

VLR-6/20/89 NRHP 11/13/89

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Gravson-Gravelv House

other names/site number 60-117

2. Location Northeast side of VA Route 613 at the

street & number Little River Bridge

N/A no1 for publication

city, town Graysontown

vicinity

state Virginia

coda VA

county Montgomery

code 121

zip code 24149

3. Classification

Ownership of Property

- private public-local public-State public-federal

Category of Property

- building(s) district site structure object

Number of Resources within Property

Table with 2 columns: Contributing, Noncontributing. Rows for buildings, sites, structures, objects, Total.

Name of related multiple property listing: Prehistoric and Historic Resources of Montgomery County

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official Director, Virginia Department of Historic Resources Date State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official Date State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register. See continuation sheet. determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet. determined not eligible for the National Register. removed from the National Register. other. (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

**6. Function or Use**

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic: single dwelling

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic: single dwelling

**7. Description**Architectural Classification  
(enter categories from instructions)

Late Victorian

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation stone: limestone

walls wood: weatherboard

roof metal: tin

other

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The house stands on a high bank above Virginia Route 613 overlooking the Little River. It appears to be a two-story, three-bay, center-passage dwelling of conventional form, but with highly idiosyncratic decorative elements. A three-bay porch supported by Doric columns is surmounted by a gabled enclosed room on the second floor, and at the south gable end a three-stage tower is featured containing rooms on the first and third floors and a porch on the second. The porches have elaborate decoration including sawn balusters, a frieze with brackets, dentils, and tablets. The second floor features corner pilasters, fishscale shingles, arched decorative panels over windows with keystones, and a returned cornice with decorative paired brackets. The second-floor front windows are surmounted by small arch-headed gables containing elaborate spool-work.

A nineteenth-century one-story ell extends to the rear along with a two-story wooden leanto. The decorative features do not extend to the rear. A stone retaining wall and concrete stairs are located at the road's edge.

The interior is characterized by restrained ornament. The center passage and the room to the south are clearly part of an earlier frame house, probably the one said to have been moved from farther up the hill. The second floor incorporates beaded board partitions, indicating a mid-nineteenth-century or earlier date of construction for this section. The open-stringer stair seems to have been added. It has a turned newel and turned balusters. The first-floor room was served by a fireplace (now blocked). The house has a clear seam in the rear weatherboard indicating that the room to the north was added. This room has simple moldings and a brick stove flue. The second-floor porch room shows clear evidence of having been added.

**8. Statement of Significance**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally     statewide     locally

Applicable National Register Criteria     A     B     C     D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)     A     B     C     D     E     F     G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)  
Architecture

Period of Significance

1880-1900

Significant Dates

1881

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Grayson-Gravely House is significant under criterion C as an unusual example of a late nineteenth-century dwelling that exhibits a great profusion of exterior ornamentation. The house has been carefully maintained, and is today the most elaborately decorated house from any period in the county. The house also embodies significant vernacular forms, including its apparently original hall-parlor or two-room plan and its expansion to a center-passage plan with an ell.

The property originally belonged to the Grayson family. John Grayson sold "lot 4" to Ephraim C. Grayson in 1879. Land books of that year show the land was worth \$10 per acre with the relatively low value of \$40 in improvements. Between the 1880 and 1881 tax assessments the property dramatically increased in value to \$400 per acre with \$350 in buildings. Local sources indicate that the house was moved in 1881 from up the hill to its present site. It may have received its addition at that time, but the decorative elements are said to have been added by Mrs. Gravely, an owner in the 1890s. The Grayson family operated a sawmill in the immediate vicinity, and it seems likely that the building's decorative features are products of that factory.

County Deed Books confirm that the property was sold by D. H. Grayson and James H. Grayson to J. H. H. Gravely in 1889. D. H. Grayson had received the house and lot from E. C. Grayson in 1888.

See continuation sheet

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

Mullins, Mrs. Edwin C. Interview, November 1987.  
Montgomery County Deed Books 29, p. 1, and 42, p. 54.  
Montgomery County Land Books, 1879-1882.

See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository:

Virginia Department of Historic Resources  
221 Governor Street  
Richmond, VA 23219

**10. Geographical Data**

Acres of property less than one acre.

UTM References

A 

117	538890	4099570
Zone	Easting	Northing

C 

--	--	--

B 

Zone	Easting	Northing

D 

--	--	--

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Beginning at point A on the east side of the road 168 feet north of VA Route 613, and located fifteen feet north of the house, proceeding 100 feet east to point B, thence 168 feet to point C, thence west 100 feet with lot line to the east side of VA Route 613 at point D, thence north along the road 168 feet to the point of origin.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundaries were chosen to enclose the house and its domestic-related space.

