Further evidence to bolster this theory was discovered in the basement of the house. Twenty six large wrought iron meat hooks were located in the floor joists of the first story (see figure 8). These meat hooks represent physical evidence of 18th century accounts from Tidewater Virginia which describe plantation hands hanging meat in the basement of the big house to prevent it from becoming coated in creosote from successive smoking sessions in the smokehouse. Since hams could be kept for up to four years after being smoke cured, it was quite common to remove them from the smokehouse and store them in basements to keep them from further dehydration brought on by the smoking of new meats. However this was rarely done on small farms where meat was only being processed for family consumption. The scale of this operation is more akin to meat smoking on large Virginia plantations where many individuals, both free and enslaved, are dependent on a source of preserved meat (figures 5, 6, and 7).

Finally perhaps the most striking piece of evidence was found in Randolph’s will. After payment of his debts he leaves all his worldly property to his wife Lydia. It reads “... my beloved wife Lydia Mitchell, and she my said wife is to have full possession of… all the hogs all the poultry all the beef and all the pork and beef or bacon all the flour that may remain on hand.”