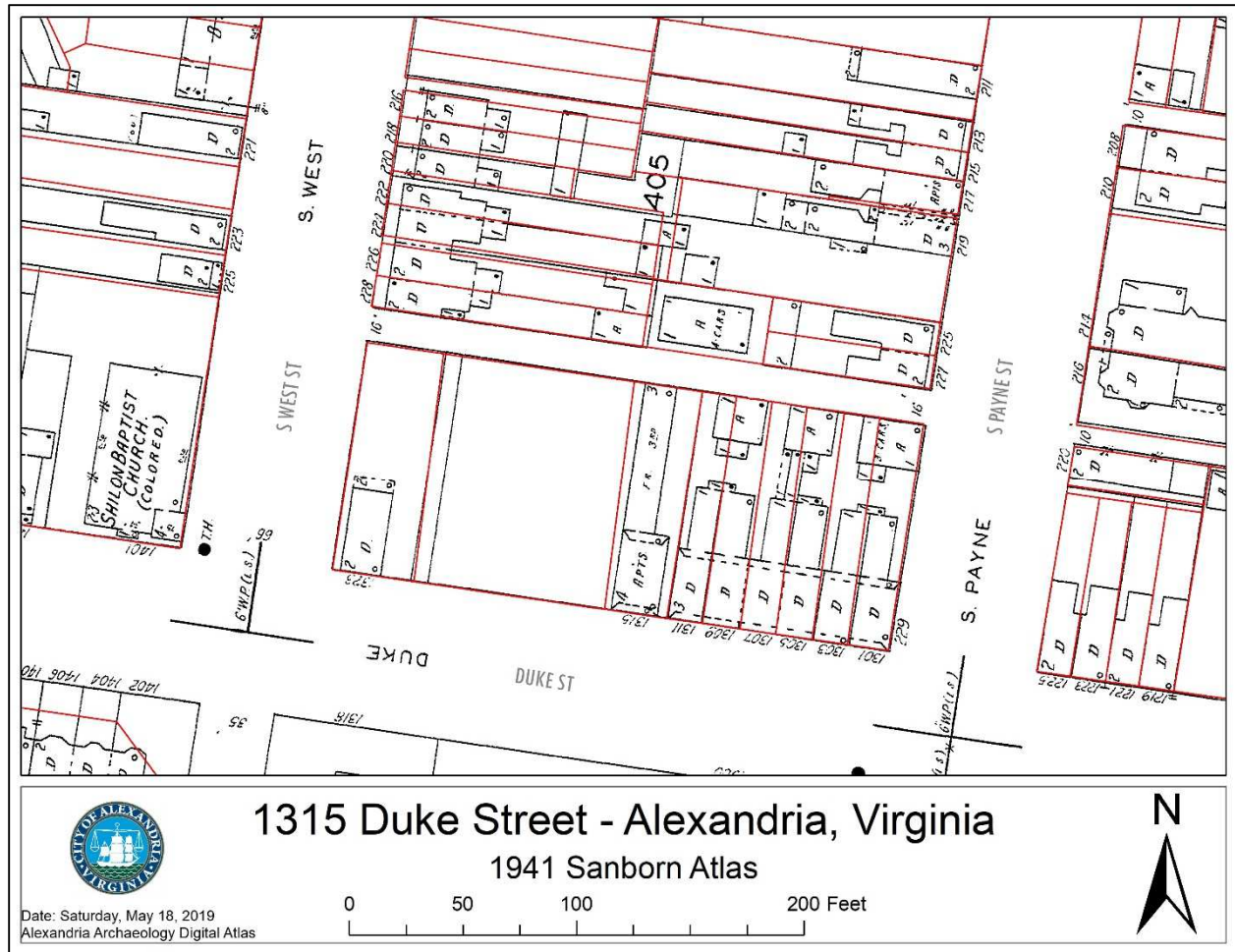
⁴⁰¹ Alexandria Deed Book 767 p. 28.

⁴⁰² Alexandria Deed Book 802 p. 676.

