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Mott House: NEH Grant Application for Archaeology Field Work, 1973

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TELEPHONE: 202-382-5891

GRANT APPLICATION FACE SHEET

- PLANNING
- DEVELOPMENT
- PROJECT RESUBMISSION
(# _____)
- PROJECT NEW
- PROJECT RENEWAL
(# _____)

1. PROJECT DIRECTOR (NAME, ADDRESS AND ZIP)
 James Deetz.
 Department of Anthropology
 Brown University
 Providence, R.I. 02912
 Office (401) 863-3251
 TELEPHONE: Home (617) 746-6973

2. INSTITUTION (NAME, ADDRESS, AND ZIP)

Brown University
Providence, R.I. 02912

3. AUTHORIZING OFFICIAL (NAME, TITLE, ADDRESS & ZIP)

Joseph A. Burnette Jr.
Director
Grant and Contract Services
Brown University, Providence, R.I. 02912

4. FUNDS REQUESTED (FIRST YEAR AND TOTAL)

FIRST YEAR: \$ 7966.00
 TOTAL: 7966.00

5. PAYEE (CHECK TO BE MADE PAYABLE TO:)

CHECK TO BE MAILED TO: Joseph A. Burnette Jr.
 NAME AND TITLE: Director, Grant & Contract Services
 ADDRESS: Brown University
 Providence, R. I. 02912

6. INCLUSIVE DATES OF GRANT:

FROM: May 1 19 73
MONTH DATE

THROUGH: September 1, 19 73
MONTH DATE

7. TITLE: An interdisciplinary summer training program in historical archaeology

8. BRIEF DESCRIPTION:

The training of 9 students in interdisciplinary historical archaeology will be carried out during the summer of 1973. This research training will take place at the Mott Farm, Portsmouth, R. I. This site is virtually unique, in that the entire farm has survived intact from 1638 when the land was granted to the Mott family. Students will work with consultation from specialists in archaeology, architecture, folklore, social history and the analysis of food remains.

AGREEMENT: IT IS UNDERSTOOD AND AGREED THAT ANY FUNDS GRANTED AS A RESULT OF THIS REQUEST ARE TO BE USED FOR THE PURPOSES SET FORTH HEREIN. FURTHERMORE, THE UNDERSIGNED AGREE, AS TO ANY GRANT AWARDED, TO ABIDE BY THE RELEVANT NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES POLICIES AS PRESCRIBED.

SIGNATURE: PERSON NAMED IN ITEM 1

SIGNATURE: PERSON NAMED IN ITEM 3

John S. P. P.

An interdisciplinary summer training program in
historical archaeology

INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE

As research and interest in historical archaeology have increased in the past decade, it has become quite clear that competent research by the historical archaeologist is dependent upon a number of disciplines, including social history, architectural history, the history of technology, folklore, anthropology and archaeology, to name but a few. As a result, there has been considerable debate as to just what academic department is best equipped to train individuals in historical archaeology. All single disciplines have their shortcomings; the anthropologist as archaeologist is often not aware of the richness of the documentary record which relates to his materials, the architectural historian may not know what the archaeologist can contribute to his efforts, and neither may perceive some of the implications of folk material culture studies to their work. From the perspective of the archaeologist, whether trained as a classicist or as an anthropologist, the full recognition of the value of above-ground data, and their relationship to that which is buried and awaiting excavation, has not yet been achieved.

This proposal is directed at providing a special program within which students can work as a team, each pursuing a specific problem, under the general guidance of a number of specialists from backgrounds as diverse as architectural history on one hand and faunal analysis on the other. In such a way, the students will gain sophistication in some of the special problems posed by historical archaeology, if it is to be done in a responsible and truly productive fashion. While most of the students are receiving their training within the department of anthropology of Brown University, and are particularly involved in historical archaeology, any shortcomings which

result from the more traditional definitions of that discipline will be overcome through participation in this program. Likewise a similar program could be organized from any number of other departments as long as the essential interdisciplinary emphasis is retained.

