

# Notes on Virginia

NUMBER 21

Published by the Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission

AUTUMN 1980



Rehabilitation Through Tax Incentives

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Published by the Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission

Morson's Row  
221 Governor Street  
Richmond, Virginia 23219

*MRS. NELLIE WHITE BUNDY*

Vice Chairman

*TUCKER H. HILL*

Executive Director

VHLC RESEARCH CENTER FOR ARCHAEOLOGY

Wren Kitchen, College of William and Mary  
Williamsburg, Virginia 23186

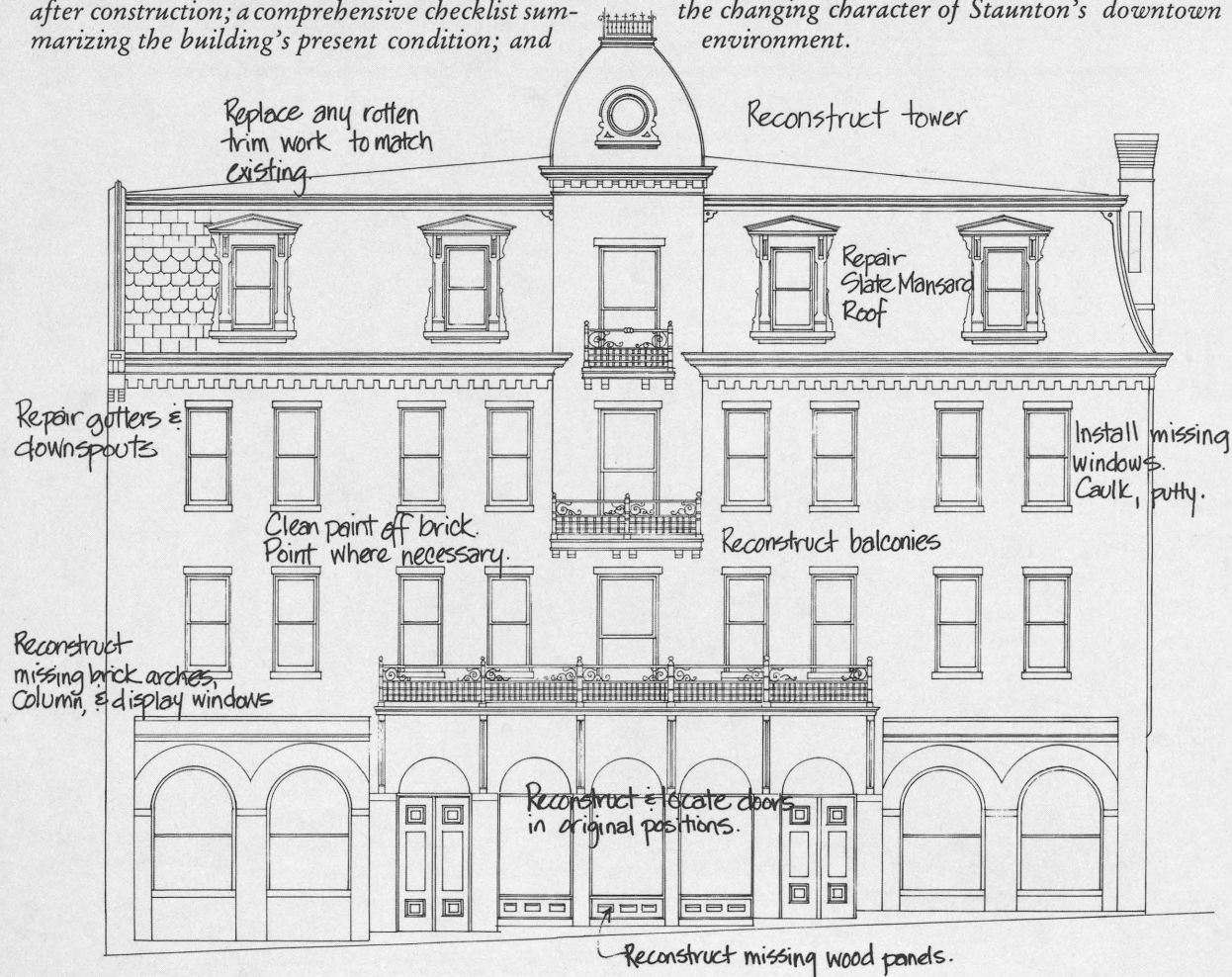
*Notes on Virginia* is funded in part by a grant from the  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service, U.S. Department of the Interior.

*Notes* is designed and prepared for publication by  
Douglas W. Price, Graphic Designer, Printing & Graphics,  
Virginia Department of General Services.

All photographs are from the VHLC archives, except where noted.

The cover for this issue of Notes on Virginia illustrates one way Virginia cities are promoting downtown revitalization through rehabilitation. Historic Staunton Foundation's Facade Improvement Program is a free design service that assists owners of buildings in designated historic districts with their renovation plans. An owner who wishes to participate in the program is offered the following services: historical research of the building, including old photos, if available; photographic documentation of the project before, during, and after construction; a comprehensive checklist summarizing the building's present condition; and

facade drawings, including color overlays. If major construction is needed, HSF has an architect-consultant review the plans or else suggests that the owner contract with his or her own architect. In addition, HSF will recommend and contact the necessary contractors and special craftsmen, assist in gathering construction estimates and bids, and keep a follow-up sheet on every detail of the project. To date, fifteen building owners have participated in the Facade Improvement Program, and their renovated storefronts have contributed significantly to the changing character of Staunton's downtown environment.



THE EAKLETON HOTEL

## FACADE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

HISTORIC STAUNTON FOUNDATION  
BOX 2534 STAUNTON · VIRGINIA 24401 703-885-7676

Final facade improvement drawing by HSF architect Kathy O'Neill

Our cover also suggests the possibilities open to owners of historic buildings whose renovation plans make provision for federal tax incentives under the Tax Reform Act of 1976. All renovation plans agreed to under Staunton's FIP conform to The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation Projects, the criteria by which projects are judged for purposes of the Tax Reform Act of 1976. The FIP coordinator for the Historic Staunton Foundation completes both parts of the Certification Application of the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service for any owner who wishes to take

advantage of the federal tax benefits provided for by the 1976 Act. The owner signs the forms, which are forwarded to the Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission in Richmond for review and are then sent on to HCRS in Washington, D.C., for final approval.

The importance of the federal tax incentives to owners of historic buildings is examined in the following article by Ann Miller, Tax Act Coordinator for the Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission.

## Federal Tax Incentives Encourage Rehabilitation

Four years ago Congress passed the Tax Reform Act of 1976. Section 2124 of that Act contains important tax incentives designed to stimulate the preservation and rehabilitation of income-producing historic buildings and to discourage their demolition.

The passage of the Act represented a reversal of federal tax policy toward demolition and preservation. For years, owners had been encouraged through tax laws to demolish older buildings and to construct new ones on their sites. The 1976 Act

substantially rehabilitated structure. For purposes of this Act, a substantially rehabilitated structure is any certified historic structure for which the cost of a certified rehabilitation exceeds either \$5,000 or the purchase price of the structure, whichever is greater. Under accelerated depreciation, an owner is allowed to depreciate the adjusted basis of the entire rehabilitated structure at an accelerated rate, as opposed to the straight-line rate formerly required. Based on frequency of use, the more popular of the two incentives appears to be the five-year amortization provision.

In addition, the Revenue Act of 1978 provided for a 10% tax credit for expenses incurred in rehabilitating any nonresidential building that has not been renovated for at least twenty years. This tax credit may be taken in combination with the accelerated depreciation but not with the five-year amortization. While properties do not have to be registered landmarks to qualify for this tax credit, owners seeking the credit for rehabilitation of a registered landmark (including certified structures in registered districts) must have their work reviewed in accordance with the explanation below.



Eakleton Hotel, Staunton, before rehabilitation

indicates that the government believes rehabilitation and preservation of historic buildings and neighborhoods to be of national importance. Through the provisions of the Tax Reform Act of 1976, owners who choose to rehabilitate income-producing historic properties are provided with the same tax incentives long available to property owners undertaking new construction.

### The Tax Incentives

The tax incentives contained in Section 2124 are of two kinds. Rehabilitation expenses can be written off over a five-year period even if the expected life of the improvement exceeds five years. This *amortization* provision applies to rehabilitation expenses incurred after June 14, 1976, and before June 15, 1981.

An owner may instead use the *accelerated depreciation* provision if the property qualifies as a

### Disincentives

The destruction of historic structures is discouraged by provisions which reduce the tax incentives both for demolition of historic buildings and for new construction on the site of a demolished historic building. Those provisions require that demolition costs be capitalized and depreciated over several years, rather than immediately written off as a current expense. The law also provides that only straight-line depreciation shall be allowed for any new construction on the site of a demolished historic structure.

### Eligibility

To be eligible for the accelerated depreciation and rapid amortization provisions of the Tax Reform Act, a building must be a commercial or income-producing property and must be listed in the National Register of Historic Places, either individually or as part of a National Register historic district. Private residences do not qualify.

## The Certification Process

Owners of eligible properties who are interested in qualifying for the tax incentives are required to complete a two-part Historic Preservation Certification Application. Part one is an application for certification of the significance of the property and must be completed by owners of buildings located in historic districts. Part two is the application for certification of the rehabilitation of the property. Spaces are provided on the form for a detailed, feature-by-feature explanation of the rehabilitation work.

Completed applications, along with general photographs of the property, detailed photographs of the work areas, and any necessary plans, specifications, maps, and drawings are then submitted to the Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission, which has 45 days in which to review the project and forward it to the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service (HCRS) with recommendations in favor of or against certification of significance and rehabilitation. The Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service also has 45 days to review the project. Notices of certification are sent directly to property owners from HCRS.

## Secretary of the Interior's Standards

It is important to note that all rehabilitation projects seeking certification for purposes of the Tax Reform Act are reviewed and evaluated, at both the state and federal levels, for conformance with *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Preservation Projects* and the accompanying guidelines for rehabilitation projects. The ten broadly worded standards were drawn up to guide the rehabilitation of all historic buildings and, above all, express a concern for the preservation of the significant historic and architectural characteristics of a structure during the process of rehabilitation. The guidelines for applying the Standards to rehabilitation projects offer important information on the types and methods of work which are recommended in rehabilitation projects and those which are not recommended or which are strongly discouraged.

Ideally, project applications should be submitted to the Landmarks Commission *before* any rehabilitation work is begun. The Commission in this way can spot problem areas early and can alert the owner to the need to follow the recommendations in the Secretary's guidelines. The likelihood of mistakes by the owner is lessened considerably. Similarly, during the review at the federal level, HCRS will advise applicants of any problem areas and recommend changes if the work has not yet been done.

## Denials of Certification

A denial of certification of rehabilitation is made when the Standards for Rehabilitation have been disregarded in the project work. In Virginia, five projects have been denied certification to date. Sandblasting of brick or stone has been the major reason for denials of projects in the state. The process of sandblasting is specifically forbidden in

the guidelines for rehabilitation projects. Those who own buildings that have been cleaned during rehabilitation by this abrasive and destructive method should not expect to have their projects certified for purposes of the Tax Reform Act.

Other reasons for denying certification to Virginia projects include the poor quality of extensive masonry repointing and the destruction or severe alteration of original features such as window or door openings. Had the owners submitted their Historic Preservation Certification Applications to the Landmarks Commission before commencing the rehabilitation work, the staff could have suggested HCRS-approved alternative treatments for the problem areas. Both the Secretary's Standards and the guidelines for rehabilitation projects are available from the Landmarks Commission upon request.

## Progress to Date

Since the Tax Act became law late in 1976, over 1,700 rehabilitations in forty-seven states have qualified for the tax incentives according to HCRS records. Representing an investment of over \$800 million, these 1,700 rehabilitations are fairly evenly divided between rental residential and commercial properties. In Virginia sixty-three properties have received certifications representing total rehabilitation expenses of over \$13 million.

