

VLR-9/15/81 NRHP 7/8/82

115-5133

United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

For HCRS use only  
received  
date entered

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

1. Name

historic GEORGE FARMAN HOUSE (PREFERRED)

and/or common Farman House; Farman-Logan House

2. Location

street & number ~~109 Pleasant Hill Road~~ 1982 Willow Hill Dr. N/A not for publication

city, town Harrisonburg X vicinity of 7<sup>th</sup> congressional district (J. Kenneth Robinson)

state Virginia code 51 county Rockingham code 165

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name William and Becky Hunter

street & number ~~109 Pleasant Hill Road~~ 1982 Willow Hill Dr.

city, town Harrisonburg N/A vicinity of state Virginia 22801

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Rockingham County Courthouse

street & number N/A

city, town Harrisonburg state Virginia

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Survey is this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date September 1980  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission

city, town Richmond state Virginia

# 7. Description

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

## Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Earman House is situated along Blacks Run south of Harrisonburg, approximately 800 feet west of the old wagon road or later Valley Turnpike. Like other early 19th-century farmhouses, this was a five-bay brick "I" house. The dwelling originally faced east towards the stream, and evidence on the west wall reveals the presence of a one-story ell. Popular decorative features for the early 19th century include the Flemish-bond brickwork, molded brick cornice, brick jack arches over the first-floor windows, and second-floor rowlock arches. By the late 19th century, the main entrance to the house had been changed to the west three-bay wall, and a one-story ell had been added off the former facade. Now the main entrance is served by a 20th-century porch, enclosing a neocolonial pedimented door frame.

The most outstanding feature of the Earman House is the showy Federal interior with original painting in the first-floor south parlor. The woodwork reflects a stronger knowledge of and response to Federal period pattern books than most Valley farmhouses, but these popular designs are interpreted and painted in a creative local manner. The carved, three-dimensional mantel, with its heavily turned, freestanding columns, turned urns, and projecting sunburst motifs, illustrates the persistence of the robust German forms. These design elements have been highlighted in a variety of colors, from the blue marbleizing and graining of the columns to the red circular sunbursts with gold bands. The textured center of the elliptical patera has been painted dark brown with surrounding rings of blue-green and dark red. Gold quarter fans in the corners of the three frieze panels radiate outward to enclose the sunbursts. Two narrow panels, with vine and leaf designs, flank the central panel. In the 20th century, much of the mantel, aside from the sunbursts and columns, had been painted a cream color. There is evidence, however, that some of the features had been picked up in brighter colors against a gray background.

The cupboards, doors, and windows are finished by decorative cornices, illustrating several Federal period motifs. Matching tripartite cupboards are positioned on either side of the mantel, each composed of a projecting central glass cabinet flanked by two narrow, wooden cabinets. Engaged columns define the sections of the cupboards and support typical Valley exaggerated cornices. The friezes again enclose central sunburst panels with urns to each side. While much of the cupboards has been painted cream and the urns gray in the 20th century, the reeded columns retain the original blue marbleizing. Similarly, the door and window trim has been painted cream, including the molded trim, frieze, and layered cornice. The central design within these friezes consists of a red vase holding red flowers. Green and red pinwheels with gold centers adorn the corner blocks.

The bright green sponge painting that finishes the door, wainscot, and cupboard panels was a distinctive Valley paint design in the early 19th century. Brown woodgrained rails and stiles frame these panels, and blue marbleized baseboards add more contrast. The chair railing, as well as the molded door and window trim, had probably originally been painted dark gray, matching the mantel and cupboards.

Although the original painting does not survive in other rooms, the woodwork throughout the house exhibits other creative local designs. In the passage, the unusual round newel top has been carved with an oculus design. The elaborate carved brackets derive from pattern book designs for this period. The staircase, now repainted, has also been decorated with green sponge work, trimmed with gray, and finished with a brown balustrade. The north first-floor room contains a simpler, Federal mantel--with molded pilasters, three-panel frieze, and layered cornice shelf--and the end blocks are carved with floral patterns.

(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 type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input checked="" 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 checked="" 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)
<b>Specific dates</b>	ca. 1822	<b>Builder/Architect</b>	Unknown	

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

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The George Earman House is an outstanding example of the creative carving, joinery, and painting that characterized farmhouses in the Valley of Virginia in the early 19th century. Hidden within an exceptionally plain, ca. 1822 brick "I" house, this rich decoration reveals the persistence of the German influence after the traditional continental house forms had been abandoned for the popular Georgian models. The Earman House woodwork illustrates a blend of Federal designs with the German propensity towards flamboyant decoration. The local carpenter freely interpreted these pattern book motifs, carving them in the more robust German manner and integrating them with more traditional local designs to create very personal compositions. The opulent, brightly colored marbleizing and graining that finishes the elaborate parlor woodwork was popular in the central Valley, but few examples of such complexity survive. Particularly distinctive about this painting are the sponge-work designs on the door and wainscot panels and the use of bright colors to pick out details in the carved designs.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

George Earman (spelled variously Earmin, Earmon, Airmon) was born in Pennsylvania in 1774. He had immigrated to Virginia by 1806, when he married Sarah Argenbright whose family had large landholdings in Rockingham County, south of Harrisonburg. By 1810 George Earman had acquired 80 acres in the same general vicinity as his in-laws on Cook's Creek. It is possible that he built a small dwelling on this property, as the 1820 tax books indicate improvements on it of \$200. The house either was not standing by 1815, or was valued at less than \$500, as the Personal Property Tax books of that year show Earman having no slaves, two horses, five head of cattle, and "a chest of drawers" but no substantial dwelling.