⁴⁰³ Alexandria Deed Book 858 p. 339.

⁴⁰⁴ 1977 Sanborn Map Company atlas, Alexandria, Virginia.

1315 Duke Street – Building and Property History
BOARDING HOUSE AND TENAMENT (1866-1984)



1315 Duke Street – Building and Property History
BOARDING HOUSE AND TENAMENT (1866-1984)

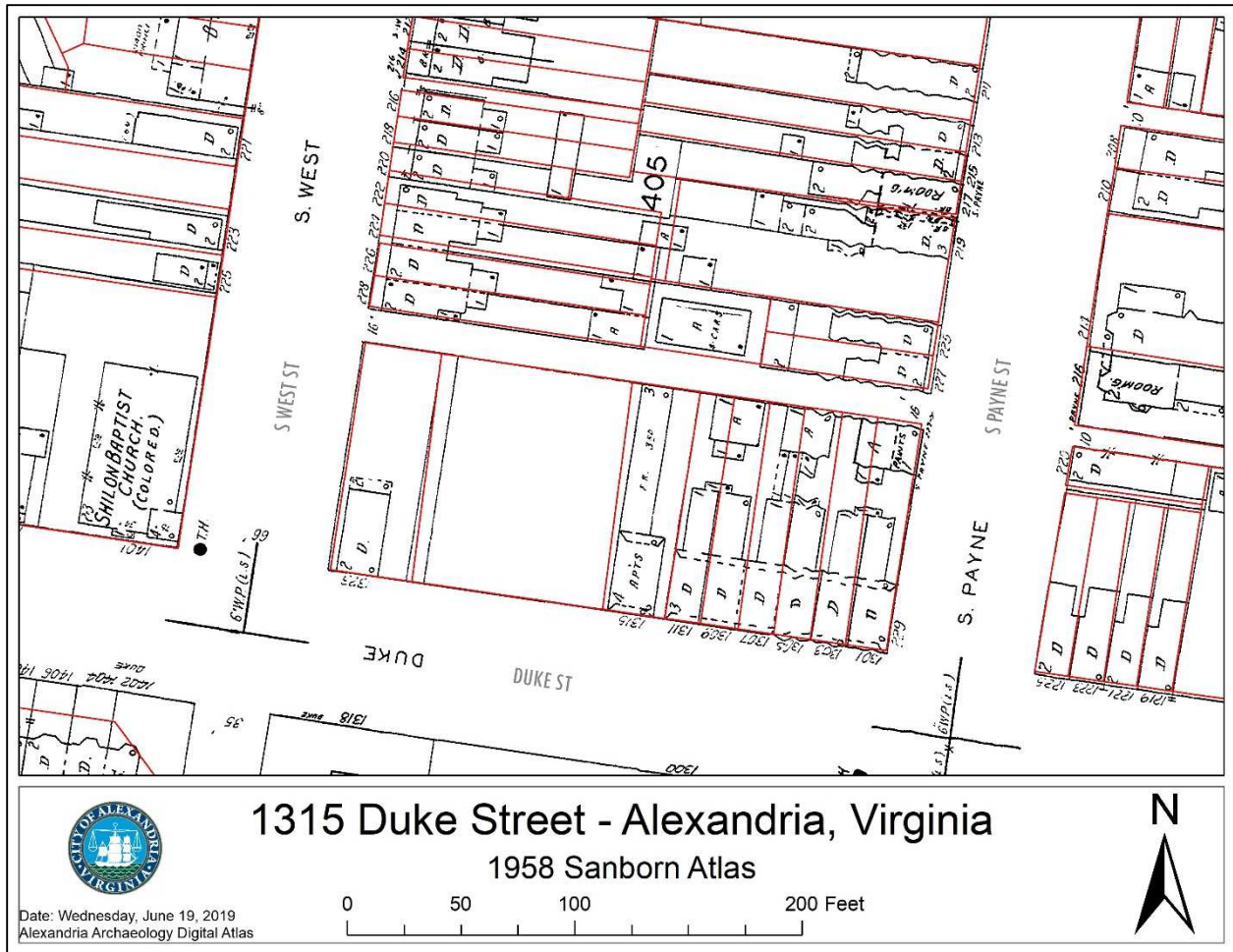


Figure 156. Sanborn Atlas, 1958.