The Tobacco Company Restaurant, Shockoe Slip Historic District—one of Richmond's better examples of rehabilitation through tax incentives



26-28 E. Beverly Street, one of the older structures in downtown Staunton, before rehabilitation.



## The Record in Virginia

Despite the obvious financial benefits resulting from the use of tax incentives and despite the wealth of eligible structures in the state, a relatively small percentage of Virginians have chosen to take advantage of the Tax Reform Act. There are over sixty historic districts within the Commonwealth, yet in only three or four districts have the Tax Act provisions been widely used.

Alexandria's historic district has been the site of most of the state's activity. Twenty-eight projects have been submitted for certification from this district alone. Fredericksburg, Richmond, Winchester, and Staunton have witnessed a significant, though smaller, volume of activity.

Richmonders, although slow at first to make use of the tax incentives, are beginning to grasp the importance and value of them. Of the nine historic districts located within the city, the Shockoe Slip Historic District and the St. John's Church Historic District on Church Hill are the areas where property owners have taken the most interest in the Tax Reform Act. The Monument Avenue Historic District, with its large number of older apartment houses, represents an area of the city with great potential for use of the tax incentives.

26-28 E. Beverly Street after rehabilitation qualified as a "certified historic structure" for tax deductions under the Tax Reform Act of 1976.



## Importance of Incentives to Investors

According to a recent HCRS poll, 41% of property owners indicated that they would not have undertaken a rehabilitation project had the tax incentives not been available. Although many rehabilitation projects are made possible by a combination of loans, grants, and the tax incentives, the HCRS poll points up the fact that the tax incentive is often a major factor in a property owner's decision to attempt a renovation of a historic structure.

In Staunton's large downtown historic district, recently nominated to the National Register of Historic Places, nine vacant buildings were purchased for development by an out-of-state firm. The partners indicated that the incentives for rehabilitation contained in the Tax Reform Act of 1976 played a significant part in their decision to undertake the project.

Similarly, the Tax Reform Act's incentives made the renovation of Richmond's once-grand Jefferson Hotel an attractive and feasible idea. At present, a Historic Preservation Certification Application is pending for the old hotel.

## Results of the Tax Reform Act

The beneficial results of the passage of the Tax Act are many. The Act has greatly stimulated private investment, improved run-down neighborhoods and depressed areas, and broadened urban tax bases. Even though the rehabilitated structures contain 12,000 housing units, 9,300 of which are newly created, overall displacement has been light. This is due in large part to the fact that most of the projects have involved the rehabilitation of empty or underutilized buildings. Perhaps most important to the preservation movement has been the formation of the Secretary's Standards and the accompanying guidelines — both direct results of the passage of the Tax Reform Act. These have been valuable instruments in promoting the practice of sensitive alterations to historic buildings and neighborhoods and in encouraging the use of appropriate materials and methods in preservation projects.

Signed into law on October 4, 1976, the Tax Reform Act is scheduled to expire in June of 1981. A resolution calling for the extension of the tax incentives until January 1, 1986, has recently been introduced in Congress. Hearings and studies regarding the extension most likely will begin this fall.

The Landmarks Commission will be glad to assist any property owner in determining if he/she is eligible to apply for the tax incentives when rehabilitating his/her building. As Virginia's historic preservation office, the Commission also will offer help in completing the Historic Preservation Certification Application and will provide technical assistance with regard to specific questions concerning proposed project work. Any property owner interested in taking advantage of the impressive rehabilitation incentives of the Tax Reform Act of 1976 should begin the process of securing certification at the Landmarks Commission.

Ann C. Miller  
Tax Act Coordinator

# Becoming A Historic Landmark: The Process and Significance of Landmark Registration

Since January 1980, the Commission has received as many as twenty-five letters a month from individuals interested in having properties considered for nomination to the Virginia Landmarks Register and the National Register of Historic Places. Of more than a hundred requests received so far this year, fifty appear to meet the criteria for eligibility and will be investigated further by the staff. During the same period, the staff has presented forty completed nomination re-

ports to the Commission, almost all of which have been approved for the state and national registers.

Unfortunately, public awareness of the process and significance of registration has not kept pace with the growing volume of register activity at the Commission. The following step-by-step description of register procedures—from initial request to formal recognition of an important state and national landmark—is meant to address this need.

## The Request

Nomination of a place to the Virginia Landmarks Register usually begins with a written request that a property be listed as an official historic landmark. The person making the request should provide the Commission with the precise location of the property and the owner's name, address, and telephone number, as well as that of a tenant or custodian. If the owner is not making the request, the Commission should have a clear indication that the owner is aware that the request has been made. The Commission also will need to examine exterior and interior photographs of the property. These may be black-and-white or color prints, or slides. It is understood that these photographs will become part of the Commission's files and will not be returned.

One may assist the Commission further by submitting a brief statement of the prehistoric, historic, or architectural significance of the property to the state. The statement should mention any significant events, persons, or families associated with the property. If the property's importance is thought to be mainly architectural, then the date of the structure should be documented as firmly as possible.

For the convenience of those wishing to propose nominations to the state and national registers, the staff has prepared a preliminary information form which is designed to elicit the data required by the Commission before it can consider the eligibility of a property for designation as a historic landmark. The three-page questionnaire may be obtained by writing the Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission.

## Commission Surveys

Although the greatest number of nominations originate with requests by interested individuals, groups, organizations, and governmental bodies, the staff also gleans potential landmarks from the Commission's extensive survey of buildings and structures in the Commonwealth having historical and architectural interest. The survey is a continuing cooperative effort between staff and local citizens in which historical information, photographs, drawings, and maps are assembled for each place. Since 1967 the staff has visited more than 20,000 places within the state and gathered information about each.

In addition to the Commission's survey of buildings and structures, the Virginia Research Center for Archaeology, a branch of the Commission with offices at the College of William and Mary, is undertaking a statewide survey to locate and assess the significance of archaeological sites in Virginia. As part of the survey, VRCA archaeologists visit sites throughout the Commonwealth to record the nature, period, present condition, and significance of each archaeological resource. Valuable information regarding archaeological site history and location is obtained through documentary research, map study, and consultation with local historical groups and archaeological societies. Material from the survey is analyzed at VRCA laboratories, and those sites most likely to yield important information on life in historic and prehistoric Virginia are considered eligible for nomination to the register.

## Staff Evaluations

Once the Commission receives sufficient information to consider a request, the staff evaluates the property according to standard register criteria. To qualify for registration, a property must be associated with important historic events, developments, or persons, or possess outstanding architectural or archaeological significance. Any building, structure, site, or district prominently identified with Virginia history and culture from prehistoric times to the present may therefore be eligible. Register quality may also be present in

structures that embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction; that represent the work of a master; or that possess high artistic values. Besides satisfying one or more of these conditions, the property must also possess integrity of location, design, setting, workmanship, feeling, and association. The results of the staff evaluation not only assist in determining the eligibility of property for registration but are essential in establishing the scheduling priorities of the Commission.



## Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission State Review Board

**Mr. A. Smith Bowman**  
Executive, A. Smith Bowman Distillery

**Mrs. Nellie White Bundy, Jr.**  
Curator, Tazewell County Museum

**Mr. Donald Haynes**  
State Librarian, Virginia State Library

**Mrs. Kenneth R. Higgins**  
Chairman, Governor's Advisory Committee  
Virginia Research Center for Archaeology

**Dr. Daniel P. Jordan**  
Assistant Chairman, Department of History  
Virginia Commonwealth University

**Mr. William M. Kelso**  
Director of Archaeological Research  
Thomas Jefferson Memorial Foundation

**Mr. Jon K. Kukla**  
Head, Publications Branch  
Virginia State Library

**Mr. Frederick D. Nichols**  
School of Architecture  
University of Virginia

**Dr. Stephen E. Plog**  
Department of Anthropology  
University of Virginia

**Mr. James R. Short**  
Vice President for Preservation and Research  
Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, Inc.

**Dr. Richard Guy Wilson**  
Chairman, Division of Architectural History  
University of Virginia

## Screening by State Review Board

After the staff evaluation, the property is discussed at a monthly meeting of the State Review Board, an advisory committee whose members are appointed by the Executive Director of the Commission with the endorsement of the Commission members for their knowledge of history, architecture, environmental planning, and archaeology. Screening requests is one of the board's chief re-

sponsibilities. If, based on the submitted information and the staff's recommendation, the board concludes that a property has merit and may meet the criteria for registration, it will authorize the staff to investigate further and to visit the property. If the board does not think the property can meet the criteria, the applicant will be notified immediately in writing of the board's decision.

## The Nomination Report

Formal consideration for listing on the Virginia Landmarks Register consists of the preparation of nomination reports by the Commission staff. The staff reports are based on submitted material as well as on the staff's own research and architectural analysis. Each place deemed eligible by the State Review Board is assigned to an architectural historian who visits the site and meets the property owner or custodian to explain the process and significance of registration. During this visit the architectural historian also thoroughly examines and photographs the place under consideration to ensure that the nomination report will be accurate and up-to-date. After the architectural historian's visit, a staff historian will pursue an independent investigation of the history of the property, plotting



Staff historians Vicenta Scarlett and Margaret Peters scan maps for location of land described in colonial patents.

changes of ownership, use, and form over time and interpreting the significance of the site to the broad patterns of national, state, and local history. The results of the historian's research are usually turned over to the architectural historian assigned to the property, who drafts a complete architectural description of the structure as well as a statement of its significance. The draft is then approved by the senior architectural historian, edited by the staff historian, reviewed by the assistant executive director, and finally submitted to the Commission registrars for the final proof, before it is sent to the Executive Director for approval.

In the case of archaeological sites, nomination reports are the collaborative work of an ar-

chaeologist and a research historian of the Virginia Research Center for Archaeology. After receiving the approval of the Commissioner of Archaeology, the chief executive officer of the VRCA, archaeological reports are presented to the Center's advisory committee for review. The committee consists of nine members who are appointed by the Governor to advise the Historic Landmarks Commission on the Center's operations. With the endorsement of the Governor's advisory committee, the completed reports are then submitted to the Commission's Executive Director.

## Final Determination

When approved by the Executive Director, final reports are mailed to the State Review Board members for review in advance of an upcoming meeting. After the nomination forms are presented and discussed at the Review Board meeting, the board decides whether or not to recommend to the Commission that the property be registered. Upon a favorable vote, the board's recommendation is submitted to the full nine-member Commission, with whom final action on the nomination rests. Approval attests that a property conforms to established criteria and is of significance to the state and nation. Acceptance by the Commission of a positive recommendation in a formal motion constitutes official listing in the Virginia Landmarks Register.

## Nomination to the National Register of Historic Places

It has been the Commission's policy to nominate to the National Register of Historic Places any place it has entered on the Virginia Landmarks Register. The National Register of Historic Places, maintained by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service of the U.S. Department of the Interior, is the official federal list of properties worthy of preservation. The law which called for the creation of this federal list in 1966 specifically indicated that properties receiving the National Register designation should include places of state and local, as well as national, significance. As the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service ordinarily accepts the nominations of the Commission, the Virginia section of the National Register contains approximately the same number of entries as does the Virginia Landmarks Register. (The National Register of Historic Places should not be confused with a National Historic Landmark designation. A property of *national* interest may be designated a National Historic Landmark by the Secretary of the Interior under authority of the Historic Sites Act of 1935. Each property so designated is awarded a special bronze plaque to identify its status. Currently there are eighty-seven such "bronze plaque" landmarks in Virginia. The Commission does not play an active role in the National Historic Landmarks program.) After the nomination form is submitted to the office of the National Register, it is usually accepted for the National Register in several months time.

