

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

received

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Williamsville (DHL File No. 42-27)

and or common N/A

2. Location

street & number 1.1 mile N.W. of intersection of VA-343, Rt. 615 and Rt. 605 N/A not for publication

city, town Studley vicinity of \_\_\_\_\_

state Virginia code 51 county Hanover code 085

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<u>N/A</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
			<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Mr. and Mrs. Robert Woodrow Cabaniss

street & number Williamsville

city, town Hanover N/A vicinity of \_\_\_\_\_ state Virginia 23069

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Hanover County Courthouse, Clerk's office

street & number N/A

city, town Hanover state Virginia 23069

6. Representation in Existing Surveys (See Continuation Sheet #1)

title (1) HABS has this property been determined eligible? y e s  no

date 1935  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Library of Congress

city, town Washington state D.C.

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		date <u>          N/A          </u>

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

### SUMMARY DESCRIPTION

Williamsville is a formal, two-story, Flemish bond brick, 1794-1803, "I" house with rear ells. The central door in the five bay principal facade is covered with a one-story wood porch surmounted by a balustrade. The sophisticated trim, including the fully-developed modillioned cornice and the elaborate Adamesque mantels are in a superior state of preservation. The location of Williamsville on Rt. 615 in Hanover County, Virginia, in a grove of ancient boxwood on the highest elevation in the vicinity provides an appropriately noble setting for the house. The nominated acreage includes one contributing building.

### ARCHITECTURAL ANALYSIS

Williamsville is a two-story, brick building over English basement. Behind the main rectangle containing primarily two rooms at each level with a center hall is a two-story ell containing one room at each level, followed by another one-story ell containing a room at the main floor and at the basement level. Well-proportioned exterior Flemish bond chimneys with corbeled caps provide a termination at each of the three gables of the house. First-floor windows have nine/nine sash, while the upper floor contains windows with six/nine sash. All fenestration is topped with splayed brick jack arches. Those above the second-floor windows extend to the bed molding of the wood cornice. The well-proportioned cornice contains modillions. Each cornice run terminates in end boards shaped to the profile of the cornice which continue as rake boards for the gabled end walls. Rectangular windows on either side of the chimneys provide light and ventilation to the attic.

The front doorway centered in the north facade is a particularly refined Federal composition. Because of the width of the doorway and porch, the second-floor windows do not have a uniform spacing. The three bay, one-story porch with its square columns is surmounted by a balustrade consisting of simple wood pickets between piers centered over the columns. The porch is a significant element in the architectural design of Williamsville.

Unadorned porches in the reentrant corner of the ell and on the outer facade of the ell provide cover for the secondary entrances to the house. The porch at the end of the main house has been enclosed to provide access to a one and one-half story wood frame kitchen.

The main rectangular block of the house contains a central stair hall with one room on each side--the parlor to the west, the dining room to the east. The stair rises from the front of the house to the rear along the left side of the hall to a landing. A second run rises across the rear of the entrance hall over a stairway to the basement to a second landing from which there is a short reverse run to the second floor. The highly ornamented stair with carved brackets at each tread has a fully paneled cheek wall with bead and beveled raised paneling. There are two turned balusters per tread with turned newel post at the main floors and each intermediate landing. On the stair run the wainscot cap matches the stair rail in profile and elevation. A fluted pilaster at the first riser receives the chair rail of the entrance hall.

(See Continuation Sheet #1)

# 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1794-1803 Builder/Architect Benjamin Ellett

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Williamsville is the best preserved Federal-style house in Hanover County. The interior millwork is notable for the elegance of the design and is distinguished by the fact that the building was unaltered for such a long period. Although the work of builders Benjamin Ellett and John Haw is not documented elsewhere, they clearly were masters of the art. The location of Williamsville on the highest elevation in the vicinity made it the obvious location for headquarters for Generals Grant, Hooker and Meade during the prolonged attacks on Richmond during the Civil War.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Williamsville was begun in 1794 by George William Pollard who lived in the house until his death in 1840. As the clerk of Hanover County from 1781 to 1824, he succeeded his father, William Pollard of Buckeye who had served as clerk from 1740 to 1781.