1315 Duke Street – Building and Property History
BOARDING HOUSE AND TENAMENT (1866-1984)

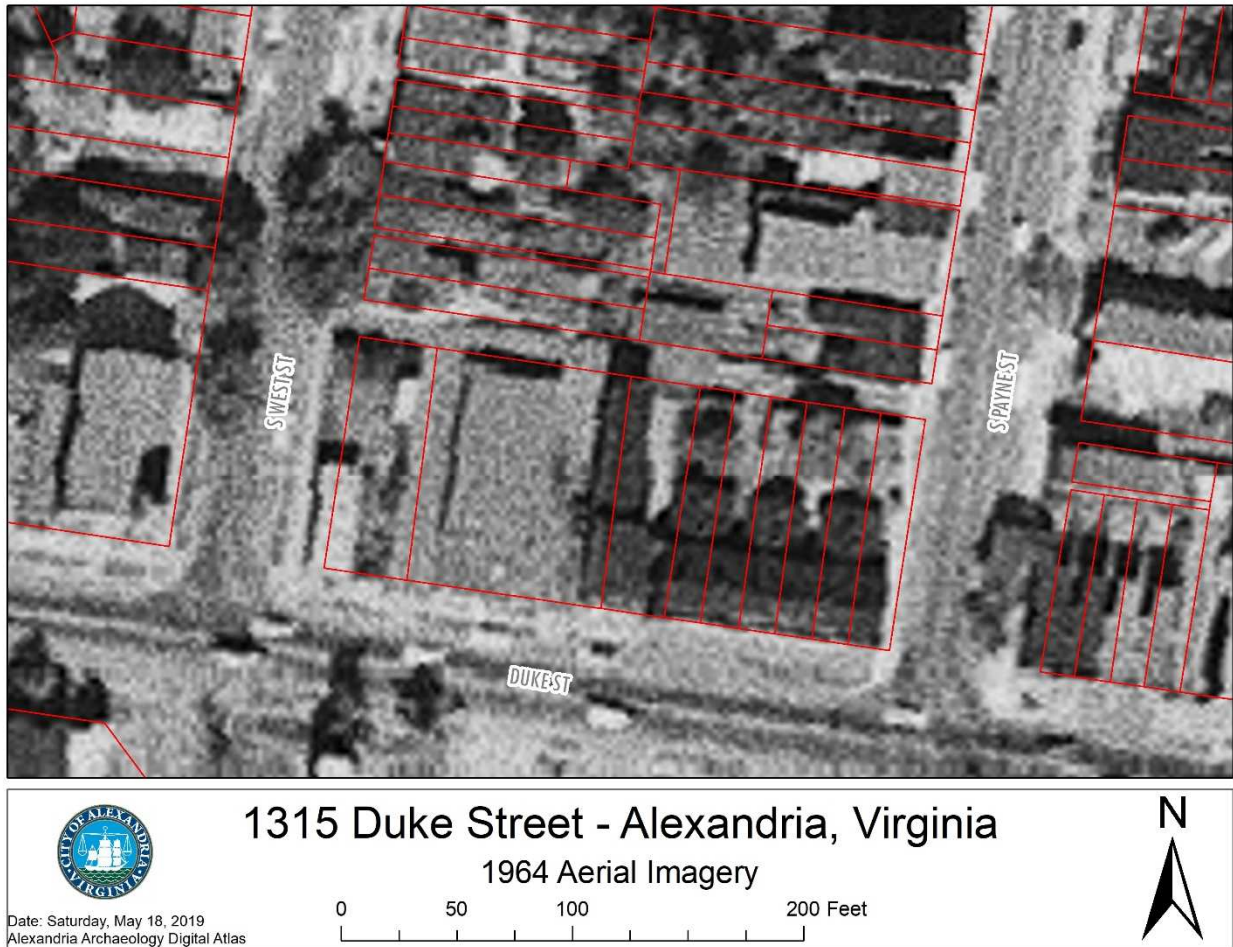


Figure 158. 1964 Aerial Imagery.



