

The Grange (La Grange)

Grange is a French word meaning 'barn,' and La Grange was the home of the Marquis de Lafayette's estate in Auvergne. According to Slaughter family lore, Lafayette stopped here during his June, 1781, march through Culpeper. Living at the house at that time was Robert Slaughter, Jr., an officer in the Continental Army, prominent farmer, and next year an original trustee of the Town of Stevensburg, and later an original trustee of its academy.

Robert Slaughter, Jr., owned the property, 1765-1833, and an etched brick in the massive end chimney reads "1765". Mr. Slaughter's daughter married George Hamilton, and the property was in the Hamilton family, 1835-1947, with Maria S. Hamilton a long-time owner, 1890-1927. The bulk of the present house dates from shortly after the Civil

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War, and was built for John D. Hamilton. In 1937, Margaret Jeffries noted that "*the place is now the typical country home of well-to-do people*".

Today, the one certain vestige of 1765 is the Flemish bond south end chimney. Attached is a two story section of beaded weatherboard with a gently pitched gable roof. This section predates the main section of the house, and possibly was part of an 18th century dwelling. The main, north section of the house, also two stories, has a gently pitched pyramid roof, and is of plain weatherboard. This was the bay built for John D. Hamilton. Both sections have brick foundations, and the north section has an interior brick chimney at the north. The main entrance, with plain transom and sidelights, is sheltered by a two bay Classical porch with decorative rectangular columns. This entrance faces east, looking toward the old Fredericksburg Plank Road, the main area north-south road during the 19th century.

Hugh Hamilton, last of the Hamilton family owners, thought the south wing was not part of the 1765 Slaughter home "*but dated back to the same period*". He noted that there was an old house foundation north of the present house. He also noted that the fields to the east of the house, by Mountain Run and the old Fredericksburg Road, were known as the Quarter Fields--where Lafayette's troops were quartered.

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WPA 244 (owners, deeds, plat), CE Nov. 13, 1952; Jones, p. 45 (photo); Scheel, p. 60ff

E. M. Scheel, May, 1993