THE PROJECT

Submission of a proposal at this time for a chairman's discretionary grant, is in large part the result of the Project Director's recent involvement in the Mott Farm site, Portsmouth, Rhode Island. The site's existence and importance only became known a month ago; once its potential for training and research were fully grasped, the Project Director felt that a summer program would be of extremely high value to graduate and undergraduate students. Brown University is one of a very small number of schools which provide formal training in historical archaeology, and graduate student enrollments with this specialty have grown from two to eight in only one year, and may increase even more in years to come. It is probable that the Mott Farm site is unique in New England, if not all of what was colonial Anglo America, in terms of its preservation and research training potential. Thus it is the belief of the Project Director that the opportunity of having his students become involved in its study should not be passed by. Endowment support for the coming summer season thus would insure a training program of superior quality, as outlined below.

THE MOTT FARM SITE

Adam Mott, one of the founders of Portsmouth, came to America from Cambridge, England in 1635. After a brief stay in Hingham, Massachusetts he came to Portsmouth in 1638, was made a Freeman in 1641, and died in 1661. The land granted to him upon arrival in Portsmouth was a tract of some 145 acres, in a typical early American/English strip running from the highway to

the bay. This land remained in possession of the Mort family intact until 1895. Land title research recently completed by one of the students now working on the project shows that, with the sole exception of a forty-acre parcel to the south and on the bay end, now owned by the U.S. Navy, the entire farm of 1640 has survived essentially intact until the present. Only one other family -- the present owners -- have held the property. The land has been rented during the past century, and has seen minimal use for farming, and has had no known alteration of grade of a major character during this time. Thus one can say with great assurance that the parcel as it is today has come down the years with almost no change since the seventeenth century, and as such should contain within its limits extensive evidence of its occupation through successive generations.

The most striking single example of this evidence is the dwelling house itself, the only surviving seventeenth century structure on the site. Still situated in its original location, this structure is a remarkable example of American vernacular architecture. The earliest portion, tentatively dated to the third quarter of the seventeenth century, was originally a two-story, single-room floor plan house, with a stone chimney on one end and a jetty on the gable end opposite. To this was added, ca. 1725, a wing to the north at right angles to the original portion. At that time the original chimney (on the west end) was removed, a central chimney stack added on the north side between the wing and the original, the jetty removed, and the entrance shifted from the south side opposite the original chimney ~~breast~~ to the east side opposite the new one (figure 1). Yet later, sometime in the nineteenth century, an ell was added to the west of the eighteenth century addition. Since Adam Mort's will of 1661 mentions a house on the property, there is a strong possibility that a yet earlier structure must be accounted for, either

within the existing structure, or beneath it as an archaeological feature. The only alternate explanation would be that the existing seventeenth century portion of the house is slightly earlier than now believed, and that it was built shortly before Mott died.

This house has had a minimum of later remodeling or even minor alterations, so that details of each building phase are exceptionally well preserved for study. There are a number of late outbuildings to the east of the house, all probably of twentieth century date. Some rest on footings which might relate to earlier structures of the nineteenth and possibly eighteenth centuries. Based on our scant knowledge of seventeenth century New England farm layouts, and on comparative data from Essex, England, the seventeenth century outbuildings were probably located to the north or west of the house, i.e., to its rear. Since there has been no significant modification of the terrain in these areas, it is a virtual certainty that the remains of earlier farm buildings can be identified through archaeological excavations. The fields which comprise the 105 acres of the site are divided today by stone walls. There is a possibility, to be tested, that these may reflect field divisions from the Colonial period, in view of the undisturbed nature of the entire site. Alternately, close inspection of the land may reveal locations of earlier wall alignments which would provide such evidence. A well, and modern privy, are also associated with the house. Each may indicate earlier features of similar type, if these are indeed relatively modern. This is particularly true of the privy, since such features were frequently moved, although usually in the same general vicinity. As is well known, privies are an excellent source of artifacts and other archaeological materials. Although unpleasant to excavate at times, the effort is almost always rewarding. Besides wells and privies, the area immediately surrounding the

house is the location of refuse pits and other external features. There are two dirt-floor cellars beneath the house, both apparently undisturbed, one beneath the eighteenth century wing, the other beneath the nineteenth century ell. Taken together, the house, well(s), privies, cellars, out-building remains, stone walls, and other features should provide a continuous record of material culture and subsistence patterns for the entire history of the farm. Combined with a strong historical/documentary study, it should be possible to recover in great detail a segment of New England rural life-ways for over three centuries. The importance of such a study can hardly be overestimated.