Figure 157. Streetscape along Duke Street, showing 1321, 1315, 1311, 1309, and 1307 Duke Street (left to right), circa 1984.

1315 Duke Street – Building and Property History
BOARDING HOUSE AND TENAMENT (1866-1984)

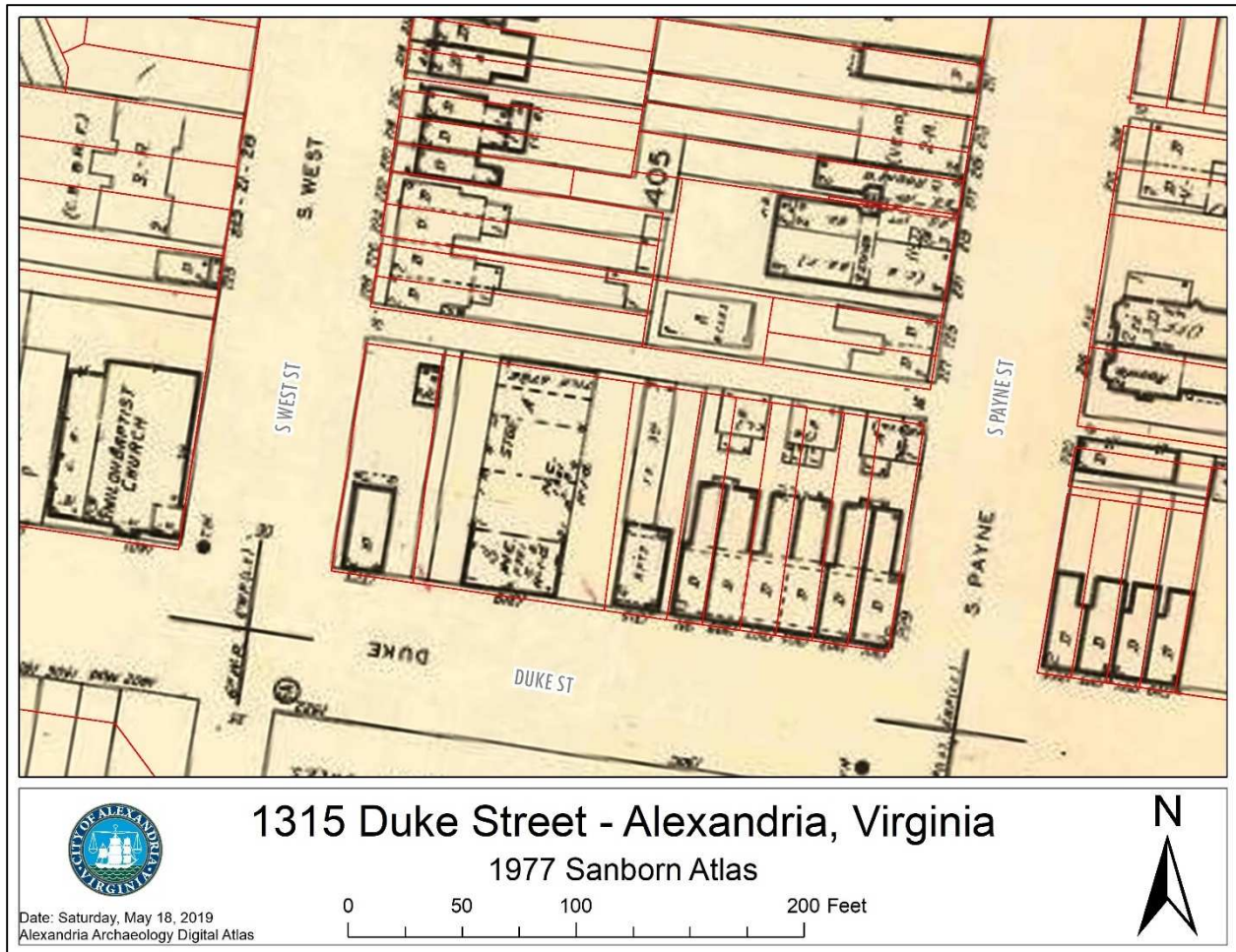


Figure 159. 1977 Sanborn Atlas.

