

VLR-4/28/95 NRHP-7/21/95 (Pending)

United States Department of the interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A) Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a) Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Long Grass
other names/site number VDHR FILE # 58-185

2. Location

street & number Route 826 N/A not for publication
city or town Eppes Fork X vicinity
state Virginia code VA county Mecklenburg code 117 zip code 23927

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets -- does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant -- nationally statewide X locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certify in official/Title Date 1-15-95
State or Federal agency and bureau DIST. OF HISTORIC RESOURCES

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

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

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is Signature of the Keeper Date of Action
entered in the National Register. See continuation sheet.
determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.
determined not eligible for the National Register.
removed from the National Register.
other (explain):

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>9</u>	<u>2</u>	buildings
	<u>1</u>	sites
		structures
		objects
<u>9</u>	<u>3</u>	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Category	Subcategory
DOMESTIC	single dwelling
DOMESTIC	secondary dwelling
AGRICULTURE	processing
AGRICULTURE	storage
AGRICULTURE	agricultural field
AGRICULTURE	animal facility
EDUCATION	school

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Category	Subcategory
DOMESTIC	single dwelling
DOMESTIC	secondary dwelling
AGRICULTURE	agricultural field
AGRICULTURE	animal facility
LANDSCAPE	garden

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Greek Revival

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation	BRICK
walls	WOOD
roof	METAL
other	STONE

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- X A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
X C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
B removed from its original location.
C a birthplace or a grave.
D a cemetery.
E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
F a commemorative property.
G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past fifty years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

AGRICULTURE

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

Ca. 1800 - 1945

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Holt, Jacob W. (attributed builder)

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

Primary location of additional data:

- X State Historic Preservation Office
Other State agency
Federal agency
Local government
University
Other

Name of repository:

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property approximately 40 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	17	737250	4048880	3	17	738000 4048200
2	17	738000	4048880	4	17	737250 4048200

See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title	J. Daniel Pezzoni	date	February 20, 1995
organization	J. Daniel Pezzoni, Preservation Consultant	telephone	(703) 366-0787
street & number	PO Box 7825	zip code	24019-0825
city or town	Roanoke state VA		

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

- A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name _____

street & number _____ telephone _____

city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

Long Grass
Mecklenburg Co., Va.

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

Summary

Long Grass currently occupies approximately forty acres of field and woodlot on the shores of the John H. Kerr Reservoir in south-central Mecklenburg County, Virginia. The principal building on the farm is the house known as Long Grass, a predominately Greek Revival two-story frame residence built in phases from about 1800 to the Civil War. Surrounding the house are several domestic outbuildings, most dating to the antebellum period, and a one-room log schoolhouse modified as a dwelling. Further afield are a livestock barn and carriage house, a pack house, tobacco barns, and a log tenant house with a saddle-bag form.¹

Inventory

1. Main House. Ca. 1800 to ca. 1860. Contributing building.
2. Schoolhouse. Early to mid-nineteenth century. Noncontributing building.
3. Kitchen and Laundry. Early to mid-nineteenth century. Contributing building.
4. Smokehouse. Early to mid-nineteenth century. Contributing building.
5. Ice House. Mid-nineteenth century. Contributing building.
6. Livestock Barn. Ca. 1895. Contributing building.
7. Tenant House. Ca. 1885. Contributing building.
8. Pack House. Ca. 1885. Contributing building.
9. Tobacco Barn. Ca. 1885. Contributing building.
10. Tobacco Barn. Ca. 1885. Contributing building.
11. Storage Building. 1994. Noncontributing building.
12. Garden. 1993-94. Noncontributing site.