## Significance of Registration

Listing on the Virginia Landmarks Register and the National Register places no legal restrictions on an owner's use of the property, nor does it imply any architectural controls. Restrictions, such as historic district zoning, can be imposed only by local governing bodies. Registration is mainly an official and honorific recognition that a property is a historic and cultural resource for the state and nation and should be preserved. Registered landmarks do not have to be accessible to the public; indeed, the majority of places registered are privately owned and have never been open to the public. If an owner wishes to provide legal protection from inappropriate change for a registered landmark, he may do so by granting a preservation easement on the property to the Historic



A forthcoming nomination report—the Bristol Railroad Station, Bristol

Landmarks Commission. Listing on the National Register does offer some measure of security to historic properties, however. Federal agencies are required to take registered properties into consideration in the evaluation of federally funded projects. When a federally financed, licensed, or otherwise federally assisted project appears to threaten the integrity of a registered landmark, the President's Advisory Council on Historic Preservation may review and comment on the project. Although the Council cannot cancel the federal involvement, it can ensure the consideration which often leads to satisfactory compromise. Besides serving as an important planning tool, registration makes property owners eligible to be considered for

federal preservation grants-in-aid which are administered and distributed by the Commission. Owners who rehabilitate certified historic income-producing properties are also eligible for federal tax benefits.

## Patience

Because the Landmarks Commission receives many requests to register properties and has a large backlog, it may be several months to a year before the staff can follow up on the authorization of further study by the State Review Board. The staff and the State Review Board must reserve the right to determine scheduling priorities and therefore may not necessarily respond to requests in the order in which they are received. While giving the greatest weight to the type and degree of a property's historical, architectural, archaeological, and geo-

graphic significance, the staff also must take into consideration such other factors as public interest in its preservation, present dangers to the property's survival, and the likelihood of its becoming a catalyst for preservation in the area. Apart from these priorities, confirmation of historical data by staff researchers takes time, and it is impossible to estimate how long the necessary research and documentation will take. However, the Commission staff will make every effort to act promptly and to give each request thorough consideration.

Robert A. Carter  
VHLC Historian  
with material prepared by other  
members of the staff.

# VIRGINIA LANDMARKS REGISTER

The Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission is pleased to note the following additions made to the Virginia Landmarks Register during the winter and spring of 1980. As the state's official list of properties worthy of preservation, the Register embraces buildings, structures, sites, and districts prominently identified with Virginia history and culture from prehistoric times to the present. Since the General Assembly established the Register in 1966, recognition of more than 900 places has directed public attention to Virginia's extraordinary legacy from the past and greatly encouraged the preservation efforts of state, local, and private agencies and groups. All of the properties here listed have been nominated to the National Register of Historic Places.

A cloth-bound copy of the *Virginia Landmarks Register* (published in 1976) is available for \$8.95 (plus Virginia sales tax) from the printer, the Dietz Press, 109 E. Cary Street, Richmond, Virginia 23219. This volume contains brief statements about each of approximately six hundred properties and is profusely illustrated.



Horn Quarter, King William County

## Eastern Virginia & Richmond

**BLADENSFIELD, RICHMOND COUNTY:** This large wooden plantation house is located on land that was one time the property of Robert "King" Carter. It was inherited in 1734 by his grandson, Robert "Councillor" Carter, who probably built the house in the third quarter of the 18th century. In 1847 Bladensfield was acquired by the Rev. William N. Ward, who enlarged the house and operated there a well-known female academy. Bladensfield is still owned by the Ward family.

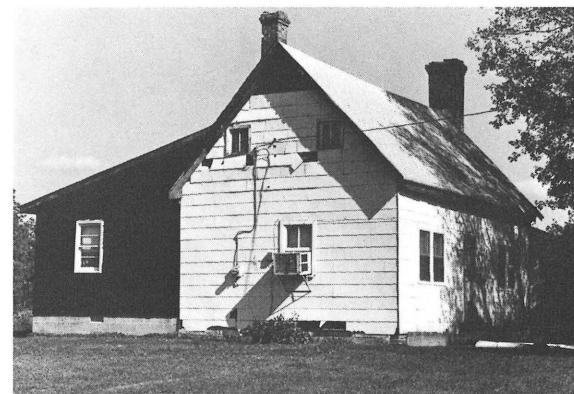
**LOTT CARY BIRTH SITE, CHARLES CITY COUNTY:** For more than a century and a half, the black community of Charles City County has recognized this typical late 18th-century vernacular dwelling as the birthplace of Lott Cary, the first black American missionary to Africa and one of the founding fathers of Liberia. As the only visible remnant of the plantation on which Cary was born and lived, the house and its simple rural setting have become the major focal point of local sentiment toward Cary and his remarkable achievements. Equally significant is the site's representation of the important contribution of black Virginians to the Commonwealth in the early national period.

**HORN QUARTER, KING WILLIAM COUNTY:** One of the most impressive and highly ornamental Federal-style residences in Virginia, this house was erected in 1829-30 for George Taylor, son of the noted agrarian reformer, politician, and pamphleteer John

Taylor of Caroline County. In addition to its architectural embellishments, which include a magnificent three-story spiral stair, Horn Quarter is noted for the remnants of its original elaborate gardens and for being one of the earliest Virginia houses with documented indoor plumbing.

**ST. SOPHIA HOME OF THE LITTLE SISTERS OF THE POOR, RICHMOND:** The former charitable hospital of the Little Sisters of the Poor is a prodigious and rare example for Richmond of late Victorian institutional architecture. Adding to its interest is the fact that the building incorporates the walls of Warsaw, a brick farmhouse built in 1832 as the residence of William Anderson, whose farm now forms a large part of the surrounding neighborhood, the Fan District. Warsaw was acquired by the mendicant order of nuns in 1877 and was transformed into the present Second Empire-style building over the next two decades.

**TRUXTUN HISTORIC DISTRICT, PORTSMOUTH:** Truxtun was the first wartime government housing project constructed exclusively for blacks in the United States. Named for Thomas Truxtun, an early naval hero, the forty-two-acre neighborhood was built during World War I to accommodate the growing work force at the Norfolk Naval Shipyard in Portsmouth. Truxtun is also significant for its exhibition of the planning standards of the United States Housing



Lott Cary House, Charles City County



St. Sophia Home of the Little Sisters of the Poor, Richmond



Bladensfield, Richmond County

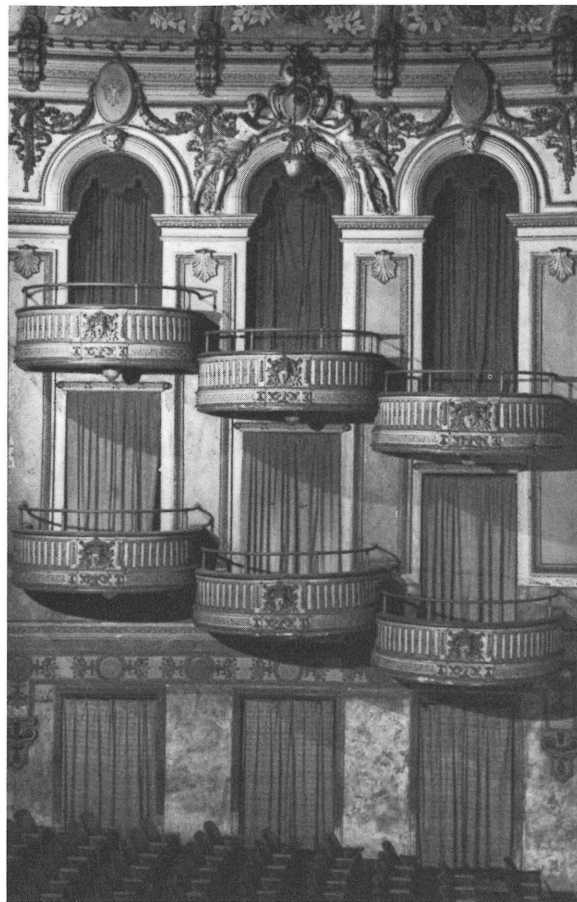


Truxtun Historic District, Portsmouth

Corporation, the federal agency which financed and built the community as a model village for the nation's black citizens. The residential portion of the district is characterized by close-knit, five-room structures with jerkinhead roofs, so arranged that a repeated pattern is almost indiscernible. Though having undergone moderate alterations since the 1920s, Truxtun retains much of its original character.

**WARNER HALL, GLOUCESTER COUNTY:** The site of the colonial residences of Councillors Augustine Warner, I, Augustine Warner, II, John Lewis, I, and John Lewis, II, Warner Hall is one of the most historic estates in Gloucester County. The porticoed center portion of the expansive dwelling, built by an unidentified architect ca. 1905, is attached to two colonial wings that remain from an 18th-century house which burned ca. 1840. Like the previous structures at Warner Hall, all of which indicated the social prominence of their owners, the present dwelling is a grand architectural gesture. The walled cemetery of the Warner and Lewis families, located on the property southeast of the house, has been owned and maintained by the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities since 1903.

**WELLS THEATRE, NORFOLK:** Designed by the New York firm of E. C. Horn and Sons, the Wells Theatre is significant both as a representative of early 20th-century popular culture and as an outstanding example of Beaux Arts theatre architecture in Virginia. Opening on August 23, 1913, as part of the Southern vaudeville chain operated by Jacob and Otto Wells, the theatre enjoyed popular success until the late 1920s when it was converted to a movie theatre and sold. The Wells retains most of its original ceiling murals and plaster decorations.



Wells Theatre, Norfolk



Warner Hall, Gloucester County

## Middle Piedmont

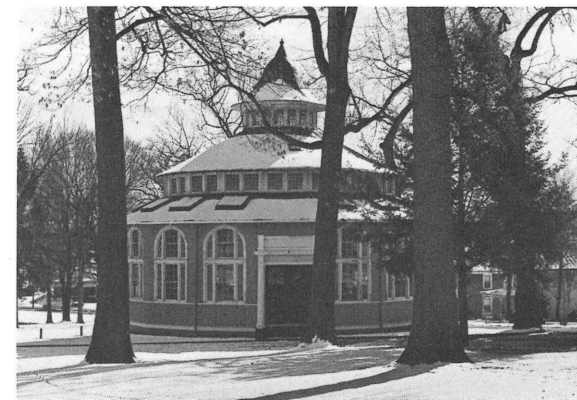
**THE AVIARY, LYNCHBURG:** An interesting adaptation of the Queen Anne style, this unusual building stands as the state's earliest known municipal aviary. Designed by the local firm of Frye and Chesterman and opened in Miller Park in 1902, the building was the gift of Randolph Guggenheim, a Lynchburg native who became a successful New York businessman. The Aviary is also significant as an expression of the nationwide interest in the development of zoological parks and gardens in metropolitan areas that prevailed in the late 19th century.

**BERRY HILL, ORANGE COUNTY:** Prominently sited overlooking the town of Orange, Berry Hill is a Jeffersonian-style house attributed to William B. Phillips, a master mason employed by Thomas Jefferson during the construction of the University of Virginia. The house was erected in 1827 for Reynolds Chapman, the Orange County Clerk, and remains one of the most charming and successful adaptations of Jefferson's architectural idiom for a private residence.

**BON AIRE, NELSON COUNTY:** Bon Aire, built ca. 1812 for Dr. George Cabell, Jr., is a distinctive Federal

dwelling inspired by Palladian forms published in mid-18th-century English pattern books such as William Morris' *Select Architecture* of 1755. The builder of Bon Aire has not been identified, but the tripartite organization of the plan and many details relate the house to Point of Honor in Lynchburg, also a Cabell house. Constructed in native materials of red brick and whitewashed wood trim, Bon Aire exemplifies the process by which Virginia builders manipulated the scale, plan, details, and materials of Morris' designs to conform to local vernacular traditions.

