

ABSTRACT

Title of Thesis: RESTORATION RECONSIDERED: HISTORICAL ACCURACY OF THE KITCHEN AT ADENA, A FEDERAL PERIOD HOUSE MUSEUM

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This thesis examines the role of standards, decision processes, and professionalism in contemporary restoration practice as a preparatory step to reconsidering the kitchen at Adena, a Federal Period house museum. The thesis surveys recent historical research as it relates to the accuracy of previous restorations of kitchens from this period and evaluates the demands of modern interpretive themes for re-restoration. The thesis demonstrates the difficulty of making restoration decisions with scant physical evidence and offers a process for contemporary practice.

The thesis includes seven chapters. Chapter II traces the origins of restoration philosophy and the evolution of contemporary restoration practice in the United States. Chapter III reviews the historical background and physical aspects of kitchens from the Federal Period and explains why early restorations lack historical accuracy. Using case studies, chapters IV and V analyze contemporary practice by comparing present-day

re-restorations at the Octagon and Monticello with their previous campaigns. Chapter VI evaluates the historical accuracy of the 1953 restoration of the kitchen at Adena and offers three options for the treatment of the building fabric, dependent on further investigation.

The findings support the suppositions that the requirements of interpretive programs initiate re-restoration campaigns and that restorers seek physical evidence to justify altering the building fabric in order to comply with contemporary standards.

The central question of the thesis was how are restoration decisions made and what constitutes conclusive evidence under contemporary practice.

The thesis determines that restoration decisions are based on informed probabilities or proven facts, depending on the reasoning process used to evaluate the evidence. Evidence is conclusive only when it is used to deduce a fact.

The thesis concludes that the best contemporary practice requires careful record keeping, thoughtful use of all sources of evidence, and acknowledgment of the reasoning that leads to decisions.