Main House: Exterior

The main house at Long Grass has an overall H-shaped plan composed of a south-facing wing that incorporates a ca. 1800 hall-parlor-plan dwelling as its first story; a two-story hyphen; and a north-facing center-passage-plan, single-pile wing that became the front of the house after its construction about 1840 (Exhibit A). Both the north and south wings have metal-sheathed hip roofs, beaded weatherboard siding, and brick foundations and exterior end chimneys with stepped shoulders. The north wing features a symmetrical three-bay facade with a central one-story porch. The porch has Doric columns and pilasters that support a Doric cornice with triglyphs, guttae, and mutules; other elements include brick foundation piers and balustrades above and below (the former a modern rendition in the Chinese style). The porch shelters a front entry with double-leaf doors, sidelights, and an elliptical fanlight with a keystone-like motif at its top.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 2Long Grass
Mecklenburg Co., Va.

At the southwest corner of the north wing is a small porch sheltering a door into the west first-floor room (formerly a dining room), with square wood posts with molded caps and bases, arched frieze boards, and a balustrade newel with a globe finial. Other north wing exterior features include six-over-six-sash windows with louvered shutters; a cyma recta cornice; horizontal wood-barred foundation vents; and a crawlspace access door with a wood and iron lock box and hand-wrought latch.

The south wing also has a three-bay (originally) facade and a one-story porch, although its facade is slightly asymmetrical and its porch extends across the entire elevation. The porch is supported by paired and trebled square wood posts with recessed panels and diminutive sawn brackets. Sawn vergeboards with pendant knobs at their mid-points span between the tops of the posts, and turned balustrades span below. The exposed porch ceiling structure has beaded joists and other members, and the brick underpinnings are partially enclosed, forming a crawlspace storage area accessible only through a hole in the south wing basement. The porch shelters a central entry with a six-panel door, flanking nine-over-nine-sash windows with wavy panes, and a modern entry at the southwest corner. The weatherboards over the original entry preserve the ghost image of a gabled stoop that preceded the present porch. One-story appendages extend from each end of the south wing. On the east end is an early gabled dispensary wing--with modern doors and windows--where George Tarry stored medicines that he used to treat his slaves and others in need of medical attention. On the west end, flanking the chimney, are a shed-roofed bulkhead with a three panel door, and a shed-roofed pent room with a four-over-four-sash window. The hyphen connecting the north and south wings has a first story constructed at the same time as the north wing, and a second story constructed in 1950.

Main House: Interior

The Greek Revival Style dominates on the interior of Long Grass, as it does on the exterior, with vestiges of earlier Georgian and/or Federal details on the first floor of the south wing, the surviving part of the original one-story-with-garret dwelling. These early vestiges include paneled wainscots in both hall and parlor, with floating moldings above the base and below the chair rail; delicately molded door and window surrounds; and three six-panel doors in addition to the front door (a door leading from the parlor into the west pent room formerly opened to the exterior and may have communicated with the kitchen, located a short distance to the west). Other features include an enclosed winder stair; Federal mantels from a North Carolina house that replace the 1850s Greek Revival mantels, which have diminutive trefoil cut-outs at the top of the pilaster panels (these mantels are presently stored in the pack house on the farm); a hall fireplace with a soapstone lintel and a relieving arch (the latter concealed behind the present wall finish); and a sink and counters constructed in the parlor when it was converted into an indoor kitchen in 1950. In both the old and new sections of the house, walls and ceilings are finished

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 3

Long Grass
Mecklenburg Co., Va.

in plaster and lath or modern drywall; doors feature either Carpenter Company locks or No. 60 Improved locks with spread eagle motifs; and many window panes are inscribed with the initials of Tarry family members.

The second floor of the south wing, which apparently replaced an original garret in the 1850s, has a single-pile center-passage plan. The two rooms are detailed in the Greek Revival Style, with symmetrically molded door and window surrounds and mantel pilasters (the surrounds with plain corner blocks), grained two-panel doors with butt hinges and brown pottery knobs, and panels under the windows. As of January 1995, the second-floor walls and ceilings were stripped of their plaster and lath revealing sash-sawn mortise-and-tenoned framing members, outriggers supporting the roof eaves, and common rafters butted and nailed to ridge boards. In the south-wing basement are hewn sills and joists, whitewashed brick walls, and concrete floors. Notable features include possible evidence of a former fireplace on the east end, and asymmetrically-placed heavy summer beams. The first floor of the hyphen is finished in mid-twentieth-century knotty pine, and a bathroom was inserted into the second-story in 1950.