**FEDERAL HILL HISTORIC DISTRICT, LYNCHBURG:** One of the most distinctive of several early neighborhoods situated on the hills surrounding the commercial area of Lynchburg, Federal Hill primarily has served as the residential area for merchants and civic leaders. Contained within the district's dozen blocks is a notable assemblage of free-standing dwellings in architectural styles ranging in date from the early 19th century through the Edwardian styles of the early 20th century. Most significant is the neighborhood's important collection of early Federal-style town houses which includes some of the oldest and finest houses in the city.



The Aviary, Lynchburg



Bon Aire, Nelson County



Berry Hill, Orange County



1007 Federal Street, Federal Hill Historic District, Lynchburg



**BREMO SLAVE CHAPEL, FLUVANNA COUNTY:** The wooden Gothic Revival structure now serving as the parish hall of Grace Church, Bremo Bluff, was originally constructed in 1835 as a slave chapel for Bremo, the plantation of General John Hartwell Cocke. It is the only known structure of its type in Virginia and represents Cocke's deep concerns for the religious and moral edification of Negroes. The building was moved from the plantation to the community of Bremo Bluff in the early 1880s.

**GREENVILLE, CULPEPER COUNTY:** An unusually large country residence of great visual interest, Greenville was erected in 1854 for Philip Pendleton Nalle, a local entrepreneur. The grandiose, if not ostentatious, dwelling is in the Classical Revival style, having tall columns and elaborate cornices. Architecturally, it is more akin to the antebellum buildings of the deep South than the generally more modest and refined structures of Virginia.

**HILL MANSION, CULPEPER COUNTY:** The Hill Mansion is a sophisticated and well-preserved example of the Italianate Style, one of the picturesque architectural modes popular in America in the 1850s. The house was completed in 1857 for Edward Baptist Hill and is still owned by his descendants. It preserves its original scored and painted stucco, elaborate cast-iron and wooden porches, and fine interior appointments. The house served as a Confederate hospital and later as a Union headquarters during the Civil War.



Bremo Slave Chapel, Fluvanna County

**MITCHELLS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, CULPEPER COUNTY:** This simple Carpenter Gothic church contains the most elaborate example of late 19th-century, folk-style trompe l'oeil frescos in the state. Executed in 1892-99 by the Italian immigrant painter Joseph Dominick Phillip Oddenino, the artwork is a curious transplant in rural Virginia of the ancient art of fresco common throughout Europe. The scheme is architectonic, consisting of a Gothic arcade on the side walls and an apse flanked by twisted Baroque columns. Mitchells Church was built in 1879 under the leadership of the Rev. John P. Strider.

**MONTEZUMA, NELSON COUNTY:** Erected around 1790, Montezuma is a notable example of Piedmont Virginia Federal architecture. Its impressive scale, distinctive plan, fine woodwork, and Roman Revival dwarf portico set it apart from more standard farmhouses of the period and region. Montezuma also derives significance from its association with the Cabell family, who settled in Nelson County in the second quarter of the 18th century. This prominent family built nearly a dozen architecturally distinguished houses in the area, of which Montezuma is one of the few remaining. Thomas Jefferson was a friend of the Cabells and may have had an influence on the design of the house.

**MOUNTAIN GROVE, ALBEMARLE COUNTY:** Mountain Grove shares with other Piedmont houses of tripartite design an architectural tradition which was derived from 18th-century English pattern books. Built on Green Mountain in 1803-04 by Benjamin Harris, a



Hill Mansion, Culpeper



Greenville, Culpeper County



Mitchells Presbyterian Church, Culpeper County

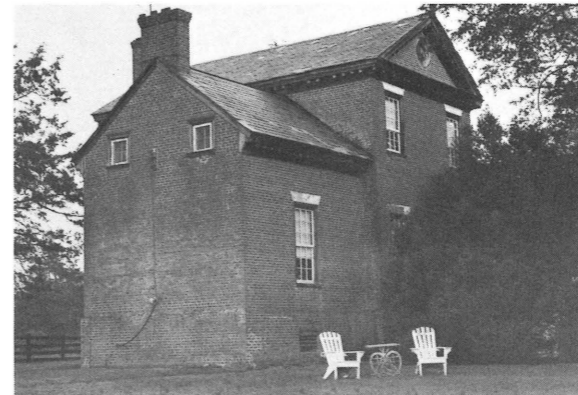
prominent Albemarle soldier and magistrate, the classic Virginia Palladian dwelling is reminiscent of Jefferson's earliest designs for Monticello and reflects the sophistication of its builder in abandoning the more traditional Georgian plan in favor of the newer, three-part scheme. Both the high quality of its workmanship and the important interior decorations painted by an unknown artist demonstrate the availability of skilled designers and artisans in the area in the early 19th century.

**RED HILL FARM, AMHERST COUNTY:** Originally the Ellis family homestead, Red Hill Farm is the finest Federal-style house in Amherst County. The house was built from profits of the family's mercantile interests both in the county and in Richmond. The Adamesque detailing, finely executed stair, and spacious plan suggest that the family was familiar with the fine residences being erected in Richmond and adapted their refined lines for the country home.

**RIVER BLUFF, NELSON COUNTY:** This handsomely proportioned farmhouse was first constructed as a side-passage, one-room house in 1785 and completed as a three-part dwelling twenty years later. Through its transformation from a small rectangular structure to a stylish, if simplified, Palladian type, River Bluff illustrates changing 18th-century concepts of popular and acceptable housing which retained the Georgian ideal of order, symmetry, and regularity. River Bluff and its setting at the base of the Blue Ridge Mountains have changed little since the 19th century.



Montezuma, Nelson County



Mountain Grove, Albemarle County

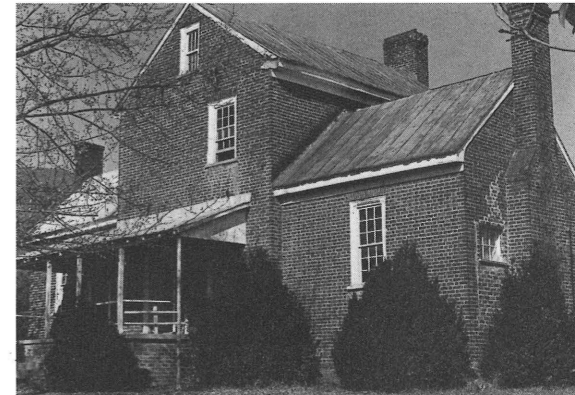
**SOLDIER'S JOY, NELSON COUNTY:** One of the few remaining Cabell family houses in the Piedmont region, Soldier's Joy was built in 1784-85 and enlarged approximately twenty-five years later. Although its early 19th-century wings were reduced in size in this century, Soldier's Joy remains one of the most ambitious of the Cabell's building efforts. The Late-Georgian dwelling is distinguished by its fine proportions and interior detailing, much of which was added when the house was enlarged. Adding to the house's architectural interest is its extensive documentation, including the detailed contract of the builder, James Robards. Samuel Jordan Cabell, for whom the house was built, served as the Republican Congressman of the district from 1795-1803.



Soldier's Joy, Nelson County



Red Hill Farm, Amherst County



River Bluff, Nelson County

# Southside Virginia

**CHARLOTTE COUNTY COURTHOUSE, CHARLOTTE COUNTY:** Charlotte County's temple-form courthouse was built in 1821-23 from plans supplied by Thomas Jefferson and is a prototype for numerous Roman Revival court buildings in the state. The county appointed a special delegation to visit Monticello and obtain a design from the former president. The contractor for the project was John Percival who built other courthouses in the region. Much of John Randolph of Roanoke's law practice was centered at the courthouse.

**DANVILLE TOBACCO WAREHOUSE AND RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT, DANVILLE:** Both in its visible and archaeological resources, this 350-acre district encapsulates the development of Danville from its pre-historic beginnings as a Native American fishing center to its subsequent position as the primary tobacco marketplace of Virginia. Approximately 585 structures represent all the elements of a 19th-century/early 20th-century tobacco manufacturing town and trace the evolution of its industry from the rise of locally-owned firms of the 1870s to the expansion of tobacco conglomerates in modern times. Through its well-preserved industrial and residential architecture and in its tradition as the city's tobacco processing center, the district maintains a visible link to the past.

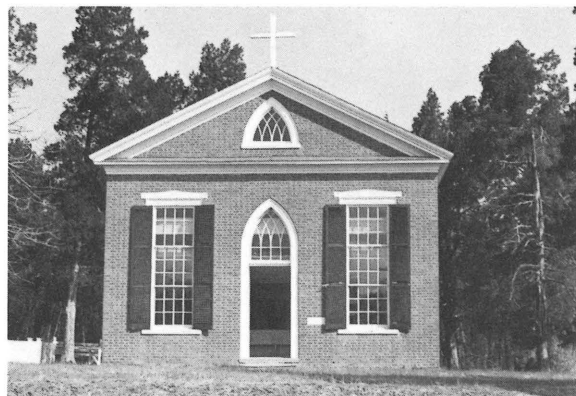


Charlotte County Courthouse

**GRACE CHURCH, CA IRA, CUMBERLAND COUNTY:** Grace Church, Ca Ira, survives as a charming illustration of the stylistic hybridization that occurred with Romantic Revivalism in the antebellum period. Its temple form and fine brickwork are an offspring of Virginia's Jeffersonian tradition, while its Greek and Gothic details are adapted from builders' pattern books. The church was erected in 1840-43 by Valentine Parrish, a local master builder, and is one of the only remaining buildings of Ca Ira, a town laid out in 1787 which prospered briefly in the antebellum period as a milling and tobacco warehouse center.

**HALLSBOROUGH TAVERN, CHESTERFIELD COUNTY:** This well-known Chesterfield County landmark served travelers on the old Buckingham Road throughout much of the 19th century. Constructed in three stages, most of the original fabric in each section is intact, making the building an interesting example of evolutionary vernacular architecture. The building was first associated with the Michaux family, Huguenots who settled in the area in the first quarter of the 18th century.

**PAMPLIN PIPE FACTORY, APPOMATTOX COUNTY:** At one time the largest clay pipe factory in America, supplying a national and international market with one million pipes a month, the Pamplin Pipe Factory



Grace Church, Cumberland County



Craghead Street, Danville



Hallsborough Tavern, Chesterfield County

contains the archaeological remains of several consecutive periods of clay pipe manufacture. Excavation of the facility, which is known to have been in operation since 1879, promises to reveal valuable information on the evolution of pipe manufacturing technology at the most productive factory of its kind in the nation. It also may determine whether pipe-making occurred on the site as early as the European-Aboriginal contact period.

**SEATON, HALIFAX COUNTY:** The documented work of the Halifax master carpenter, Josiah Dabbs, Seaton is one of the best-preserved, mid-19th-century Gothic Revival cottages in Southside Virginia. Built in 1856-57 for William M. Howerton, the son of tobacco entrepreneur Philip Howerton, the residence expresses



Seaton, Halifax County



Seaton, parlor



Kiln and chimney, Pamplin Pipe Factory, Appomattox County

the architectural taste of one of the county's leading families and illustrates the popularity of the Gothic style among cultivated people in the years just prior to the Civil War.

**VAWTER HALL AND OLD PRESIDENT'S HOUSE, VIRGINIA STATE UNIVERSITY, CHESTERFIELD COUNTY:** The two oldest buildings at Virginia State University constitute the historic core of the oldest state-supported college for blacks in the United States. Virginia State College was chartered by the General Assembly in 1882. The Old President's House was built in 1907, and the adjacent Vawter Hall was put up the next year.

**WASHINGTON STREET METHODIST CHURCH, PETERSBURG:** For many years the leading Methodist Church in the Commonwealth, the Washington Street Methodist Church in Petersburg served as the site of the first General Conference of the Methodist Church South in 1846 and as a Confederate hospital during the Civil War. The architect has not been identified, but the Classical Revival style of the building was the most fashionable architectural mode in Petersburg when the church was constructed in 1842. Since the addition of its east and west wings in 1921-22, the church, with its three monumental porticos, has become an important visual element in the city's commercial area.