STRATEGY

The primary purpose of this proposal is to obtain support for nine students, seven graduate and two undergraduate, for summer training on the Mott farm. While the central organizing theme of this project will be archaeology, it will be so only in the broadest sense. To this end, it is proposed that a set of specific projects be pursued, each contributing to some aspect of the total project. In each case, a professional specialist has consented to serve as a consultant adviser to the student on problems of procedure or special difficulty. In this way, the students constitute a team specially suited to the project, and gain maximum understanding of the practicalities, both academic and administrative, of interdisciplinary research. All nine students are committed to careers in historical archaeology, and all have already become involved in the project in those specific areas in which they will conduct research during the summer. Although the principal investigator will be on sabbatical leave next academic year, he will continue to supervise and direct their work on a formal credit-earning basis during that time, since a portion of his leave will be devoted to the

project in any case. Thus the project has already been initiated on a modest scale, using the same personnel, and will continue during the coming academic year. What is critically needed is support for the summer portion of the project, since such support falls outside the regular academic season, and the summer is the optimum season for archaeological excavations to be conducted. Depending on the outcome of the summer's work, separate support may be sought from some agency for a more ambitious program in coming years. Such support would be requested as a research project rather than an educational one; the present proposal is intended to provide a special kind of training for students in historical archaeology, working with unusually rich and potentially highly rewarding materials. Indeed, once trained under the support from this project, they would be specially suited for participation on a research program. In essence, then, we are now seeking to train students in such a way that future research programs at the Mott Farm or elsewhere will benefit from their expertise.

The organizational structure of the program will be as follows. Six discrete but interrelated areas of inquiry will be pursued, each by one or more students, with a resource specialist's advice in each case. These areas, the students participating, and the consulting specialists are:

Field archaeology

The planning and execution of the archaeology will be under the direction of Marley Brown, a fourth-year graduate student who has had four seasons of field experience in historical archaeology in southern New England, and directed excavations for the past three years. Brown will work closely with the project director in this phase of the work, and will utilize the other eight students in part-time field supervision of excavations. The actual excavation will be done by students from various colleges, who will

be given academic credit in most cases for their work, and who will be available at no cost to the project. Tentative plans call for detailed excavations in the vicinity of the house, and extensive testing over the entire property.

Faunal analysis and the study of plant materials

One specialized aspect of archaeological analysis is the study of food remains. The identification of animal bone is a special skill which requires considerable practical experience and specialized instruction. Two students will specialize on this phase of the project. Joanne Bowen, a first-year graduate student, has been working with faunal materials from other New England sites this year; the summer project will provide more intensive training in this work. Funds are requested for her to travel to Florida State University this spring to spend a two-week period with Stanley Olsen, who has consented to serve as consultant to her work on the project. Olsen is one of the few ethnozoologists working with the remains of domesticated animals. Preliminary excavations beneath the house, and the study dismantling of portions of the structure hold promise of a rich collection of plant remains. Flotation of fill materials should provide additional material of this type. Joseph Hall, a first-year graduate student, will concentrate on the plant remains from the site and work with an agricultural historian, Darwin Kelsey of Old Sturbridge Village, on their identification. Data recovered from the study of both plant and animal remains, from closely dated contexts on the site, will yield valuable information regarding the food ways of the inhabitants of the farm over three centuries.

Architectural history

With at least three building periods represented in the house, and with concurrent archaeology being done in its environs, there will be an

excellent chance to study both an important example of New England vernacular architecture, as well as the relations between a standing structure and the archaeological features which relate to it in situ. Such a study requires competence in architectural history. Working with A. L. Cummings, Director of the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities and an authority on New England folk architecture, and Richard Candee, Architectural Historian of Old Sturbridge Village, two students will conduct an intensive study of the Mott farmhouse and a comparative study of contemporary houses in the Rhode Island area. These students, Dell Upton, a third-year graduate student in American Civilization, and Leslie Abernathy, a first-year graduate anthropology student, will develop drawings and a model of the house, conduct an extensive photographic survey, and coordinate their study with the ongoing archaeology. Upton has already completed the research on the property title; a preliminary copy of his report is attached. Abernathy is presently studying carpenters' joints and constructional techniques of seventeenth and eighteenth century England and America.

Social history

Since all owners of the property have been identified, it will be possible through a study of their wills and probate inventories, as well as their appearance in various primary historical records (i.e., court records, vital records, church records, etc.) to develop a picture of their place within the larger context of the society of which they were a part. This work will be done by Joyce McKay, a second-year graduate student in anthropology, in consultation with John Demos, Professor of History at Brandeis University. Demos has done significant research in demography and social structure in southern New England (A Little Commonwealth, Oxford Press) and on demography in neighboring Bristol, Rhode Island.

