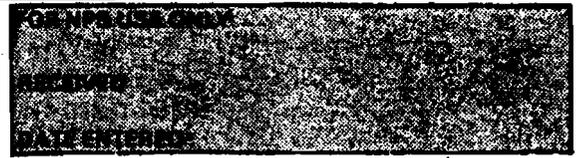


Listed On:  
VLR 07/31/1980  
NRHP -----

041-0039

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM



SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC Wiley's Tavern Archaeological Site

AND/OR COMMON Same

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER [Redacted]

CITY, TOWN Danripple VICINITY OF 5th, W.C. Daniel COUNTY Halifax STATE Virginia CODE 51 CODE 88

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SITE	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC ACQUISITION	<input type="checkbox"/> ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME Mrs. Margaret A. Sheier

STREET & NUMBER Route 3

CITY, TOWN South Boston VICINITY OF STATE Virginia

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Halifax County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER CITY, TOWN Town of Halifax STATE Virginia

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE Virginia Site Survey Form, 44HA36

DATE October 30, 1978 FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS Wren Kitchen Virginia Research Center for Archaeology, College of William and Mary

CITY, TOWN Williamsburg, Virginia STATE Virginia 23186

## 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> _EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> _DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> _UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> _ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> _GOOD	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> _RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> _ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> _MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> _FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> _UNEXPOSED		

### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The archaeological remains of an eighteenth century ordinary known as Wiley's Tavern [REDACTED],

[REDACTED] These remains consist of a twenty-foot by twenty-four-foot field stone foundation with an end chimney. The area is currently covered by a lawn [REDACTED].

Photographs taken in 1924 and 1936 indicate that Wiley's Tavern was a one-and-one-half story log structure with a wood shingled roof (Photos 1 and 2). Local residents indicate that the tavern interior consisted of one large room with an overhead loft. A wooden lean-to was located immediately adjacent to the tavern.

The tavern and lean-to collapsed in the 1950's and the above-ground debris was removed. The area was planted in lawn. A Virginia Research Center for Archaeology archaeological survey of the property in 1978 located the intact foundation remains of the tavern. The Shefer home, constructed in 1932, is located nearby, (Photo 3).

# 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 checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES      1781                                      BUILDER/ARCHITECT      William Wiley

**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

Eighteenth century Wiley's Tavern, an archaeological site in Halifax County, figured prominently in one of the most strategic military maneuvers of the American Revolution. The Tavern served alternately as the headquarters of the British General Charles Lord Cornwallis and his American counterpart, General Nathaniel Greene, during the decisive military stratagem known as the Retreat to the Dan River. The Wiley's Tavern site symbolizes for the people of Halifax County their area's most significant historical event, a feat which prevented the complete devastation of the American army in the South. Thus, archaeological excavation of the Wiley's Tavern site would reveal architectural and artifactual data potentially capable of reconstructing the setting in which Halifax County played its most significant role in the history of the American nation. Moreover, data would be gained on the construction and operation of a back country colonial tavern which could serve to generate comparative studies with previously excavated taverns in cities like Williamsburg, Alexandria and Philadelphia. Because Wiley's Tavern is located [redacted] near the North Carolina line, archaeological excavation should reveal valuable research data about inter-colonial trade.

Outbuildings such as a kitchen, dairy, smokehouse, stable and grainhouse were usually present adjacent to the ordinary itself. Although the archaeological remains of such structures were not located during the 1978 VRCA survey, they are expected to be present within the nominated acreage. Because minor utilitarian outbuildings were usually pulled down or allowed to decay as modern ways of life rendered them useless, they are a relatively undocumented page in American vernacular architectural history. Here, historical archaeology can make one of its most significant contributions. For that reason, the Wiley's Tavern site and its surrounding yardscape and outbuildings sites should be preserved for future study with National Register recognition being an initial step toward that goal.

William Wiley acquired approximately 2,000 acres of Halifax County land in the middle of the eighteenth century in a location near modernday Tubbeville. By January 1771 he was operating an ordinary on the Dan River near Boyd's and Irwin's Ferries, [redacted] through Halifax County. Receipts for transactions at Wiley's Tavern indicate that he was selling rum and loaf sugar to the public as early as January 11th of that year. Wiley next appeared in the historic record on April 28, 1774 when he advertised in Purdie and Dixon's Williamsburg Virginia Gazette that he had taken up a number of free-running swine, which he would detain in Halifax until they were claimed.

(See Continuation Sheet #1).