**CHARLES IRVING THORNTON TOMBSTONE, CUMBERLAND COUNTY:** The Charles Irving Thornton Tombstone in the Thornton family cemetery is the only tangible reminder of Charles Dickens' visit to the Commonwealth during his United States tour of 1842. Already regarded as a major literary figure, the author penned the stone's inscription to commemorate the death of the Thornton infant in 1842. Only one other Dickens epitaph is known, that of his sister-in-law, making the Thornton example unique among his American writings.

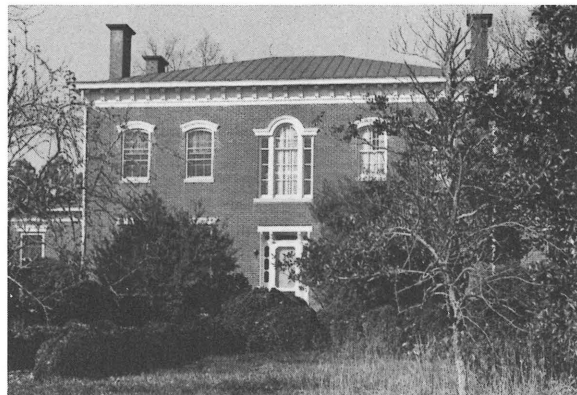
**WINDSOR, PITTSYLVANIA COUNTY:** Completed in 1862 for the ardent secessionist Samuel Pannill Wilson, Windsor's huge Italianate mansion and collection of outbuildings form the last of the elaborate antebellum plantation complexes built in Pittsylvania County by generations of rich planters and entrepreneurs. The layout followed patterns established in the colonial period, incorporating a formal, symmetrical residence, architecturally sophisticated outbuildings, geometric gardens, and prominent siting. Of particular interest is Windsor's Victorian decoration, which includes original lighting fixtures and gashouse, Brussels-type carpeting, rich plasterwork, and cast-iron veranda.



Washington Street Methodist Church, Petersburg



Vawter Hall, Virginia State University, Chesterfield County



Windsor, Pittsylvania County

## Northern Virginia

**BEN LOMOND, PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY:** Built in 1837 by Benjamin Tasker Chinn, the grandson of Robert "Councillor" Carter, Ben Lomond is one of only two remaining Carter family houses in an area which once exhibited such fine country residences as Portisi, Pittsylvania, Hazel Plain, Mountain View, Elmwood, Sudley, and Woodland. Besides its association with one of Virginia's most prominent families, the house also is noted for its interior woodwork and for its services as a hospital during the First and Second Battles of Manassas. With its once-rural surroundings succumbing to intense development, Ben Lomond remains an important reminder of the area's past.

**FORT HUNT, FAIRFAX COUNTY:** Fort Hunt was originally part of the Endicott system of seacoast defenses erected between 1889 and 1901 to guard twenty-six of the nation's major ports. Located at Sheridan Point, overlooking the Potomac, the complex was equipped with four concrete batteries and some thirty support structures of which four remain. The fort was garrisoned until World War I; during World War II it served as an interrogation area for captured enemy officers. It was made part of the National Park Service system in 1948.

**JONES POINT LIGHTHOUSE AND DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA SOUTH CORNERSTONE, ALEXANDRIA:** The south cornerstone, one of the oldest artifacts related to the nation's capital, marks the origin of the 1791 survey that carved the District of Columbia from the states of Virginia and Maryland. The Jones Point Lighthouse, built adjacent to the south cornerstone in 1855, aided Potomac River shipping for seventy years and is significant in illustrating federal concern for the improvement of inland navigation in the 19th century.

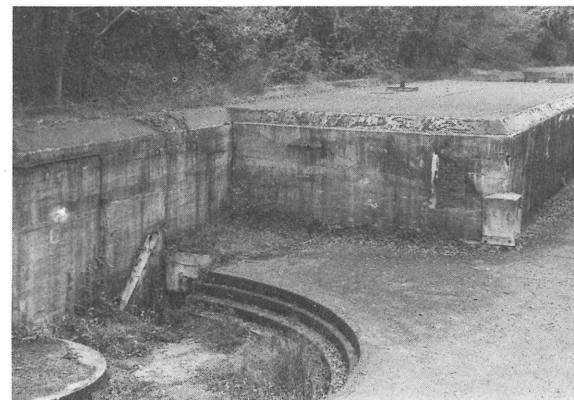
**LIBERIA, MANASSAS:** This stately, Federal-style farmhouse on the edge of Manassas achieved prominence in the Civil War when it was used as a headquarters for both the Confederate and Union Forces. Presidents Jefferson Davis and Abraham Lincoln, along with other statesmen, visited Liberia during the war. The house was built in 1825 by William Wier, whose wife, Harriet Bladen Carter, inherited the property through her Carter ancestors. During the late 19th century, Liberia was owned by Robert Portner, a prominent inventor and businessman.



Ben Lomond, Prince William County



Jones Point Lighthouse, Alexandria



Battery Mount Vernon, Fort Hunt, Alexandria



Liberia, Manassas

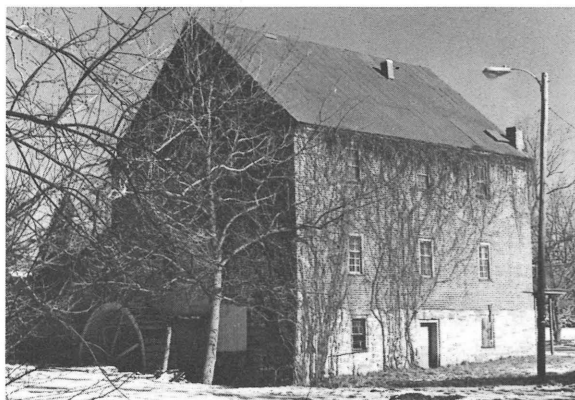
# Mountain & Valley

**BRECKINRIDGE MILL, BOTETOURT COUNTY:** Breckinridge Mill is an architecturally imposing remnant of the grain and milling industry that figured significantly in the economy of antebellum Virginia. The 3½-story brick structure was erected in 1822 for James Breckinridge, a leading politician and landowner of southwestern Virginia, and is one of the oldest mills in the region. The present owner has preserved the mill through adaptive reuse as apartments.

**NININGER'S MILL, BOTETOURT COUNTY:** When Peter Nininger built this brick mill on Tinker Creek in 1847, he was continuing a milling tradition in Botetourt County that began with the county's first settlers. Adjacent to the Pittsylvania-Franklin-Botetourt turnpike that connected the farmlands of the Great Valley with bustling Southside markets, the mill operated for decades as a quasi-public utility, constituting one of the most important services within the rural economy. The conversion of the mill to a restaurant in 1968 has served as an interesting example of adaptive use of historic buildings.



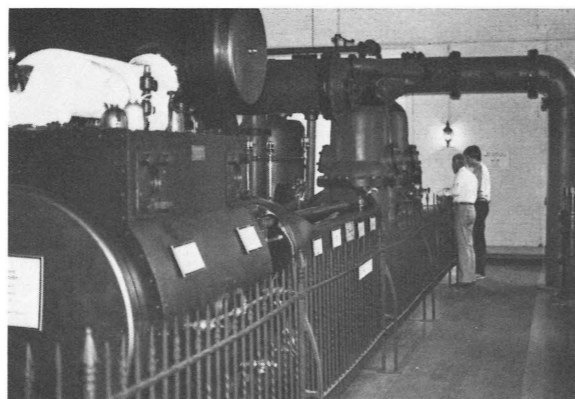
Breckinridge Mill, Botetourt County



Nininger's Mill, Botetourt County

**CRYSTAL SPRING STEAM PUMPING STATION, ROANOKE:** Manufactured in 1905 by the Snow Steam Pump Company of Buffalo, New York, this elaborate water pump is believed to be a unique survival of its type. The pump employs the Corliss method of valve control, a technical breakthrough for the period. It drew water from Roanoke's historic Crystal Spring until 1957, supplying the city with a reliable water source during its years of rapid growth. Recently restored, the pump is now exhibited as an important artifact of industrial archaeology.

**MOUNTAIN VIEW, ROANOKE:** Mountain View ranks among the notable examples of the early Georgian Revival style in the Commonwealth. The house was designed and built in 1907 by local architect H. H. Huggins for Junius Blair Fishburn, the president of the National Exchange Bank of Roanoke, and it served as his residence until his death. Through its association with the city's leading financier and philanthropist, Mountain View symbolizes the remarkable industrial, commercial, and residential development that took place in Roanoke at the beginning of the 20th century.



Water Pump, Crystal Spring Steam Pumping Station, Roanoke



Mountain View, Roanoke



## In Memoriam

JAMES R. SHORT

*James R. Short of Williamsburg, Chairman of the Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission, died on August 16, 1980. Mr. Short was Senior Program Officer of the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation and one of the nation's foremost experts on historic preservation.*

*As a member of the Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission since 1974, and as its chairman since 1978, James Short contributed significantly to the success of the commission and of historic preservation generally in the commonwealth. Throughout his tenure Mr. Short generously and graciously gave his time and talents in support of the commission staff. In recent weeks Mr. Short had led a fight by the commission to save threatened portions of the 18th-century Gloucester-town site at Gloucester Point.*

A native of North Carolina, Mr. Short was educated at Lynchburg College, Washington and Lee, and Yale, following service as a first lieutenant of infantry in World War II. He taught at the University of Tennessee and was a historian on the staff of the Virginia State Library before joining Colonial Williamsburg in 1955.

At Colonial Williamsburg he first directed an oral history project relating to the restoration of Williamsburg. He subsequently served as general editor of publications and films and as planner, advisor, and coordinator of interpretive programs and seminars. He also served as director of the Division of Preservation and Research.

Mr. Short was the editor of a volume of essays, "Historic Preservation Today," and an edition of "The Journal of Major George Washington," and was the author of a broad range of popular articles on Virginia history.

He was treasurer of the American Association for State and Local History, a member of the accreditation commission of the American Association of Museums, the Longwood Gardens Visiting Committee, the Thomas Nelson Community College's board, and Phi Beta Kappa.

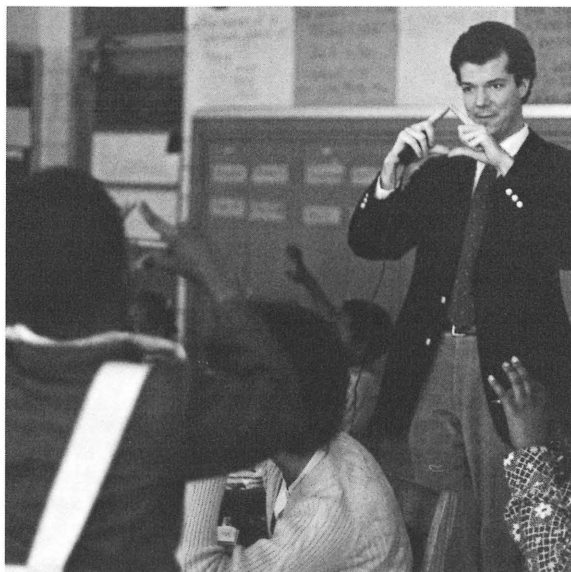
## Commission Marks Tenth Anniversary of Unique Educational Program

The "Richmond History Through Architecture" program was inaugurated in 1970 as a cooperative effort of the Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission and the Junior League of Richmond to bring the city's elementary school children a presentation touching on preservation, history, and local architecture. It was observed that these subjects rarely receive emphasis in normal classroom activity, and it was felt that presenting them in a positive light would instill in the students an interest in their surroundings at an age when they are especially receptive. From a more practical standpoint, the advent of cross-town bussing gave students ample time to observe unfamiliar areas of the city.