The first and second floors of the north wing share similar Greek Revival detailing, earlier and less typical than that appearing in the second floor of the south wing. Throughout the north wing are molded chair rails and baseboards and unusual four-panel doors with three panels stacked vertically above the lock rail and a larger fourth panel below. These doors are hung on cast iron butt hinges stamped "THO CLARK." Doorways on the first floor have architrave surrounds with dentil cornices; the second-floor surrounds are less elaborate. A two-run stair in a curved well rises on the west wall of the center passage. This stair features a paneled spandrel, slender turned newels, plain balusters, scrolled tread brackets (forming a scrolled frieze along the fascia of the stairwell), and disk-like pendant knobs under the newels. A lamp hangs from a circular plaster medallion in the ceiling of the center passage; a smaller medallion and a plaster cornice embellish the ceiling of the east room. The first-floor mantels have standard Greek Revival forms, with symmetrically molded or recessed-paneled pilasters and small shelf brackets (it is possible these mantels were originally marbled). The mantels on the second floor are less elaborate than those on the first. Other north-wing interior features include early gilded curtain rods with foliar ends in the east first-floor room, and a workroom or storage room at the top of the stairs on the second floor.

Outbuildings and Landscape Features

Long Grass features a large collection of domestic and farm outbuildings that illustrate the daily workings of the farm from its early years up through the mid-twentieth century. To the south of the main house stands an antebellum log building used as a schoolhouse before the 1890s, and later used as a fishing cabin. The building is one story in height with a garret, and it has a

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 4

**Long Grass
Mecklenburg Co., Va.**

metal-sheathed gable roof that extends to engage a front porch (recently glassed in) and a rear shed room. The exterior is sheathed in weatherboard siding; the exposed walls of the one-room interior show traces of whitewash. Other interior features include crudely beveled hewn ceiling joists, an enclosed stair opening into the rear shed room, and a Federal mantel (salvaged from a house in North Carolina) that is associated with the building's recent remodeling as a dwelling.

Off the west side of the main house stand two one-story frame buildings that are also of antebellum date: a kitchen and laundry building and a smokehouse. Both buildings have metal-sheathed gable roofs, modern beaded weatherboard siding matching the original siding, stone foundations, mortise-and-tenoned and pegged framing members (exposed on the interior), and *modern doors hung on the original wrought strap hinges with unusual staple-like pintles* (similar hardware appears on the door of the ice house, described below). The two buildings stand in a line facing the main house; the northern building is the kitchen and laundry, with the kitchen representing the original section and the laundry added to its south gable end (probably not many years after the kitchen's construction). Both share the same massive stone chimney with a brick stack and a massive hewn lintel spanning the laundry fireplace opening. Early weatherboards on the south gable end of the kitchen are visible in the laundry. The smokehouse, which stands several feet to the south, features a modern batten door with the initials "LG" formed out of nails driven into the battens, and on the inside are log pole and sawn beams for suspending hams and a wall-mounted wooden winch of unknown function.

The ice house stands to the east of the main house. The ice storage area itself occupies a stone-lined pit under a frame superstructure used as a corncrib in the 1930s. Doorways at both gable-ends open into boxed-in shafts leading down to the ice pit; pulleys in these shafts permitted ice to be lifted out, and slatted transoms over the doors allowed warm air to escape. Slits in the weatherboards at the base of the gable ends (faithfully recreated when the weatherboards were replaced by modern beaded weatherboards) aided in ventilating the frame superstructure. Hewn and straight-sawn framing members are visible on the interior, as are recycled boards (some of them beaded) used to form partitions, and a corner stair that rises to a metal-lined garret formerly used as a pigeon cote.

