

**The Bower**  
**Resource History**  
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**1752** – Dr. Adam Stephens of Stafford County, Fairfax grant for 332 acres on the east side of Opeckon Creek including the Hopewell Run to its mouth, adjoining Jacob Hite and another of his own surveys (NN GB H/185). In 1753, Stephens got another grant of 252 acres adjoining his own land and that of Jacob Hite, the beginning point being “a Locust standing upon an Indian grave...” (NN GB H/274). His other 1752 patent was 400 acres (NN GB H/184).

In 1780, Adam Stephens gave the 600-acre estate called Hazelfield to his daughter Anne when she married Alexander Spotswood Dandridge.

In 1784 Alexander Spotswood Dandridge wrote his will and died the following year (1785). He wrote in his will: “I give unto my beloved wife Anne Dandridge (after my decease) all that Tract of land whereon I now live lying in Berkeley...Containing Six Hundred Acres more or less it being the land given me in part of my wife Ann’s Estate by General Adam Stephens.” (BC WB 1/380) Apparently they were living in the Hazelfield estate. The only other land Dandridge had was in Hanover County.

In 1787, Anne Stephens Dandridge, widow, married Moses Hunter. She eventually moved back to Hazelfield in 1815, in a new house.

**1791** – Following the death of General Adam Stephens in 1791, he devised the land he called “The Bower” Anne and Alexander Dandridge’s son Adam Stephens Dandridge [I] (b.1782 - d.1821) (“The Bower” National Register documentation).

In 1798, Adam Stephens Dandridge [I] was assessed for one house in the country valued at \$157.50. The house was occupied by James Callero. Presumably Adam S. Dandridge, aged 18, was living with his mother in Martinsburg.

**1804** – Adam S. Dandridge [I] was listed on the Jefferson County land tax (under Adam Stephens heirs in 1802 and 1803) with 3,200 acres.

In 1808 and 1811, Adam Dandridge recorded several leases for “farmlet” of parts of his land.

The 1808 lease was for 100 acres of woodland to William Butler for an initial sum of £500 for ten years and an additional five years for a yearly rent of £150. Butler was also required to build a dwelling house and barn and make other improvements in the first year:

“a good dwelling House of Good logs eighteen feet by twenty four in the clear with a good stone chimney & plank floors also a barn of good logs twenty six feet wide & each[?] way twenty feet long, and a thrashing floor between twenty six feet square, covered with good shingles, the dwelling House also to be covered with good shingles...”

He was instructed to clear 17 acres per year. This tract was said to adjoin Hazelfield and “the Road leading from David Moore’s shop to Strider’s Mill.” (JC DB 5/148)

[I believe Butler later purchased this tract from Dandridge]

**1805** – Adam S. Dandridge [I] married Sarah Pendleton. National Register documentation says that construction on The Bower began in 1805 and finished in 1806 (NR used Bushong for these dates, which presumably was gotten from the family). The NR also says the house was built by African-American slave labor, which is likely but undocumented.

On the 1810 census, Adam S. Dandridge [I] (should be 28 years old) was listed in Jefferson County in the Leetown neighborhood (judging by the neighbors). In the household, including Adam [I], were two males aged 26-44 and one aged 45+, also three females – one 10-15, one 16-25 (wife Sarah), and one 45+ (Anne Hunter?).

The Dandridge household included 64 slaves, surely among the highest in the county.

**1815** – Adam S. Dandridge [I] was assessed for one country house valued at \$6,500 (plus \$500). This value was \$2,000 above any other house valued in Jefferson County in 1815. Clearly this was not the house assessed in 1798, and likely, given the extremely high value, it was the brick house known as The Bower.

In 1816, the Jefferson County land tax record listed Dandridge’s 3,200 (3,400) acres as two distinct tracts: 1,200 acres (in later tax records called The Bower) adjoining Isaac Strider (NW 10 miles from the courthouse); and 2,200 acres adjoining Travelers Rest (NW 9).

**1820** – The Jefferson Co. land tax assessed Adam S. Dandridge for 1,200 acres adjoining Isaac Strider with \$6,000 in building value. He was also assessed for 1,789 acres adjoining Travelers Rest (what remained of the 2,200 acres after several out sales) with a building value of \$600.