During the past ten years the program has reached over 20,000 fourth graders. The Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission has handled organization, scheduling, and training for the presentations, while the Junior League has provided instructors. The League's volunteers, each committed to three hours per week, have backgrounds in history and art, and most have had previous teaching experience. A Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission staff member serves as liaison with curriculum specialists in the city's elementary schools.

Two presentations are provided for the schools. The first deals specifically with Richmond's most noted historic landmarks and public buildings and illustrates how major architectural focal points contribute to a city's image and visual interest. The second concentrates on domestic architecture and neighborhoods and points out changing fashions in exterior decoration. The programs are in the form of slide presentations with commentary by volunteers. Because the programs rely on student participation, they are presented in the classroom rather than in a large, impersonal auditorium. Teachers are provided beforehand with a set of questions concerning the observation of old buildings. These are used both for preparing the classes and as follow-up. The volunteer lecturers encourage the students to "look up" and observe the variety of architectural features and detailing such as roofs, cornices, doors, windows, and chimneys. They also ask children to look for different shapes, colors, and materials in buildings. The role of the architect as an artist is discussed as well. Building styles and types are related to the city's development, and emphasis is placed on the roles specific buildings have played in the history of the city and state. Students participate by pointing out details they learn about through the slides. The identification of special features such as columns and pediments is reinforced through blackboard sketches.

This year the program is receiving special assistance from Mark Kemp, a recent graduate of



Volunteer Mark Kemp encourages students to look for different shapes, colors, and materials in buildings.



Virginia Commonwealth University. In addition to delivering the regular programs, he gives a follow-up program to some classes involving special art projects. The additional involvement is made possible through funding by the Virginia Arts Commission, which also has awarded Mr. Kemp a generous grant to inaugurate a similar program for the schools in the Ghent district of Norfolk and to develop in-service materials on local architectural history this summer for Richmond city teachers.

The Richmond city schools have been most receptive to the Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission program and have made it a regular part of their social studies curriculum. To our knowledge, it is one of the only programs in the country that actively involves a state preservation office, a volunteer organization, and a public school system. It is a program that can be adapted to any community, and it is hoped its success in the Richmond area will be an example for other areas of the Commonwealth.

## First State-wide Historic District Conference Well Attended in Richmond

More than 150 invited representatives of Virginia's private historical foundations, architectural review boards, historical societies, and planning organizations assembled at Richmond on June 6, 1980, for a one-day conference on historic district preservation, sponsored by the Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission. Barry N. Zarakov, the Commission's architectural historian in charge of historic districts, organized the conference for the three-fold purpose of increasing communication among local architectural review boards and other preservation interests, publicizing various state and federal services available to historic districts, and formulating a consistent yet flexible ideology for historic district preservation in Virginia. After Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Executive Director Tucker Hill offered his welcoming remarks, the conferees participated in three morning and two afternoon sessions on vital local preservation issues. Featured topics and speakers included:

**Historic Districts—Making Them Work**, Barry N. Zarakov, Architectural Historian, Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission

**Safeguarding the Historic District—The Role of The Architectural Review Board**, John G. Zehmer, Jr., Senior Planner for Historic Preservation, Urban Design/Historic Preservation Division, Department of Planning and Community Development, Richmond

**Sources of Preservation Funding**, Marilyn Cable, Preservation Planner, Planning Branch, Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

**Historic District Design Review: The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic District Preservation Projects**, de Teel Patterson Tiller, Architectural Historian, Technical Preservation Services, Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

**Preservation and Public Support**, William T. Frazier, Executive Director, Historic Staunton Foundation

Also in attendance were representatives of the National Register of Historic Places and the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Speakers stressed the importance of local review boards adopting *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Preservation Projects* as the proper criteria by which rehabilitation efforts in their communities should be judged. Copies of this important publication may be obtained by writing the Landmarks Commission.

A panel discussion, led by the speakers and Commission staff members Bryan Mitchell and Calder Loth, concluded the day's activities. Abstracts of speeches presented at this conference will be published in the next issue of *Notes on Virginia*.

It is hoped that the June 6 meeting will be the first in a series of Commission-sponsored forums on topics of paramount importance to Virginia preservationists.

## New Employees and Recent Appointments

**Harriet Franklin** joined the Commission staff last September and is presently serving as Grants Coordinator. Dr. Franklin holds degrees from Wellesley College, Boston University, Brown, and Columbia.

**Robert A. Carter** has replaced H. Peter Pudner as the VHLC staff historian. Mr. Carter received his B.A. in History at Princeton University in 1969 and his M.Litt. in History at the University of Edinburgh in 1975. Formerly a lecturer in American History at Lawrence University in Appleton, Wisconsin, he is currently completing a Ph.D. in American History at the University of Virginia.

**Virginia Sutherland** recently joined the Commission clerical staff. Ms. Sutherland attended the College of William and Mary and formerly served as Confidential Secretary to the Director of the Division of the Budget of the Governor's Office,

the State Auditor of Public Accounts, the Director of the Parole Board, and Director of the Virginia Civil War Commission.

**Tommy L. Bogger** has been appointed by State Historic Preservation Officer Tucker Hill to the State Review Board. Dr. Bogger completed his Ph.D. in History at the University of Virginia in 1976 and is Associate Professor of History at Norfolk State University.

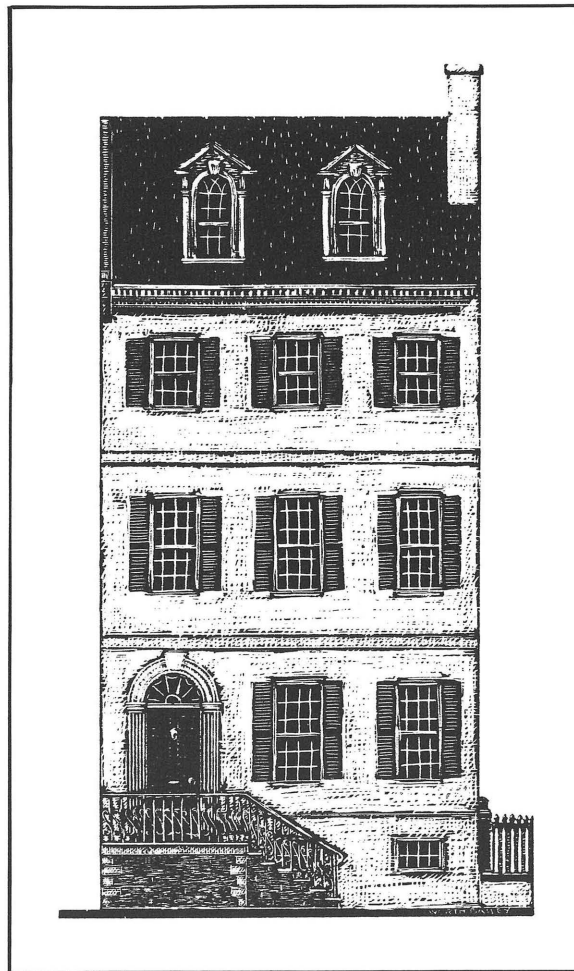
**Stephen E. Plog** has accepted an appointment to the State Review Board as Prehistoric Archaeologist. Dr. Plog, who received his Ph.D. from the University of Michigan in 1977, is Assistant Professor in the Department of Anthropology of the University of Virginia and has published extensively in the field of research design for archaeological surveys.

## Preservation Easement Granted

Mrs. Charles Beatty Moore, the well-known Virginia preservationist and historian, gave an easement this past December on her Alexandria town house at 207 Prince Street. Built in the last half of the 18th century, the large, 3½-story dwelling is the end building of what is regarded as the most distinguished residential block in Old Town Alexandria. The house was erected on a lot originally belonging to George William Fairfax, son of Col. William Fairfax of Belvoir. In 1790 the house was acquired by William Hodgson, an English merchant sympathetic with the American cause. Hodgson was married to Portia Lee, daughter of William Lee of Greenspring.

By the time Mrs. Moore purchased the house in 1929, it, along with the rest of the neighborhood, had greatly deteriorated. Mrs. Moore's extensive restoration signaled the beginning of the rehabilitation of Alexandria's historic district. Today, the 200 block of Prince Street is the center of one of the most complete and best preserved early cityscapes in America. The history of the house, as well as those of many other famous Alexandria buildings, is documented in Mrs. Moore's book, *Seaport in Virginia, George Washington's Alexandria*, published in 1949.

Under the terms of the easement, the house and its garden are to be preserved in perpetuity. Although the house may remain in private ownership, and be bought and sold as any other property, any architectural changes must be approved by the Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission.



207 Prince Street, drawing by Worth Bailey in Gay Montague Moore's *Seaport in Virginia, George Washington's Alexandria*

## Recommended Reading

Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. *Assessing the Energy Conservation Benefits of Historic Preservation: Methods and Examples*. Washington, D.C.: US Government Printing Office, 1979 (USGPO, Washington, D.C. 20402, #625-050-1302-1233). This study compares the amount of energy needed to restore and rehabilitate existing buildings with the amount needed to demolish and replace them with comparable new construction. Three case studies are included.

Derry, Anne et al. *Guidelines for Local Surveys: A Basis for Preservation Planning*. Washington, D.C.: US Government Printing Office, 1977 (USGPO, Washington, D.C. 20402, #024-016-00089-7). This book provides guidance to communities, organizations, and individuals interested in undertaking surveys of historic and cultural resources. It is divided into 4 basic sections: planning the survey, conducting the survey, review and organization of survey data, and publications. The appendixes include a bibliography, state historic preservation officers, federal legislation affecting historic preservation, and legal and financial tools used to preserve and enhance historic resources.

Myers, John H. *Preservation Briefs: No. 8, Aluminum and Vinyl Siding on Historic Buildings*. Washington, D.C.: US Government Printing Office, 1979 (USGPO, Washington, D.C. 20402, #1979-0-302-019). This 8-page Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service publication discusses the issues surrounding the application of aluminum and vinyl siding which can subtract from the basic integrity of historically and architecturally significant buildings.

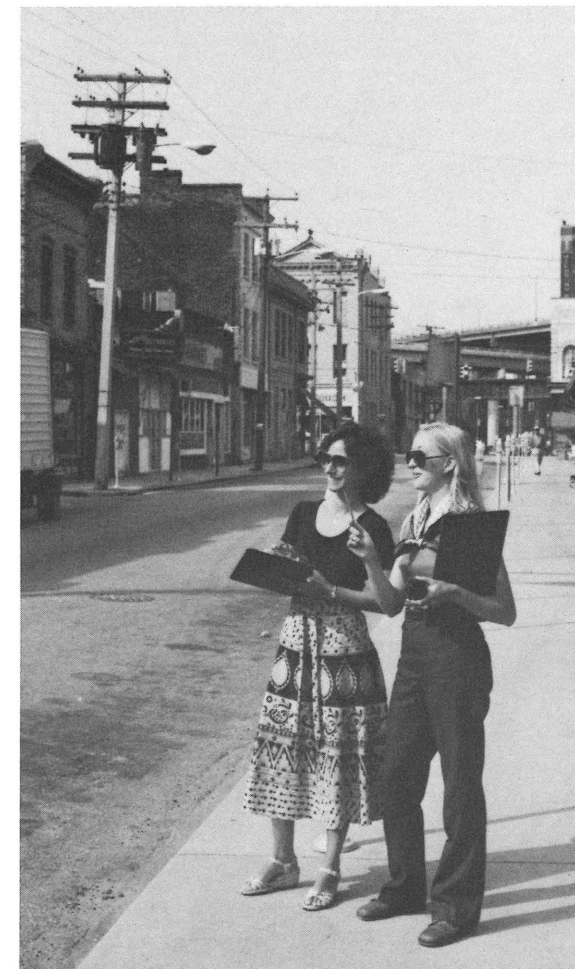
Ziegler, Arthur P., and Kidney, Walter C. *Historic Preservation in Small Towns: a Manual of Practice*. Nashville: American Associations for State and Local History, 1980. This manual is meant to offer some techniques that might be considered by those involved in the preservation of small towns and rural areas. The authors survey techniques that have worked and have asked others to describe successes and failures in a series of case studies selected for range of approach as well as variety of location.