OFFICES (1984-2020)

Starting around 1984, the site of 1315 Duke Street and the property to the west was redeveloped. Prior to construction, archaeological excavations were conducted at 1315 and 1317 (now 1321) Duke Street. For a detailed summary of the archaeology conducted prior to construction of the addition at 1315 Duke Street and the current structure at 1321 Duke Street, see Artemel et al. 1987.⁴⁰⁵ For a detailed summary of the archaeology conducted at 1323 Duke Street, see Traum et al., 2007.⁴⁰⁶

Following archaeology, an addition to the 1812/3 Robert Young house and kitchen wing went into the yard space to the north and east of 1315 Duke Street and the rest of the structure was converted into offices. A series of property transactions accompany this transformation, including an easement over the alley to the west and the parking lot in the alley to the rear of the property, and on May 10, 1985, J. Peter Dunston and Betty Mailhouse Dunston mortgage the property to Maryland National Bank for \$400,000.⁴⁰⁷ See Appendix C for design plans for this 1984 renovation and addition.⁴⁰⁸

The extent of the 1984 additions at 1315 Duke Street are visible in this aerial imagery dated 1995 (Figure 160). Also present here is the current building at 1321 Duke Street.⁴⁰⁹ See Appendix B for a conjectural plan of the site during this period.

In 1997, the Northern Virginia Urban League (NVUL) purchased the property from the Dunstons, and NationsBank, successor to Maryland National Bank, certified that their mortgage for \$400,000 had been paid.⁴¹⁰ The NVUL moved their offices into 1315 Duke Street.

⁴⁰⁵ Artemel, Janice G., Elizabeth A. Crowell and Jeff Parker, 1987, *The Alexandria Slave Pen: The Archaeology of Urban Captivity*. Engineering-Science, Inc., Washington, D.C.
<https://www.alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/historic/info/archaeology/SiteReportArtemel1987SlavePenAX75.pdf>.

⁴⁰⁶ Traum, Sarah, Joseph Balicki and Brian Corle, 2007, *A Documentary Study, Archeological Evaluation and Resource Management Plan for 1323 Duke Street, Alexandria, Virginia*. John Milner Associates, Inc., Alexandria, VA. <https://www.alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/historic/info/archaeology/SiteReportTraum1323Duke.pdf>.

⁴⁰⁷ See Alexandria Deed Book 1126, p. 1127; Alexandria Deed Book 1127, p. 323; and Alexandria Deed Book 1150, p. 293.

⁴⁰⁸ Dunston Properties, dated October 29, 1984.

⁴⁰⁹ 1995 aerial imagery, City of Alexandria, GIS Office.

⁴¹⁰ Alexandria Deed Book 1617, p. 1878.

