

Fox Hall - *Part 7*, First-Floor Plan

By Dick Gresham

The floor plan presented here represents Fox Hall as restored (Fig. 1, Fox Hall first-floor plan). It is current as of 1 May 2020, based on what the restoration team has ascertained through study of Fox Hall and the actual restoration work the team has undertaken thus far in the project. The restoration project at Fox Hall is ongoing, and this floor plan is subject to revisions as new evidence is discovered.

An overview of and the completed restoration projects at Fox Hall have been discussed in detail in *Parts 1* through *6* already published on this website. You are encouraged to read them. This floor plan is intended to accompany these published articles and those to follow in this series on Fox Hall.

Figure 1 has been reduced from a full-size architectural drawing of roughly 35" x 24" to fit into this article. For better viewing, simply zoom in on your computer.

There are several features shown on the drawing that warrant additional comment. They include: the kitchen chamber/buttery, the original cellar entrance, the closet in the kitchen, and the barred vent. These comments follow after Figure 1.

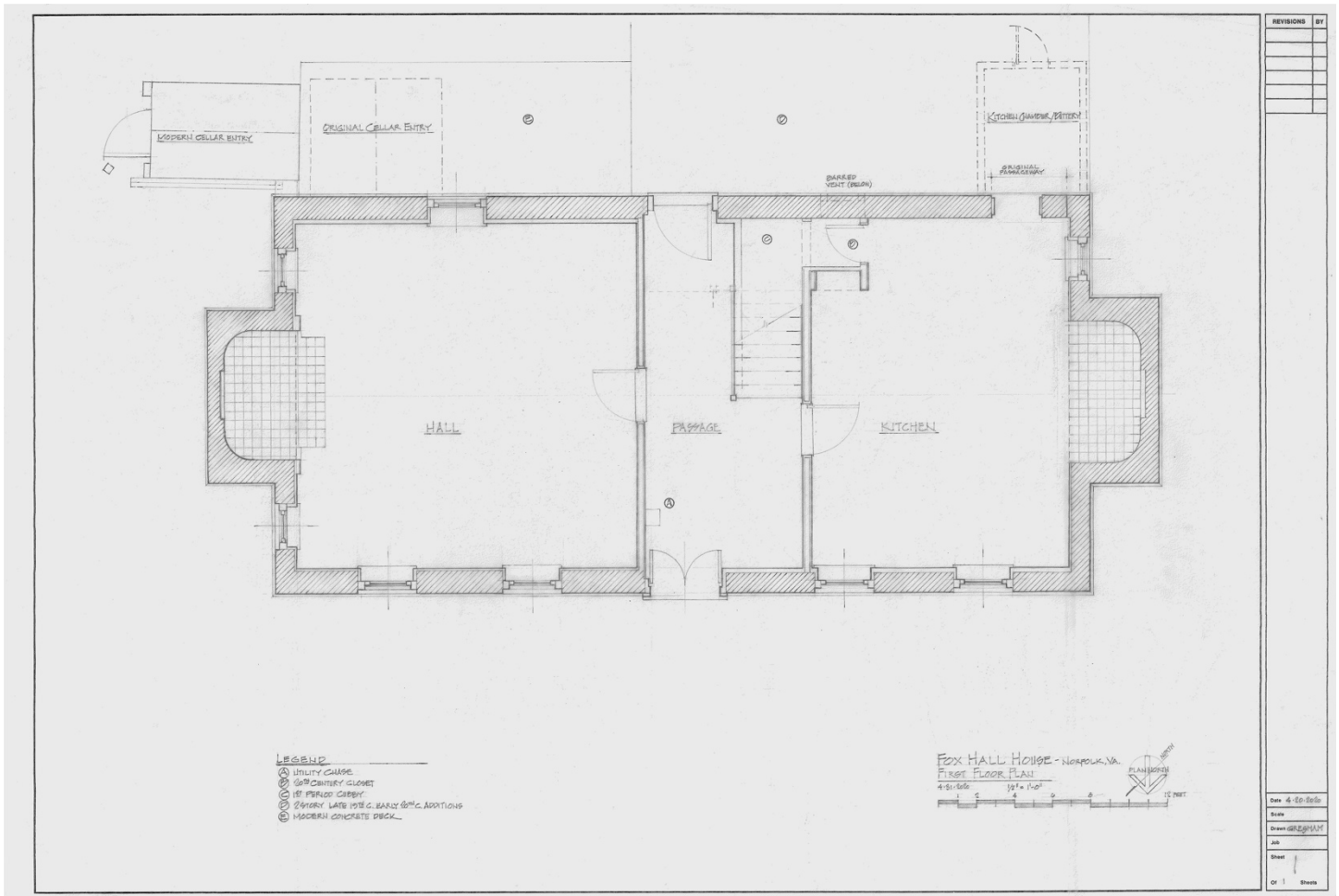


Figure 1

Kitchen Chamber/Buttery

This space was originally used for kitchen-related storage and likely for sleeping as well (See *Part 1* of this series). There is little remaining evidence to indicate its construction materials, actual size, exterior door location, windows (if any), foundation, and roof line. The original passageway into this annex from the kitchen was 4' 5" wide. As can be seen in Fig. 2, this passageway was reduced in size and partially infilled (Fig. 2, Current passageway from kitchen). The right side of the brick opening in Fig. 2 is the original. The infill brickwork appears to be no earlier than late nineteenth century as does the repaired damaged brickwork above and below this present opening.



Figure 2

While excavating along the outside wall of the early twentieth-century addition, only modern concrete was encountered. Furthermore, the owner reported that there are remains of a small concrete pad in front of the passageway under the addition. Based on this evidence, the kitchen chamber probably was removed during the earlier construction of the late nineteenth-century addition and before construction of the present early twentieth-century addition, converting the area into a small exterior entrance.

In the lower right of Fig. 2, there is a pocket in the brickwork initially thought to have been the location of the original passageway sill. However, we now believe that this pocket was the puthole for a 5" x 6" east sill of the kitchen chamber. There is no evidence of a brick foundation for the kitchen chamber, so it probably was supported on brick piers and was of frame construction. The damaged brickwork above the original passageway provides no indication of the roofline.

We know that there was a kitchen chamber and how wide its passageway was. Also, its west wall likely did not extend beyond the end of the house. We have no way of knowing just how far to the south the kitchen chamber extended. On the drawing, the door is placed on the south end. This makes sense as the well is only a few yards to the southwest from this presumed end of the kitchen chamber.

Original Cellar Entrance

A similar situation exists with the original cellar entrance. We do not know how far to the south this structure extended. Based on the location of the extant original cellar header and ghost marks on the brickwork, we do know the precise location of

the original cellar entrance as well as the height and shape of its roofline (See *Part 5* of this series).

Closet in the Kitchen

With construction of the early twentieth-century addition, the stair landing had to be extended to the west to allow access to the second floor of this addition. Item (B) in the legend indicates how the space under this landing was recently converted into a closet. Item (C) shows the cubby under the stairs.

Barred Vent

A barred vent in the house wall below the brick water table is shown on the drawing in the vicinity of the modern closet just discussed (See *Part 2* of this series). This feature is not to be confused as a blocked window in the modern closet under the landing. There never was a window in this location or anywhere else along the first-floor wall between the kitchen chamber and the back door of Fox Hall.