Material Culture

In view of the long and continuous occupation of the site, the archaeology promises to produce a remarkably complete and large collection of artifacts. The specialized skills in identifying such objects, and relating them to other aspects of the project will be developed by Laura Stopps and Steven Pendery, both undergraduate anthropology majors at Brown University, under the direction of the project director.

Folk material culture and oral history

The contributions of folklore to historical archaeology are only now beginning to be fully appreciated. Both from a structural point of view towards buildings, farm layouts, and material culture systems as integrated wholes, and from the use of interviews regarding material culture, folklore studies hold considerable potential to historical archaeologists.

Jean-Francois Blanchette, a first-year graduate student in anthropology, who recently has done such a study on bread ovens in Provincial Quebec, will work on the folk culture aspects of the project in conjunction with Professor Henry Glassie of the University of Indiana. Glassie will be in the area from June 1 through August 15, and available for consultation. His interests, reflected in his Pattern in the Material Folk Culture of the Eastern United States (U.Pa. Press), are most appropriate to this project.

While each student will be working primarily on his or her specialty, there will be ample opportunity for all participants to consult with each other regarding the significance of their work to that being done by others. Weekly working seminar sessions will be held, at which time results will be compared, procedures amended in line with new information, and the project maintained as an integrated cross-disciplinary effort. At the end of the grant period, each student will prepare a formal report; taken to-

gether, these should give a remarkably broad picture of life on an American farm or over three centuries. Through consultation with his student colleagues and his consultant in each case, the participant in the program should acquire a genuine sense of the strategy and aims of historical archaeology. The combination of a unique site, of consultants who will be present in the vicinity during the time of the project, and of a program which will be a part of a longer, ongoing process gives this project a very high educational value, which should repay efforts expended on it many times over. While some work will certainly be done at the Mott farm by these students, both currently and next fall, the value of the experience will be enormously enhanced if support can be obtained for a summer study and research session for them. Without such support, a minimum amount of work, primarily of a survey nature, will be done, and the students in question will have to seek employment elsewhere for the summer period.

PROJECT DIRECTOR

James Deetz

ARCHAEOLOGY

M. Brown with
J. Deetz

SOCIAL HISTORY

J. McKay with
J. Danos

FURNAL STUDIES

J. Bowen with
S. Olsen

PLANT REMAINS

J. Hall with
D. Kelsey

ARCHITECTURE

D. Upton
L. Abernathy
with
A. Cummings and
R. Candee

ARTIFACTS

L. Stopps
S. Pendery
with J. Deetz

FOLKLORE

J. Blanchette
with H. Glass

This program reflects the overall project organization. Horizontal integration between students will be frequent and intensive. Of the consultants, Glassie, Candee, Cummings, Kelsey, and Demos will be locally available to the students. Olsen has agreed to work with Bowen for an intensive two-week period in Fallahassee and will be available later by phone or mail.

James J. F. Deitz

Address: Plimoth Plantation, Plymouth, Massachusetts

Date of Birth: February 8, 1930

Place of Birth: Cumberland, Maryland

Marital Status: Married

Wife's Name: Joanne

Children:

James C.	-	September 4, 1954	Eric	-	July 1, 1960
Tonia	-	January 17, 1956	Geoffrey	-	January 5, 1961
Joseph	-	February 3, 1957	Joshua	-	February 9, 1962
Kristen	-	April 22, 1959	Cynthia	-	August 18, 1964

Education:

B.A., Harvard College, 1957 (cum laude)
M.A., Harvard University, 1959
Ph.D., Harvard University, 1960

Professional Experience:

Teaching Fellow, Anthropology, Harvard University, 1957-60.
Archaeologist, Smithsonian Institution, River Basin Study, 1958.
Archaeologist, Plimoth Plantation, 1959-60.
Instructor in Anthropology, UCSB, 1960-61.
Assistant Professor, Anthropology, UCSB, 1961-65.
Visiting Associate Professor of Anthropology, Harvard University, 1965-66.
Research Fellow in North American Anthropology, Harvard University, 1965-66.
Associate Professor, Anthropology, UCSB, 1965-66.
Professor, Anthropology, UCSB, 1966-1967.
Professor, Anthropology, Brown University, 1967-
Assistant Director of Plimoth Plantation, 1967-

Publications:

"Excavations at the Joseph Howland Site (C-5), Rocky Nook, Kingston, Massachusetts, 1959: A preliminary report," Howland Quarterly XXIV, Nos. 2 & 3, 1-12, 1960.