1315 Duke Street – Building and Property History
OFFICES (1984-2020)

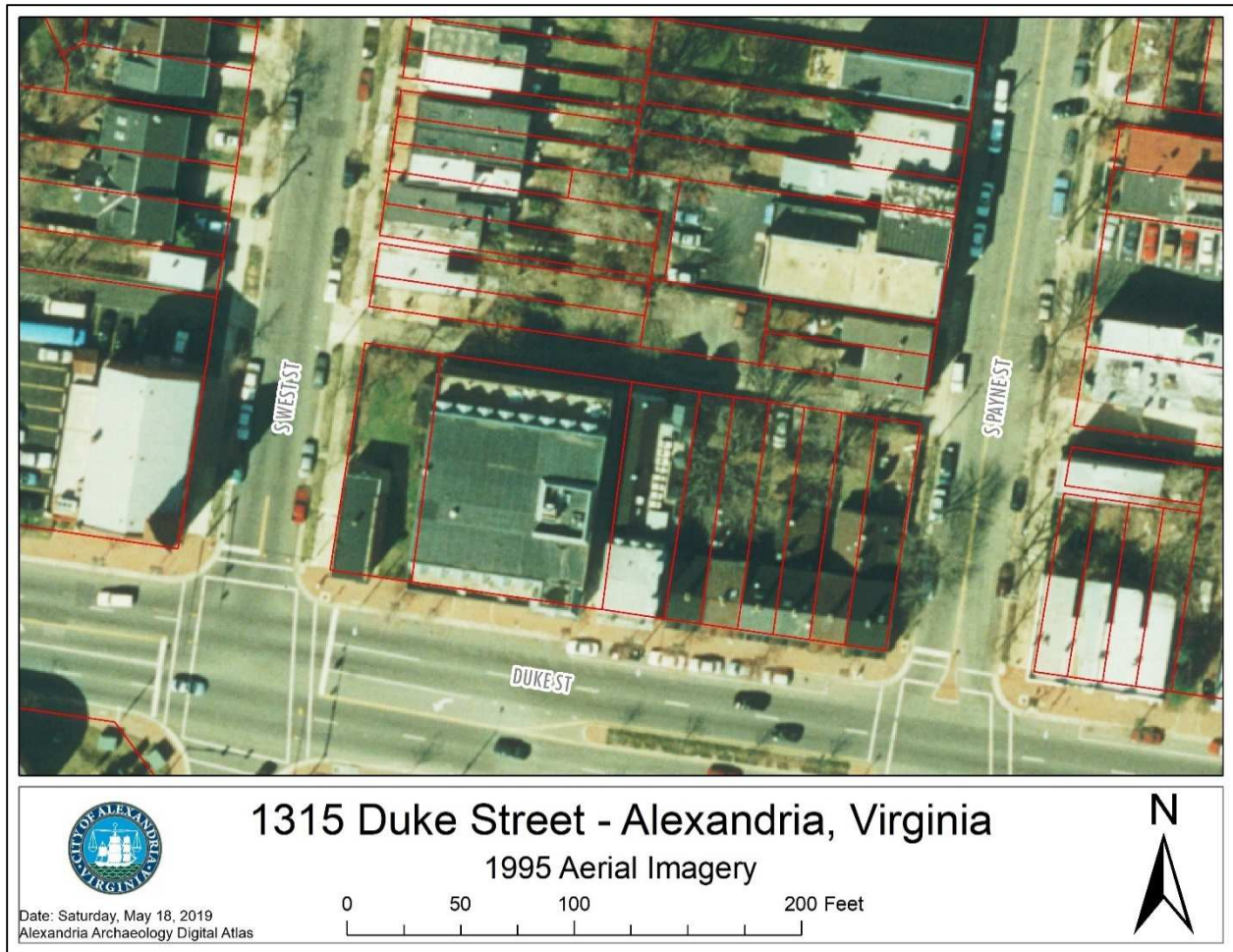


Figure 160. 1995 Aerial Imagery.

MUSEUM (2005 – present)

In the mid-2000s, the Northern Virginia Urban League began planning a museum exhibit dedicated to the history of 1315 Duke Street and the Domestic Slave Trade in the basement at 1315 Duke Street. See Appendix D for design plans for this 2005 renovation, dated June 16, 2005. This exhibit opened on February 12, 2008, President Lincoln’s birthday.⁴¹¹

1315 Duke Street was purchased by the City of Alexandria on March 24, 2020, with the intent to renovate the structure and expand the existing exhibit in the basement of 1315 Duke Street.⁴¹² See Appendix E for existing and demolition floor plans from this renovation.