George William Pollard, the builder of Williamsville, was born in 1760 at Buckeye, the adjoining plantation. He was a man of such accurate business methods in his work that he was called "Billy Particular." His first wife was Elizabeth Smelt, widow of Isaac Dabney, whom he married in 1786. There were two children by this marriage--Mary Anderson Pollard, who married John Darracott, and Elizabeth Smelt Pollard, who married Dr. Joseph M. Shepherd of Hanover County.

His second wife was Elizabeth Dabney, widow of Lyn Shackelford. Elizabeth's brother, Chiswell Dabney, was the grandfather of Chiswell Dabney Langhorne; and her sister, Nancy Dabney, who married Archibald Stuart, was the grandmother of Governor Henry Carter Stuart. The only child of the second marriage was George William Pollard who inherited Williamsville and lived there all his life.

Patriots who were entertained at Williamsville included Edmund Pendleton, first judge of the Court of Appeals of Virginia; Edmund Pendleton, II, Colonel in the Revolutionary Army; and John Taylor, United States Senator; all of whom were related to the owner.

Family papers preserved at Williamsville provide a broad picture of life and events of the times. Included are eighteenth century deeds, Jane Pollard's 1797 receipt for the sale of William Pollard's land, financial accounts showing quantities and prices of such farm crops as cotton, and a drawing of a perpetual almanac. The construction is documented by John Haw's receipt of November 8, 1802, showing Benjamin Ellett as the builder and Haw as the overseer. Mutual Assurance Society Policy No. 60 indicates that Williamsville was one of the plantations insured by the Society at an early date. The continuing interest of the family in political events is illustrated by William Pollard's letter of November 16, 1829, in which he disputes authorship as claimed by Judge Pendleton of the essay, "The Danger Not Over."

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Newsletter - The Association for the Preservation of Virginia

Antiques - Antiquities, Vol. 1, No. 1 (February 1983).  
- January 1967, page 91.

"Boxwood Growing Problems and Care," no date, Davey Tree Expert Co., Kent, Ohio.  
The News Leader, Richmond, Virginia, July 9, 1921, page 14.

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property approx. 15 acres

Quadrangle name Studley, VA

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A	<u>18</u>	<u>296740</u>	<u>4174350</u>	B	<u>18</u>	<u>296410</u>	<u>4174240</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C	<u>18</u>	<u>296360</u>	<u>4174410</u>	D	<u>18</u>	<u>296550</u>	<u>4174610</u>
E	<u>18</u>	<u>296680</u>	<u>4174560</u>	F			
G				H			

(See Continuation Sheet #2)

**Verbal boundary description and justification** Beginning at a point on the W side of a private drive approximately 1650' NW of intersection of said drive with VA 645; thence extending approx. 100' SW; thence approx. 400' W; thence approx. 200' SW; thence approx. 100' W; thence approx. 50' NW; thence approx. 100' SW; thence approx. 50' W; thence approx. 100' NNW; thence approx.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	<u>N/A</u>	code	county	<u>N/A</u>	code
state	<u>N/A</u>	code	county	<u>N/A</u>	code

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title	<u>Robert H. Garbee, A.I.A.</u>		
organization	<u>Fauber Garbee, Inc., Architects</u>	date	<u>January 25, 1985</u>
street & number	<u>Forest Village Square</u>	telephone	<u>804-525-2948</u>
city or town	<u>Forest</u>	state	<u>Virginia 24551</u>

## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

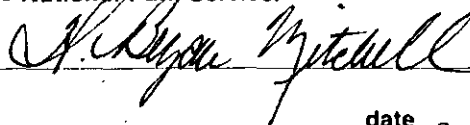
The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

H. Bryan Mitchell, Director  
title Division of Historic Landmarks



date September 28, 1985

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

WILLIAMSVILLE, HANOVER COUNTY, VA

Continuation sheet #1

Item number 7, 6

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7. Description

Architectural Analysis

In the entrance hall, as in all the principal rooms, there is a handsomely proportioned cornice consisting of a crown mould, a dentil course with punch circles at each interval mounted on an ogee board with bed mouldings to separate the principal elements. All the principal rooms have a chair rail which lines with the window stools (inside sills of the windows).