"The Howlands at Rocky Nook: An Archaeological and Historical Study," Howland Quarterly XXIV, No. 4, 1-8, 1960.

"Basketry from the James Abels Collection," Museum Talk XXXVII, No. 2, 17-23, 1963.

"Soil pH as a Tool in Archaeological Site Interpretation" (with E. Dethlefsen), American Antiquity 29:2, 242-43, 1963.

"Archaeological Investigations at La Purisima Mission," Annual Report, Archaeological Survey, UCLA, 1962-63, 165-241.

"The Construction and Uses of a Laboratory Archaeological Site," (with J. Chilcote), American Antiquity 29:4, 328-337, 1964.

Chumash Indian Art (with L. Dawson), Art Gallery, UCSB, 16 pp., 1964.

"A Datable Chumash Picograph from Santa Barbara County, California," American Antiquity 29:4, 504-506, 1964.

"Abstract of an Archaeological Approach to Eighteenth Century Arikara Kinship Change," (Ph.D. thesis), Abstracts in New World Archaeology, Vol. 2, Society for American Archaeology, 1962.

The Dynamics of Stylistic Change in Arikara Ceramics, University of Illinois, Series in Anthropology, No. 4, 1964.

"The Doppler Effect and Archaeology: A consideration of the spatial aspects of seriation" (with E. Dethlefsen), Southwestern Journal of Anthropology, Vol. 21, No. 3, 196-200, 1965.

"Old Tools as New Tools," Anthropology Curriculum Study Project Newsletter, No. 4, 1965.

A Corpus of Chumash Basketry (with L. Dawson), Annual Report, Archaeological Survey, UCLA 1964-65.

"Death's Heads, Cherubs, and Willow Trees; Experimental Archaeology in Colonial Cemeteries" (with E. Dethlefsen), American Antiquity, Vol. 31, No. 4, 501-510

Stone Tools, Anthropology Curriculum Study Project, 1966.

James J. F. Deetz

"Cultural Patterning of Behavior as Reflected by Archaeological Materials", Settlement Archaeology, University of California Press (edited by H. C. Chang), 1967.

"Death's Head, Cherub Urn and Willow", Natural History, March, 1967.

Invitation to Archaeology, Natural History Press (Doubleday), 1967.

The American Indian (with Owen and Fisher), MacMillan, 1967.

"Late Man in North America", Anthropological Society of Washington Yearbook, 1968.

"The Inference of Residence and Descent from Archaeological Data", chapter in New Perspectives in Archaeology (Binford and Binford), Aldine Press, 1968.

"Hunters in Archaeological Perspective", in Man the Hunter (DeVore and Lee), Aldine Press, 1969.

"The Reality of Pilgrim Values", Natural History, November 1969.

"Plymouth and the Pilgrims", Collier's Encyclopedia Yearbook, 1970.

"Archaeology as a Social Science", Bulletin of the American Anthropological Association, Volume 3, No. 2, 1970.

"The Historic House Museum: Can it Live?", Historic Preservation, Volume 23, No. 1, 1971.

"Some Social Aspects of New England Mortuary Art" (with E. Dethlefsen), Memoirs of the Society for American Archaeology, No. 25, 1971.

Man's Imprint from the Past, Little, Brown & Co., Boston, 1971.

"Wellfleet Tavern" (with E. Ekholm), Natural History, August, 1971.

"The Ethnogastronomy of Thanksgiving" (with J. Anderson), Saturday Review of Science, November, 1972.