In 1823 the tax books indicate that Earman added \$800 for "new buildings" on his 80 acres, bringing the total building value up to \$1,000. Although this sum seems small for the house, few of the houses in Rockingham County at that time were taxed very high. Although the farm was modest in size, Earman's well-crafted house was adequate for his family of at least six children. At least two of his children, Elijah and Jacob, were born after 1821. Earman's real property was valued at \$2,800 by 1850.

Due to the destruction of most of the antebellum Rockingham records, it is uncertain when Earman died; however, his heirs sold his farm in 1868 to Sarah Ann Logan for \$5,846.86. The property was acquired by Hugh A. Heatwole in 1907, and subsequent owners include W. W. Acker, Benjamin A. Driver, William F. Flory, and S. L. Rexrode. The present owners and occupants are William H. and Rebecca Hunter.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

Harrisonburg Historical Society. Genealogical Records. Harrisonburg, Virginia.  
 Richmond, Va. Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Archives. George Earman House,  
 Rockingham County, File No. 82-137. Daryl Batterman, "The Bill and Becky Hunter House,"  
 MS, February 1980.  
 Rockingham County Land Tax 1800-1850; Personal Property Tax Books 1815. (See Continuation Sheet #1)

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 3 Acres  
 Quadrangle name Bridgewater, Va. Quadrangle scale 1:24000

### UMT References

A	<u>17</u>	<u>6832010</u>	<u>42538310</u>	B			
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C				D			
E				F			
G				H			

**Verbal boundary description and justification** Beginning at a point about 800' due W of U.S. 11 and about 1,000' WSW of the intersection of U.S. 11 and the southern boundary of the city of Harrisonburg; thence extending about 300' SW, crossing approach drive; thence extending about 400' NW; thence extending about 400' NE; thence about 400' SE to point of origin.  
 (See Continuation Sheet #1)

### 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 Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Staff  
 organization Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission date September 1980  
 street & number 221 Governor Street telephone (804) 786-3144  
 city or town Richmond state Virginia 23219

# 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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature H. Bryan Mitchell  
 title H. Bryan Mitchell, Executive Director date MAY 10 1982  
Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission

For HCRS use only	
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register	date
Keeper of the National Register	date
Attest:	date
Chief of Registration	

**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
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GEORGE EARMAN HOUSE, Rockingham County, Virginia

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received

date entered

Continuation sheet 1

Item number 7, 9, 10

Page 1, 1, 1

7. DESCRIPTION

The second floor also contains two rooms with a central passage, although a small bathroom has recently been partitioned off the southeast room. More carved sunbursts and urns decorate the south mantel, but the snake design in the narrow frieze panels is unusual. The north mantel again contains a central sunburst with the common local quadrant designs in side panels and end blocks. A painted door, like the first-floor parlor door, does survive on the second floor, and there is other evidence that some of the other second-floor woodwork had been painted in the green and gray patterns found on the first level. Most of the woodwork on this floor has been painted in the 20th century.

This main block contained a full, slightly raised basement, with a root cellar to the north, but there is no evidence of a fireplace in either room. The sheltered south cellar entry--composed of a gable roof resting on a low stone wall--dates to the mid-19th century.

Constructed of all-stretcher bond, the brick ell contains the common two-room plan with several variations, including a shed, rather than gable, roof and a chimney located on one end of the central wall. The date August 5, 1878, which survives on a basement post, may suggest a more precise date for this late 19th-century addition. The main floor contains a front sitting room and rear kitchen, both finished with chair railing, four-panel doors, plain board window and door trim, and some nailing boards. An enclosed kitchen staircase descends to the basement, and a pantry is located off the kitchen porch. The full cellar with outside entrance has been whitewashed and plastered. This large, open room contains a cooking fireplace and a cement cooling trough to the west.

A mid-19th-century brick smokehouse with diaper-work patterns on the sides stands southwest of the main house, as does a frame 20th-century garage.

AMcC

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

U.S. Census, Rockingham County, Va. 1810, 1820, 1830, 1850.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Boundary Justification

The register boundaries have been drawn to encompass the three acres constituting the present George Earman House tract, including the main house, the 20th-century garage, and the immediate yard.

USGS 7.5' quadrangle (scale:1:24,000)  
Bridgewater, Va. 1964

GEORGE EARL MAN HOUSE, Rockingham County, Va.  
UTM References:

17/683200/4253830