The parlor, which is nearly square in plan, is located to the right of the hall. The elegance of the space is measurably increased by the location of two windows on each of the three exterior walls. The principal design element of the room is the chimney piece located on the end wall between two windows. Since the chimneys are fully exterior, there are no wall projections on the inside of the drawing room. The mantelpiece of Adamesque style is well-proportioned and contains typical elements such as ribbon bows, swags, urns draped with swags and surmounted by flame finials, as well as garlands, shell motifs and small scrolled brackets treated as acanthus leaves.

The dining room to the left of the hall and the sitting room in the ell behind the dining room contain similar treatments to the trim, cornices and chair rails. Whereas the mantelpiece in the dining room is quite similar to the one in the drawing room, the mantelpiece in the sitting room has fluted pilasters supporting a highly developed mantel shelf with a projected center section over a broad, fluted drop.

The arrangement of rooms on the second floor is similar to that on the first. Bathroom facilities and cabinet work have been added with discretion and imagination so as to protect original elements.

The imposing approach to Williamsville follows a road which rises from the entrance gates to the house. The approach road is located on the principal axis centered on the front door and is bordered by a double row of mature trees.

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

- (2) Division of Historic Landmarks Survey File No. 42-27  
1968, State  
Division of Historic Landmarks  
221 Governor Street  
Richmond, Virginia 23219

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WILLIAMSVILLE, HANOVER COUNTY, VA

Continuation sheet #2

Item number 8 , 10

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8. Significance

Historical Background

The military significance of Williamsville during the Civil War was predicated on its having been built on the highest elevation in the area. The commanding view made it the choice location for military operations in both 1862 and 1864. At varying times Generals Grant, Hooker and Meade made their headquarters at Williamsville.

The George William Pollard who occupied Williamsville in the mid-nineteenth century was a physician and was known for his war poetry during the Civil War. Yet another George William Pollard occupied Williamsville and raised his family there in the first quarter of this century.

Unscathed by the war, Williamsville survived years of minimal maintenance until its acquisition by Mr. and Mrs. Robert Woodrow Cabaniss in June 1964. Thanks to the very sensitive efforts of Mr. and Mrs. Cabaniss the house has been repaired preserving all of its original materials.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA -- Verbal Boundary Description

300' W; thence approx. 100' NNE; thence approx.  
25' W; thence approx. 150' NNW; thence approx. 200' E; thence approx. 200' ENE; thence  
approx. 100' NNE; thence approx. 300' NNW; thence approx. 200' NE; thence approx. 50' E  
crossing private drive; thence approx. 200' SE along E side of private drive; thence approx.  
300' E along E side of private drive; thence approx. 200' S along E side of private drive;  
thence approx. 75' SW following E side of drive; thence approx. 300' SE along E side of  
drive to point of origin.

Boundary Justification

The nominated property for Williamsville consists of fifteen acres. This includes the main house, a modern garage, and the Pollard family burial ground. The fifteen acres is a fraction of the original Pollard tract of 375 acres, conveyed to the present owners in 1964.

USGS 7.5' quadrangle  
Studley, VA

(scale:1:24000)  
1964 (PR 1974)

WILLIAMSVILLE, Hanover County, VA

UTM References:

A-18/296740/4174350

B-18/296410/4174240

C-18/296360/4174410

D-18/296550/4174610

E-18/296680/4174560