## 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Anonymous, Heads of Families at the First Census of the United States taken in the year 1790. (U.S.G.P.O.: Washington, 1908).

Carrington, W.J., A History of Halifax County, (Regional Publishing Company: Baltimore, Maryland, 1969).

(See Continuation Sheet #4)

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1 acre

Oak Level U.S.G.S. Quad., 1:24,000, 7.5'

UTM REFERENCES

A			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C			

B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

[REDACTED]

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

## 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Martha W. McCartney, Research Specialist

May 15, 1980

ORGANIZATION

Virginia Research Center for Archaeology

DATE

804-253-4836

STREET & NUMBER

Wren Kitchen, College of William and Mary

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Williamsburg

STATE

Virginia 23186

## 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 1986 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

Tucker Hill, Executive Director  
Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission

DATE JUL 31 1980

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

DIRECTOR OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

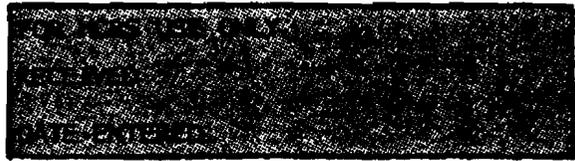
ATTEST

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM



Wiley's Tavern Archaeological Site, Halifax County, Virginia

CONTINUATION SHEET 1

ITEM NUMBER 8

PAGE 1

William Wiley apparently neglected to obtain a license to keep a tavern, an omission which by November 1779 resulted in his being summoned before the local Justices and charged with selling liquor illegally. His failure to license his tavern may have been deliberate. Because the law traditionally gave ferrymen a monopoly on tavern operation within a ten mile radius of their crossings and Wiley's Tavern was only four miles from Irwin's Ferry and seven miles from Boyd's Ferry, which had a licensed tavern, perhaps Wiley would have been unable to obtain a license. Moreover, the licensing of a tavern required the posting of a substantial bond as well as the annual purchase of a license, financial obligations which may have been difficult, if not impossible, for William Wiley, given the rural economy of eighteenth century Halifax County.

Although the larger eighteenth century taverns, usually in urban areas, were run with a sizeable staff of servants and slaves, the majority of rural taverns were small. Many of these country taverns had been private residences first. They usually had a large common room on the first floor, with one or more bedrooms in an overhead loft. Wiley's Tavern, according to oral tradition, precisely fits this architectural description.

In smaller taverns family members usually waited upon the guests, with the assistance of household slaves. According to the 1790 census, William Wiley's household consisted of four white adults and eleven Negro slaves, a group which would have been capable of operating a busy tavern.

William Wiley's tavern would have served as a center of commercial and social activity during the eighteenth century, as country taverns typically did when they were located along well traveled routes. However, it was not until February 1781 that William Wiley's ordinary attained its greatest historical significance. It was successively occupied by the leaders of both the British and American armies during the military action known as the Retreat to the Dan.

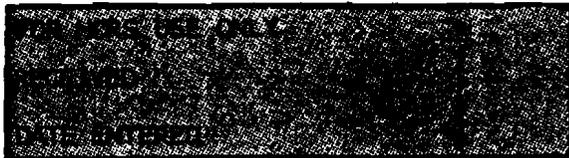
Following the American army's crushing defeat in Camden, South Carolina, in August 1780 under the leadership of General Horatio Gates, General Nathaniel Greene was placed in charge of the American Army in the Southern Department, assuming command on December 3, 1780. Although 2,300 men had survived Gate's defeat, Greene wrote to the Commander-in-Chief, George Washington that only 800 of these men were properly clothed and equipped for duty. Greene had hoped to acquire new recruits from Virginia but learned that the British held both Norfolk and Portsmouth and that Virginia was absorbed in her own defense.

Greene called a Council of War at Salisbury, North Carolina. The officers present unanimously agreed that another direct confrontation with Cornwallis's superior forces would totally annihilate the remainder of the Southern Army. Therefore, Greene elected to withdraw his army across the Dan River in Virginia, out of reach of the British, a plan known in the documentary record as the Retreat to the Dan.

FHR-8-300A  
(11/78)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**



Wiley's Tavern Archaeological Site, Halifax County, Virginia

CONTINUATION SHEET 2 ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

Colonel Edward Carrington was sent ahead to Virginia to procure a number of boats at Irwin's and Boyd's Ferries to transport the army across the Dan River. General Thaddeus Kosciusko, the Polish patriot and military engineer, began preparing fortifications to cover the crossing. Greene selected Colonel Williams, Carrington, Howard, Washington, and Lee to command the 800 light troops assigned to cover the retreat of the main body. General Andrew Pickens was assigned to follow in Cornwallis's wake, cutting off his communications and supply route with the British forces in South Carolina. Pickens was also to recruit militia along the way.