Professional Affiliations

Society for American Archaeology, Executive Committee, 1972-74
President-Elect, Society for Historical Archaeology, 1973

Consultant Work

Advisory Panel, National Science Foundation, 1965-67
Plymouth Plantation, Archaeological Advisor, 1960-present
Consultant, AAA Anthropology Curriculum Study Project
Consultant, Ealing Corporation
Editorial Committee, Bobbs-Merrill Reprints in Anthropology
Wellesley School System
National Park Service, Committee for the Recovery of Archaeological
Remains

Fellowships

Harvard graduate Fellowships 1958, 1959
NSF Cooperative Fellowship 1960 (Harvard)
Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences, Fellowship
1971-72 Palo Alto (declined)

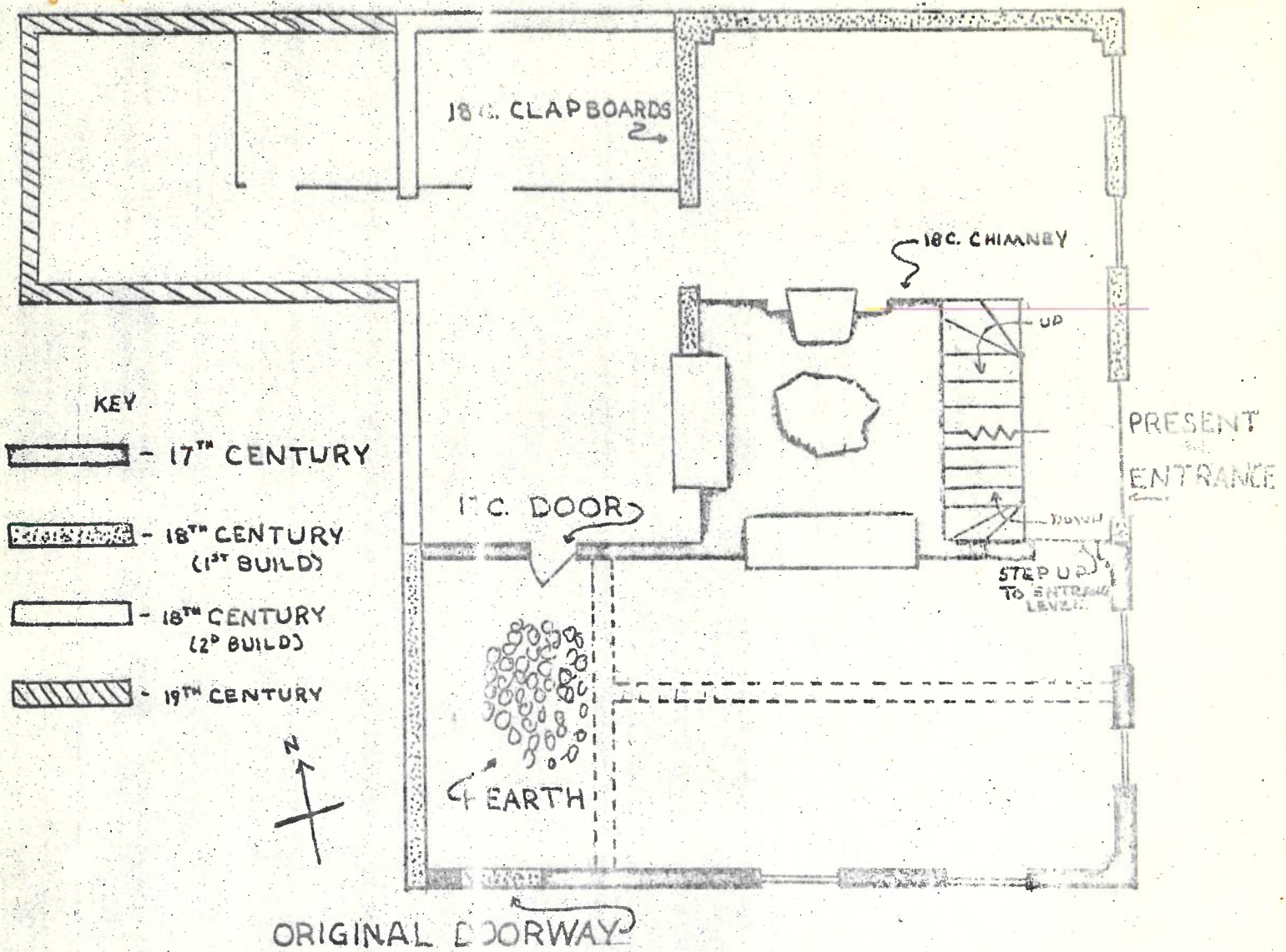


FIG. 1
 MOTT FARMHOUSE
 PORTSMOUTH, R.I.
 SCHEMATIC 1ST FLOOR PLAN

(NOT TO SCALE)