The census record listed Stephen S. Dandridge (Adam S. Dandridge [I]) as the head of household. In the household was one male aged 26-44 (Adam [I] age 38), one female aged 26-44 (Sarah P.) and another aged 16-25, as well as six children under the age of 9. There were 34 slaves in the household, with 11 occupied in agriculture. Stephen S. Dandridge described his occupation as “Farmer.”

Listed immediately after Dandridge was Ezekiel Blue, a blacksmith, and then John Ariss [or Cross maybe – the name is very blurry – a white male with family], an overseer. It is likely that at least the overseer was located on the Dandridge plantation, if not the blacksmith as well. The next name listed then is Isaac Strider, whose farm and mill property adjoined The Bower, and following Strider was his miller, Samuel Miller.

**1821** – Adam S. Dandridge [I] died. Beginning in 1825 the tax record was listed under the Adam S. Dandridge heirs and the executor of the A.S. Dandridge estate began selling off family farm-sized tracts. The 1,200 Bower tract with \$6,000 building value remained intact.

Since nearly all of the children were age 10 and under, this estate would remain in limbo until they all reached the age of 21, which was apparently in 1834. The division of the estate appears on the 1835 tax record.

**1835** – The widow Sarah P. Dandridge was given a dower including 596 acres with a building value of \$400 and a life estate on 174 acres with The Bower buildings valued at \$6,000. The rest of the land was divided between Alexander S., Mary E., Philip P. and Adam S. [II] (b.1814-d.1894).

Adam S. Dandridge [II] married Serena Pendleton in 1837. Since Adam's 390-acre inheritance tract still had no building value, presumably he and his wife and family lived with his mother Sarah at The Bower.

**1850** – Adam S. Dandridge [II] acquired 174 acres (building value \$5,000 in 1850) from his mother Sarah P. Dandridge (d. 1855). In 1851, Adam S. [II] was assessed for 564 acres (his 390 a. plus the 174 a. consolidated) called "Bower" with a seriously depreciated building value of \$3,500. Mother Sarah still retained 282 ½ acres of her dower land.

**1860** – The census listed Adam S. Dandridge [sic][II], aged 45 and blind. His wife Serena was 44 years old. Adam [II] was a Farmer with \$40,000 in real estate and \$64,500 in personal property (probably includes the mill machinery and possibly the value of slaves). All of their ten children were still living in the household: Serena C. (22), Sallie P. (21), Edmund P. (19), Lemuel P. (17), Adam S. [III] (15), Mary R. (14), Philip P. (12), Alexander (11), Nannie (9), and Mattie (2).

**1881** – A Chancery suit between John P. Kearfoot and A.S. Dandridge et al. precipitated the transfer of The Bower, now 258 acres including the eleven-acre mill site in Berkeley County, to Isabelle Dandridge, wife of Lemuel P. Dandridge – probably to protect the property from whatever was going on (ref in JC DB I/213).

The deed described the 258 acres as "the tract of land upon which the said A.S. Dandridge now resides, all of which is situate in the county of Jefferson, West Virginia except eleven acres (known as the mill lot) lying in the County of Berkeley, together with all the fixtures of every description in the grist and saw mills upon said property..." (JC DB I/213).

On the 1880 census A. S. Dandridge [II] was 65 years old and no longer described as blind. His household was listed in the Middleway District. His wife Serena and three unmarried daughters and son (Alexander) Spotswood Dandridge (23) shared the house. Adam S. Dandridge [III] (35) and his wife Caroline D. (Danske) was listed in the Potomac District. Lemuel P. Dandridge was living in Queens New York with the family of his wife Isabelle (Lawrence).

According to the NR documentation, The Bower burned in 1892 and the house was rebuilt within the original brick walls with Victorian-era additions. Adam S. Dandridge [II] died in 1894 and apparently Lemuel and Isabelle Dandridge and their family moved in, listed there on the 1900 census. The National Register nomination for The Bower, written in 1981, concluded: "Since the death of Lemuel P. Dandridge in December 1919, "The Bower" has not been a

permanent private residence. Rather, it serves as the focal point and homeplace for the large Dandridge family. A caretaker lives nearby and farms the land as well as maintains upkeep on the house. Various members of the Dandridge family spend alternating weeks at "The Bower" during all but the Winter season and, in August of every year, the entire Dandridge family comes home to "The Bower" for their annual re-union."