On February 10, 1781 the Retreat to the Dan commenced. Greene set out on a fast-paced eighty mile march north toward Boyd's Ferry, Virginia. Cornwallis pursued. The British burned their baggage to avoid being hindered by it, assuming that they could live off the land. Pickens, sweeping behind, cut them off from their source of ammunition in South Carolina.

Because it was the season for spring flooding, Cornwallis expected the American troops to cross the Dan River to the west, in the shallows of its upper region. Colonel Williams, realizing this, moved his forces westward, holding the attention of the British army. Meanwhile, Greene retreated in a direct line to Boyd's Ferry, arriving there on February 13, 1781. To facilitate the river crossing the American troops split into two groups, one crossing at Boyd's Ferry and the other four miles upstream at Irwin's Ferry, using the boats provided by the people of Halifax County. By February 14th Greene's army was established in the breastworks constructed by Kosciusko on the northern bank of the Dan.

Cornwallis arrived at the Dan's southern bank and discovered that the American army had escaped to safety across the swollen river. He used as his headquarters Wiley's Tavern, which was [redacted] out of the range of American fire. Cornwallis's Order Book, chronicling his pursuit of Greene's army shows that he issued orders from his "Headquarters, Wiley's House, 15th February, 1781."<sup>1</sup> He ordered the immediate withdrawal of his men to North Carolina.

By February 17th the last British troops had left the Boyd's Ferry area. General Nathaniel Greene recrossed the Dan River and on February 23rd made Wiley's Tavern his headquarters. The American army followed and moved toward Guilford Courthouse for a major confrontation with Cornwallis's troops. The American Forces were strengthened considerably by Halifax County recruits. Although the British gained the victory in the ensuing battle, their army was greatly depleted of officers, men and ammunition, which greatly contributed to their conclusive defeat at Yorktown.

(See Continuation Sheet #3)

FHR-8-300A  
(11/78)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE



## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

Wiley's Tavern Archaeological Site, Halifax County, Virginia

CONTINUATION SHEET

3

ITEM NUMBER

8

PAGE 3

Wiley's Tavern continued to function as an ordinary throughout the remainder of the eighteenth century. Its ownership was conveyed from William Wiley to his son and then passed into the Pate family for two generations. The tavern property was subsequently acquired by the Owens, who after three consecutive generations of ownership sold the tavern land to its present owner, [REDACTED] (Figure 1).

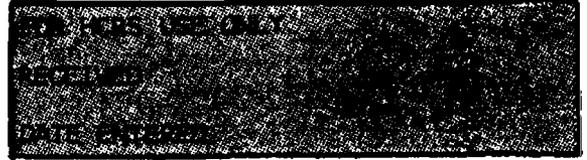
Wiley's Tavern, which served alternately as the field headquarters of both Cornwallis and Greene, symbolizes for the people of Halifax County the contribution their ancestors made toward the winning of the American Revolution, as it was Halifax County's men and boats that turned the American army's retreat into a victory. As such, Wiley's Tavern represents a significant moment in American history. The inclusion of Wiley's Tavern in the Virginia Landmarks Register and the National Register of Historic Places would recognize this aspect of Halifax County's cultural heritage.

The tavern site is, to many Halifax County citizens, a tangible symbol of their area's contribution to American liberty. As well, these remains could yield important architectural and archaeological data about a little-studied aspect of colonial life, the back country tavern. Therefore they should be preserved.

1. The Order Book of Lord Cornwallis, reprinted in appendix of E.W. Carothers The British Army in North Carolina in 1781, p. 411.

FHR-8-300A  
(11/78)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE



**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

Wiley's Tavern Archaeological Site, Halifax County, Virginia

CONTINUATION SHEET 4 ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 1

Cornwallis, Charles, The Order Book of Lord Cornwallis, reprinted in appendix of E.W. Carothers, The British Army in North Carolina in 1781 (Phildelphia, 1781).

Gibbs, Patricia A., Taverns in Tidewater, Virginia, M.A. Thesis, College of William and Mary, 1968.

Halifax County Deed and Order Books.

Headspeth, W.C., and Spurgeon Compton, The Retreat to the Dan (South Boston News: South Boston, 1976).

Purdie and Dixon's Williamsburg Virginia Gazette, April 28, 1774.

Virginia Magazine of History and Biography, Vol. 44, p. 207-222.