No major external changes can be seen in this 2019 aerial imagery (Figure 161).⁴¹³

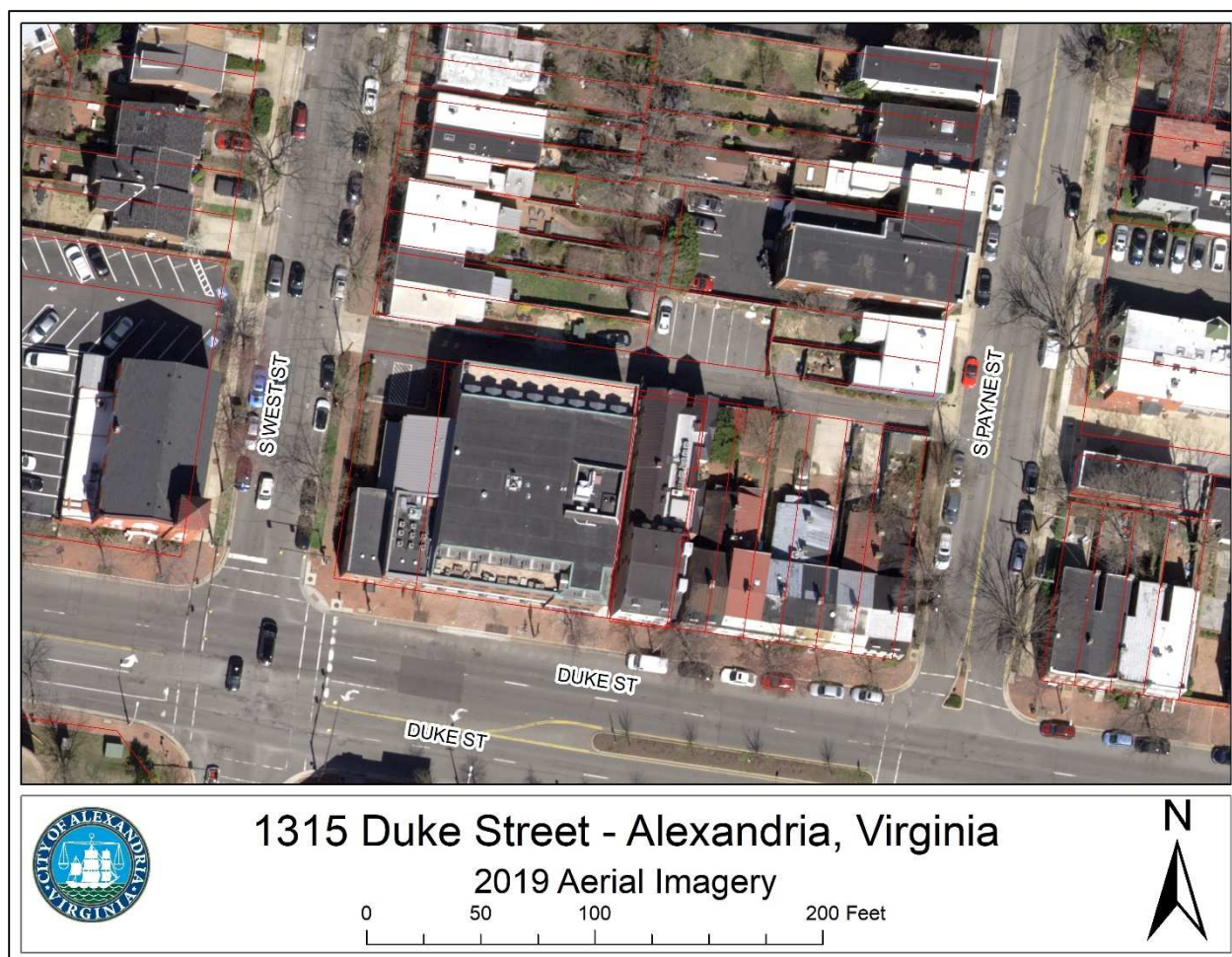


Figure 161. 2019 Aerial Imagery.

⁴¹¹ “Freedom House Museum Docent Manual”, Northern Virginia Urban League, 2015.

⁴¹² Alexandria Deed Book 4779 p. 82.

⁴¹³ 2019 aerial imagery, City of Alexandria, GIS Office.

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