## Interns Survey Shockoe Valley and Tobacco Row

The Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission is pleased to announce an experimental intern program for the summer of 1980. A. Rebecca Harrison and Karen Lang Kummer, two graduate students from the University of Virginia, were selected to take part in this year's ten-week program. The interns, under the direction of Barry N. Zarakov, worked to survey two important Richmond historic districts—Shockoe Valley and Tobacco Row. Their work focused on both inventory and historic research of these areas.



Main Street Station, Shockoe Valley, Richmond (photograph by Bill Barrett)



Interns Rebecca Harrison and Karen Kummer survey buildings in market area of Richmond's Shockoe Valley.



Tobacco Row, Richmond

## Outlaw Named Commissioner of VRCA

Alain C. Outlaw was named Commissioner of Archaeology for Virginia in July 1980 by Governor John Dalton. Outlaw has been Director of the Virginia Research Center for Archaeology for over a year, and has been employed by the agency since 1976, first as a research archaeologist and field supervisor for the VRCA's Governor's Land Archaeological District excavations at Jamestown, then as Senior Historical Archaeologist.

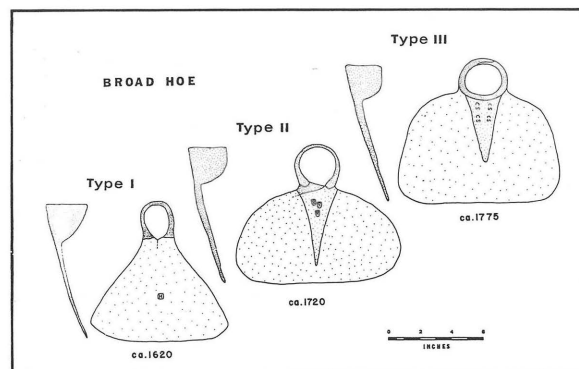
Outlaw graduated from the University of Georgia and received a Masters Degree in Anthropology, specializing in archaeology, from

Florida State University. He has engaged in numerous archaeological excavations in Virginia and North Carolina, and has written or delivered many archaeological reports and papers. He currently serves as president of the Williamsburg chapter of the Archaeological Society of Virginia, treasurer of the Council of Virginia Archaeologists, and is a member of the Surry County Board of Historical and Architectural Review. His book on the 1976 excavations at the Governor's Land Archaeological District will be published by the University Press of Virginia in 1981.

## VRCA Publications

The Virginia Research Center for Archaeology has published the first report in its new Research Report Series. *Colonial Plantation Hoes of Tidewater Virginia* by staff archaeologist Keith Egloff is a typology of plantation hand hoes based on an assemblage of one hundred and thirteen 17th- and 18th-century hoes recovered from excavations at Kingsmill, James City County, between 1972 and 1975. A total of 162 hoes from six James River plantations were examined for this study, which is a basic guide to the evolution of manufacturing and repair techniques of this particular example of material culture.

*Colonial Plantation Hoes of Tidewater Virginia* is available at cost (\$3.50) from the VRCA at Williamsburg. 63 pp; 40 illustrations.



Chronological typology of broad hand hoes based on samples from Kingsmill Plantation.



A Late Type I grubbing hoe, ca. 1690, from Kingsmill Plantation on the James River.

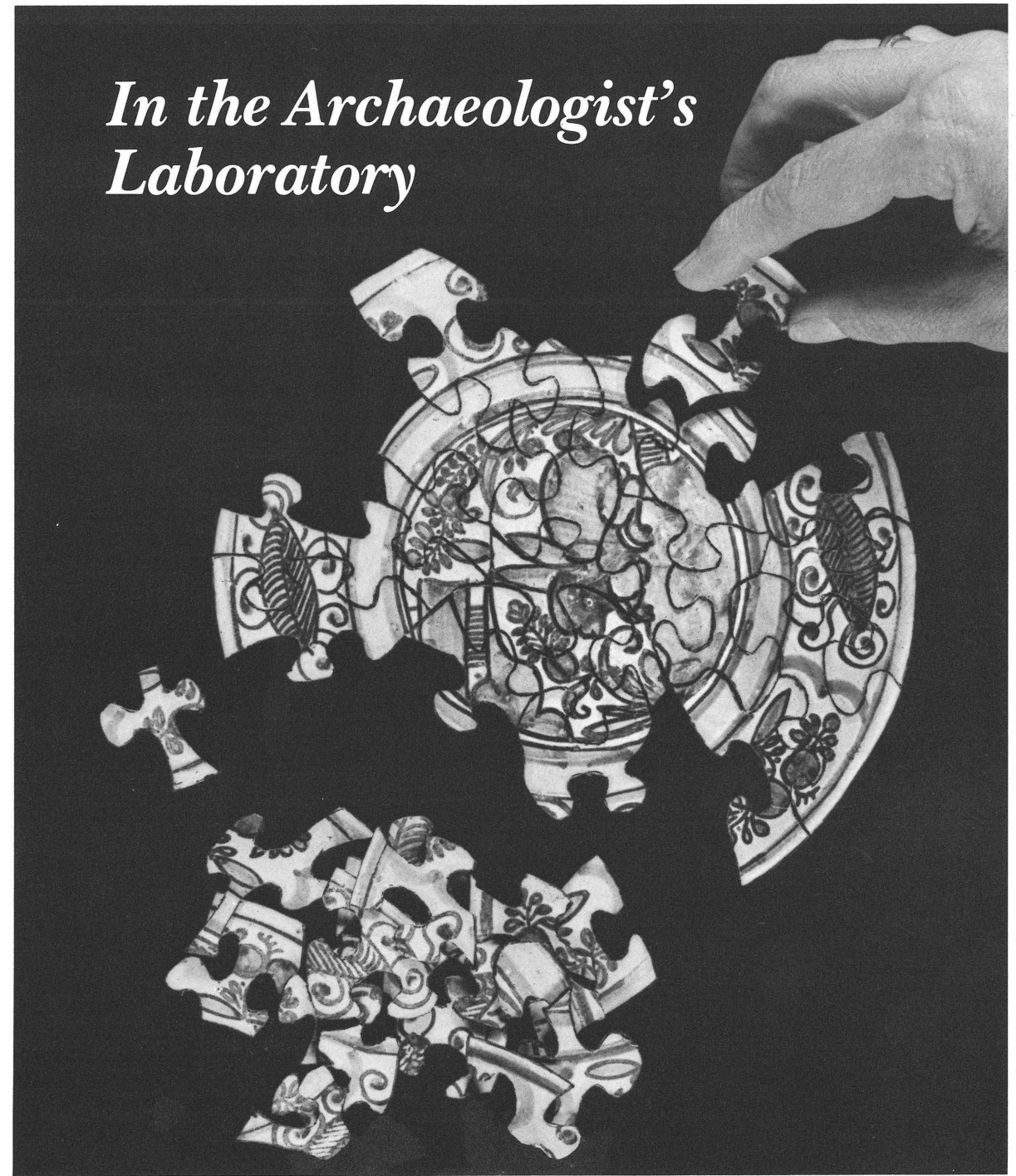
## Cofferdam Project for Yorktown Shipwrecks

Plans are proceeding for the building of a 90' x 45' corrugated steel cofferdam around the remains of a sunken ship from Cornwallis' fleet at Yorktown. John Broadwater, VRCA nautical archaeologist and director of the Yorktown Shipwreck Project, plans to begin this summer with a \$240,000 federal grant from the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service, which has been partially matched by an appropriation of \$120,000 from the Virginia General Assembly and a \$6,000 grant from The Dreyfus Foundation. More match-

ing support is being sought from private businesses so that the public can view this fascinating underwater excavation during the Bicentennial of the Battle of Yorktown.

In addition to providing good visibility for onlookers, the cofferdam and its filtration system will allow archaeologists to study the wreck, believed to be the best preserved remains of an 18th-century ocean vessel yet discovered in North America.

## In the Archaeologist's Laboratory



"Gee, you must be good at working jigsaw puzzles!"

Visitors to the laboratory at the Virginia Research Center for Archaeology in Williamsburg have made this observation many times.

Admittedly, a puzzle is the first thing one thinks of when facing a table full of ceramic or glass fragments that must be pieced together; and, as can be expected from a 200-12,000 year-old puzzle, most of the pieces are missing. Mending broken artifacts recovered during archaeological excavation, however, is just one aspect of a much larger puzzle—that of interpreting material culture. What can sherds of pottery, fragments of glass, or bits and

pieces of metal objects tell about past life in Virginia? How are information and meaning extracted from objects broken and discarded as useless hundreds of years ago? This is the puzzle and it's what makes laboratory work exciting. Like a continuing detective story, theories are both built and undermined by evidence coming in from the field. As theories interlock, the puzzle begins to make sense; but it takes years of research before patterns of human behavior emerge, and pieces will always be missing.

Mention the word "archaeologist," and the traditional picture of a pith-helmeted, bearded individual digging in the sweltering sun usually comes

to mind. This romantic image represents only the beginning step in the scientific discipline of archaeology. It's an important step, since the interpretation that follows depends on careful excavation techniques.

Interpretation of material culture is the rest of the archaeological process. A crucial yet less glamorized aspect of archaeological research, interpretation takes place in the laboratory and involves many tedious hours of washing, numbering, mending, researching, and identifying archaeological material. Although systematic and exacting, laboratory work is also varied. With hundreds of artifacts coming in from an excavation site, laboratory personnel must be well versed in all aspects of the material culture with which they are working so they can understand the significance of every recovered object, from projectile point to firearm. There is always something new—a different piece to the puzzle that wasn't known before.

Artifacts come to the lab from the field in paper bags labelled with numbers which identify where they were excavated. The numbering system used by the VRCA follows the Smithsonian River Basin Survey system; thus the label 44WY25/3A represents the first layer (A) in the third feature (3) to be excavated at the 25th site registered in Wythe County (WY), Virginia (44). Laboratory staff members must make sure that an assigned number remains permanently with each artifact no matter how small or seemingly insignificant it may be. Each object will eventually be individually numbered; until then, a tag bearing the appropriate number accompanies each group of artifacts through the processing maze.

The first step in processing involves washing the artifacts. It is fascinating to speculate, as centuries of dirt are rinsed away, how the objects were broken or why they were lost or thrown away. What did the people who last touched them think about these things? How were they used?

Washing may sound elementary, but it is integral to the proper identification and preservation of artifacts. For example, all broken edges of ceramic fragments must be scrubbed clean so that the "fabric" or "body" can be seen. This is important both for correct ware identification and for tight and accurate mending of sherds.

The washing tray also provides opportunity for the first close examination of the artifacts. At this time objects requiring special attention will be removed. Special problems are posed by decayed or soft bone, unglazed and low-fired ceramics, coins, enamelled, gilded, or silvered metals, and some organic or metal materials which may require immediate conservation. These objects are replaced by REMOVED slips bearing the object's number, description, and destination (such as "conservation" or "study collection").

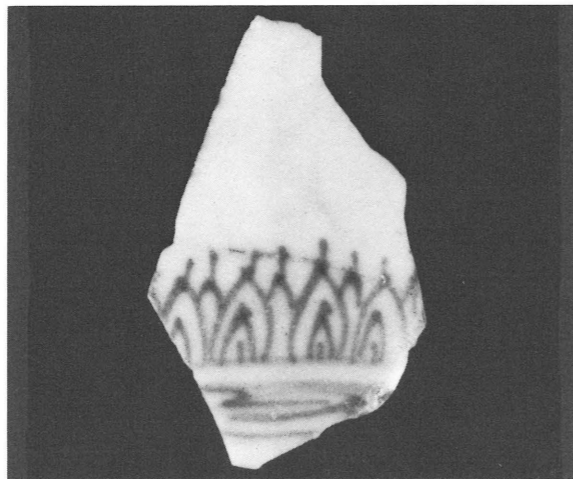
The tools most commonly used to remove dirt include soft-bristled brushes of all shapes and sizes (toothbrushes are very useful), dental picks and probes, and dissecting needles. The latter special tool is used for removing dirt from the stem holes of clay tobacco pipes, a procedure essential for the pipes made in England, since the diameters of their

stem holes are indicative of when they were manufactured.