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

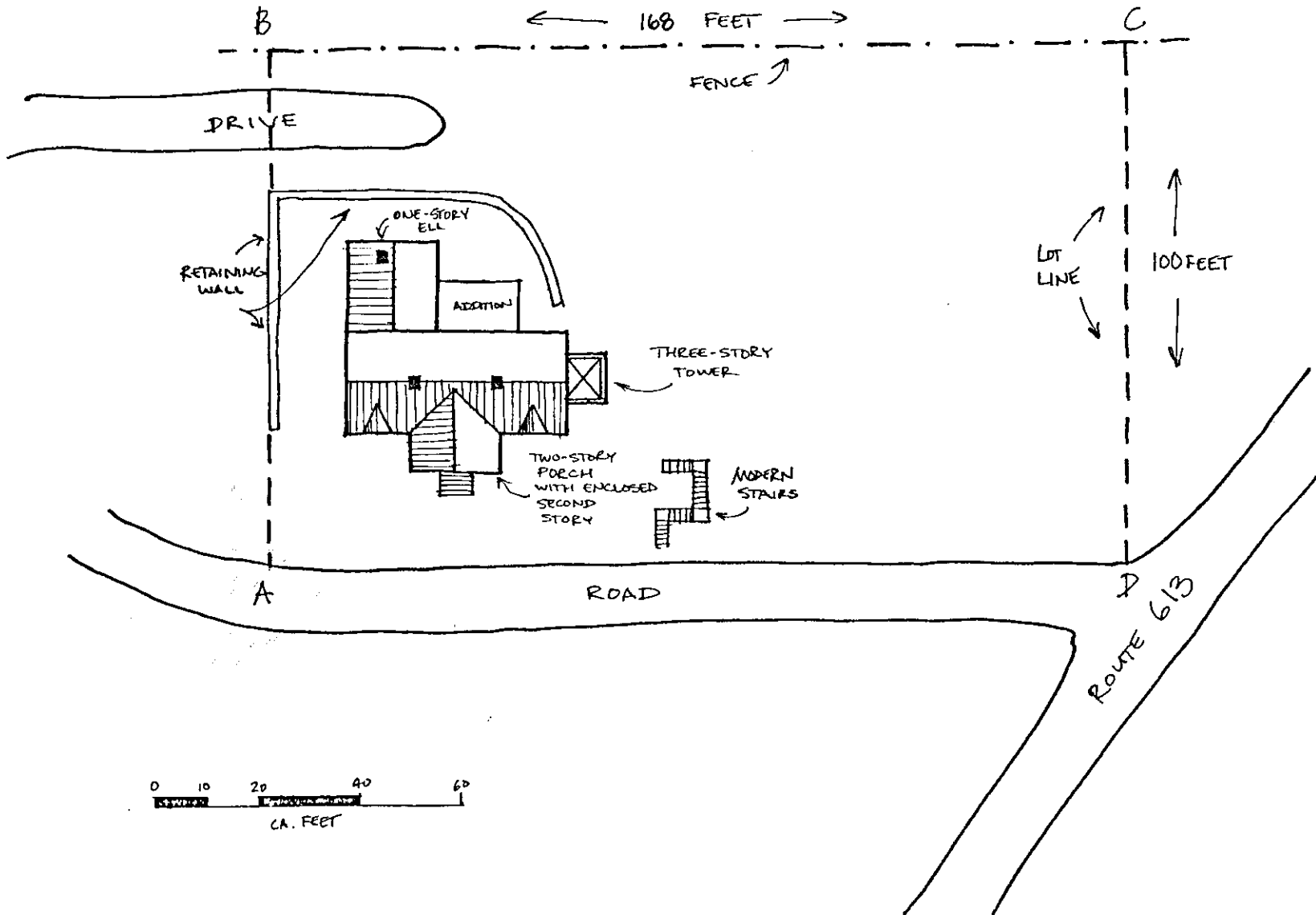
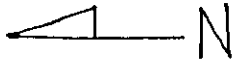
name/title Gibson Worsham date June 1988  
 organization Gibson Worsham, Architect telephone (703) 552-4730  
 street & number Route 2, Yellow Sulphur Springs state Virginia zip code 24073  
 city or town Christiansburg

60-117

GRAYSON - GRAVELY HOUSE

MONTGOMERY CO., VIRGINIA

G. WORSHAM, K. MARTIN AUGUST 1987





SOWYER -  
TROLLINGER FARM  
4102 17 543860 4102620

(RIVER)  
4958 III SW

4101

CROMER HOUSE  
17 542060 4100530

JOHN GRAYSON  
HOUSE  
4100 17 539320 4100070

GRAYSON - GRAVELY  
HOUSE  
17 528890 4099540

BISHOP HOUSE  
4099 17 539520 4098965

GRAYSONTOWN  
METHODIST CHURCH  
17 539030 4098860

RADFORD  
SOUTH  
QUAD  
4098