Once artifacts have been dried, either with electrical heat or simply in the natural air, they must be indexed. Taking one group at a time, each fragment is described and counted under one of four basic categories. For historic artifacts these are CERAMICS, GLASS, METALS, and MISCEL-



Careful washing of all artifacts is important for proper identification and preservation.



LANEOUS, and for prehistoric artifacts they are CERAMICS, LITHICS, FAUNAL, and MISCELLANEOUS. The index is very specific, taking note of the objects in each category by number, type, shape, and description. When possible, a *terminous post quem*, or date after which each particular group was deposited, is determined, based on the date of the most recently manufactured artifact.

Indexing confronts the laboratory staff with two basic questions. What do these objects represent and when were they made? Like good detec-



"Bouquet of Flowers in Glass," (1617) by Christoffel van den Berghe, portrays Ming Dynasty wine cups parallel to fragments found at the Maine, Governor's Land, near Jamestown. The John G. Johnson Collection, Philadelphia.

tives, staff members exhaust all possible information sources: archaeological site reports which identify more intact artifacts from datable contexts; museum collections, which usually contain whole objects; scholarly research in different areas of material culture; and period prints and paintings that illustrate items in use.

A good example of laboratory sleuthing concerns some Chinese porcelain wine cups. During excavations of the Maine, a ca. 1618-25 tenant settlement on the Governor's Land near Jamestown, fragments of at least five Chinese wine cups

were recovered. In the early 17th century, Chinese porcelain was a relatively expensive commodity, rarely used in rural Virginia households. Its presence was unexpected among the material remains of the Maine inhabitants, who were tenant farmers. Documentary evidence suggesting that quick fortunes were being made on tobacco between 1617 and 1630 perhaps explains the use of porcelain by the Maine household; but with few parallels in collections of 17th-century Virginia material culture, the wine cups resisted easy discovery of their date of manufacture.





Routine examination of period illustrations displaying 17th-century objects provided the first clue. Two Chinese porcelain cups appearing in a still life by Christoffel Van der Berghe, dated 1617, exactly parallel the Maine examples. Curators at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, where the painting hangs, were initially skeptical. They thought the cups belonged stylistically to the mid-17th century, and that the 1617 date of the painting was fraudulent.

Fortunately, a second clue providing corroborative evidence surfaced with a Sotheby's sales catalogue. This publication illustrated Chinese porcelain salvaged off the Caribbean island of St. Helena from the 1613 shipwreck of the Dutch

East-Indiaman *Witte Leeuw*. The porcelain collection included seven intact wine cups paralleling the examples from the Governor's Land! Now incorporated into the VRCA Study Collection of artifacts, the Maine fragments have provided students and scholars of material culture valuable information about the presence of late Ming Dynasty Chinese porcelain in Virginia and in addition have convinced the Philadelphia Museum of Art curators of the integrity of the 1617 date on the Van der Berghe painting.

If the porcelain wine cups offer an example of one of the more interesting "when" questions encountered in the archaeological laboratory, another artifact from the Governor's Land excava-

tions suggests the kind of identification, or "what," question that may arise when indexing objects from an excavation.

Sifting plow zone soil through 1/4" screen at the 17th-century William Drummond plantation site near Jamestown enabled VRCA archaeologists to recover thousands of artifacts essential to interpretation of the site. Scattered throughout the plow zone were thumbnail-sized sherds of an unusual delftware hollow vessel that had been shattered by periodic plowing. Each fragment was decorated on the exterior with reddish-orange parallel dashes separated by pale blue stripes, and a few pieces were also painted with bright bluish green. While the plow zone contained many sherds of the object too small to identify, excavation of a soil stain where a 17th-century post had rotted uncovered a large base section of the vessel resembling a cat's front paws. With this clue giving some indication of shape, research of the literature on ceramics turned up a parallel example in The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation's Department of Collections. The fragments belonged to a jug in the shape of a cat, decorated with orange and blue stripes and seated in grass. Approximately seven cat jugs are documented in museum collections, most of them bearing dates between 1657 and 1676. Mr. Drummond, a participant in Bacon's Rebellion of 1676, may have enjoyed spirits from this ceramic feline sometime before his untimely execution in 1677.

Ceramic cat jug fragment (ca. 1670s) from the William Drummond site, Governor's Land, near Jamestown. Intact parallel located in The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation's Department of Collections.



Once artifacts have been indexed, they are mended and numbered. A cellulose glue is used for mending because it dries quickly and can be dissolved with acetone. Mends must be reversible so that object profiles or fabrics can be studied. Using a fine-pointed rapidograph or quill pen, the archaeologist then labels the artifacts with the site identification. Every fragment, no matter how small, is numbered so that its provenience, or location on a site, will always be known.

When the preceding steps have been completed on artifacts from every group of an excavated site, crossmending is attempted on all of the pottery and some of the glassware. During this procedure all the excavation's fragments of a particular ware type,

such as coarse earthenware or Chinese porcelain, are spread out, and separated by shape and color. They are further separated so that individual vessels and pieces that belong together are easily recognizable. A record of mends made between groups is recorded in the finds list. The crossmending procedure is necessary to establish relationships between archaeological features and layers and also to determine the minimum number of vessels deposited on a site.

Crossmending, vessel counts, and fragment counts and weights are all procedures that correlate relationships among artifacts. They can reveal such significant cultural information as activities that occurred on a site, location of architectural features, use of space, and social and economic status of a site's inhabitants. For example, an analysis of the



Each artifact is numbered with a fine-pointed pen.

distribution of artifacts that burned during the 1729 fire at Corotoman, Robert "King" Carter's Lancaster County manor home, allowed for interpretation of what otherwise may have been viewed simply as a 40' x 90' Georgian-style mansion foundation containing hundreds of burned artifacts. Aided by SYMAP, a computer mapping program which plots artifact densities and mean frequencies, VRCA archaeologists used vessel and sherd counts and weights to determine the location of architectural features and use of space within the mansion. Weights of window glass concentrated in certain areas thus indicated original placement of the windows, and both weights and minimum counts of glass wine bottles suggested that the area inside the

northern doorway had been used for wine storage.

Even though the ceramics had exploded during the fire, spreading ceramic fragments throughout the mansion, sherd concentrations revealed where each object had been in use. Distributions of approximately seventy vessels in the total ceramic assemblage showed that teawares were concentrated in the west room of the mansion, while more utilitarian serving wares were located in the central hall. Only six vessels were used in the east room. This information, together with documentary evidence and data from the distribution of every other artifact category (such as nails, architectural and furniture hardware, personal and clothing items, and fireplace tiles), established that the west room

The final laboratory procedure at the VRCA is the selection of artifacts for its Study Collection. This collection is comprised of those objects from each archaeological assemblage which the curators have chosen as unique, representative of the site, or of exhibitable quality. These artifacts are stored in special dust-free metal cabinets in the VRCA Study Collection room of the Wren Building at the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg. Available for scholarly research, the VRCA's Study Collection represents one of the largest and most varied archaeological collections of North American material culture.

All objects not placed in the Study Collection are packed into acid-free boxes and stored in the



17th-century Portuguese maiolica plate recovered from the Joseph Pettit site, James City County.

of the Corotoman mansion was a paneled, elaborately furnished formal parlor, that a closet in the central receiving hall or basement was used for ceramic storage, and that the east end was the location of Mr. Carter's bedchamber.

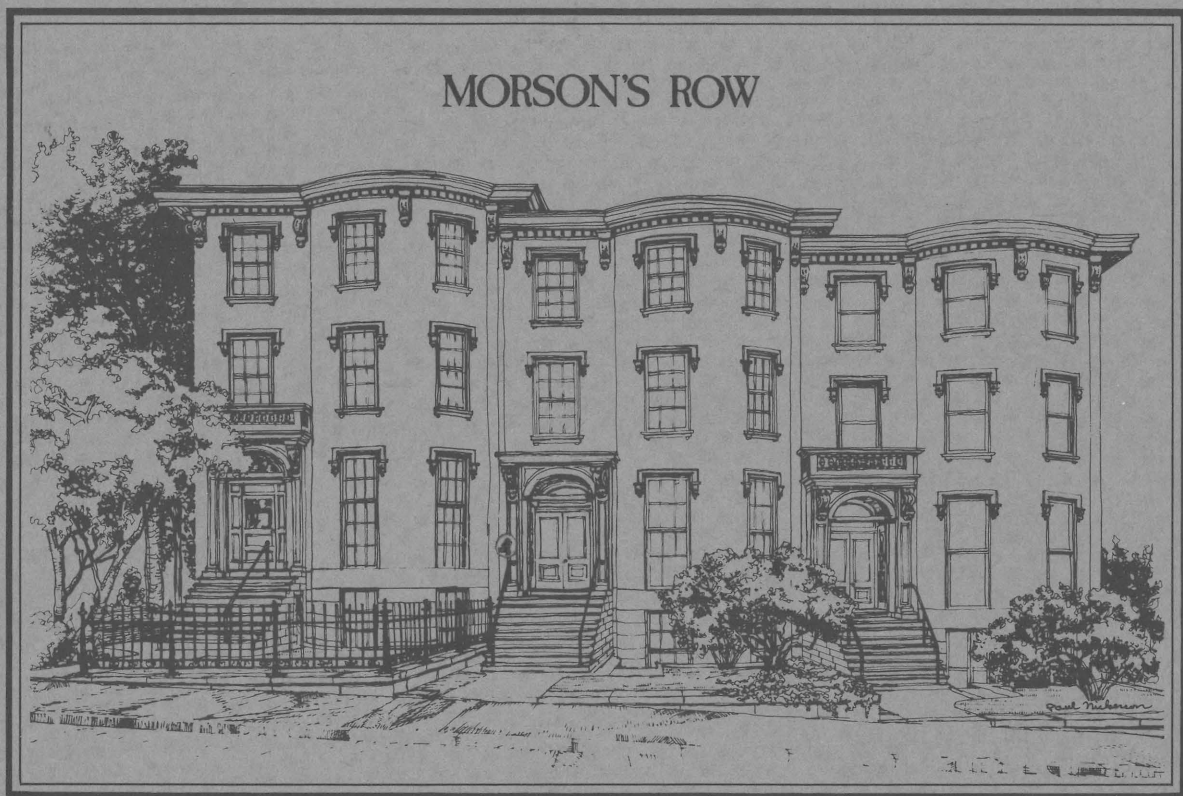
Beyond defining the functions and decorations of rooms, analysis of the total artifact assemblage from Corotoman specifically delineated objects which symbolized success and prominence in the eyes of Robert Carter, the wealthiest planter of his generation. This discovery has in turn aided archaeologists in identifying material indicators of arrival at the top rung of colonial Virginia's social ladder.

VRCA "dead storage" facility. Nothing is thrown away, not one rusty nail or splinter of glass, and for good reason. Archaeologists of the future may develop techniques for examining and interpreting artifacts that will reveal much more information than is presently apparent. As the science of archaeology develops, objects that seem insignificant now could contribute to solving future puzzles of material culture.

Beverly A. Bogley and  
Merry Abbitt Outlaw  
*Laboratory Curators*

# Notes on Virginia

MORSON'S ROW



**Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission**

Morson's Row  
221 Governor Street  
Richmond, Virginia 23219

U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
PERMIT NO. 304  
RICHMOND, VA.

Mr. & Mrs. J.  
5614 Crenshaw Ave.  
Richmond, VA. 23227