The largest historic building on the farm besides the main house is the livestock barn and carriage house that stands to the east near the shore of Kerr Lake. This two-story frame building consists of a gable-fronted center section with shed extensions on each side, all sided with plain weatherboards attached with cut nails, roofed with metal sheathing, and underpinned with continuous and discontinuous granite foundations. The building is constructed entirely of circular-sawn lumber, except for hewn joists at the first- and second-floor ceiling levels of the center section and log-pole joists over the vehicle areas and workshop on the north side (the south-side extension may have served originally as a milking area; in the mid-twentieth century

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 5

Long Grass
Mecklenburg Co., Va.

it was used to winter sheep). The center section contains horse and mule stalls lining a central drive-through on the ground level, with a hay mow above. The drive-through retains large slatted doors at its west (front) end; just inside are an enclosed stair to the hay mow and a narrow granary. The horse stall doors are constructed with wire nails and have finely crafted wooden latches. The door frame at the south end of the drive-through is constructed with cut nails with unusual bulbous heads.

A dwelling used by farmhands during the early twentieth century stands to the northwest of the main house on the north side of the present approach drive. The one-story south-facing house has two square-notched log pens separated by a gap once occupied by a chimney--an arrangement known as the saddle-bag form. The house formerly had rear frame shed rooms and a back porch; these became deteriorated and were torn down several years ago. Exterior features include a metal-sheathed gable roof; fish-scale wood shingles under the roofing on the east pen and square-edged shingles over the west pen; corner boards protecting the notching; six-over-six-sash windows; tongue-and-groove doors; and curious wood blocks nailed to the outside edge of the outermost rafter couple in the east gable (perhaps the sawed-off outriggers of a former roof extension). The white-washed interior features log pole ceiling joists, a concrete-block flue in place of the chimney, and twentieth-century paneled doors and paperboard wall and ceiling sheathing. The attic, formerly reached by a ladder stair, has floor boards attached with cut nails and log pole rafters butted and nailed at the ridge.

South of this tenant house stands a group of buildings that includes a two-story frame pack house, two square-notched log tobacco barns (out of five or more that stood at the location in the 1930s), and a modern metal-sided storage building. The east-facing pack house was used for the storage of cured tobacco. It has weatherboard siding, a gable roof with modern metal sheathing, a continuous stone foundation, and an early shed addition. An ordering pit extends under the north two-thirds of the building, reached by a trap door on the interior. Cured tobacco was placed in the pit so that moisture from the ground would make the leaves supple enough to handle without crumbling. The pit may have been retired from use by the 1930s, since at that time grading was performed in a "strip house" wing, now demolished, that was heated and humidified by fireboxes or stoves. Other interior features include exposed circular-sawn studs mortise-and-tenoned and pegged to the plates, and a second floor with a pair of opposing log posts linked to the plates by iron bars but not joined to the roof structure (holes at the top of these posts suggest a tie rod or cable once connected them across the breadth of the building). The two tobacco barns--in which tobacco leaves were flue-cured--are of similar construction, with metal-sheathed gable roofs, batten doors, five levels of tier poles on the inside, and continuous stone foundations. These barns were originally heated by fireboxes built into the foundations; later the fireboxes were replaced by oil burners.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 6Long Grass
Mecklenburg Co., Va.

The Long Grass grounds include old and new landscape features. A boxwood-lined walk leads up to the north porch, with two millstones from the former Tarry Mill used as decorative accents. Off the west side of the walk stands a bur oak (*Quercus macrocarpa*) that was presented to George P. Tarry in recognition of his service to the 1901-02 Virginia Constitutional Convention and is appropriately known as the Constitution Oak. The boxwood walk terminates at the present approach drive, which curves through the property northwestward to State Road 826. On the south side of the drive, between the kitchen and laundry building and the pack house, lies a large modern garden enclosed in a stone-walled quadrangle.

Architectural Analysis

Long Grass has evolved an architecturally significant assemblage of domestic and farm buildings through the years. Foremost among these is the main house, the earliest section of which is the first story of the south (rear) wing. Architectural evidence suggests that this original house was a one-story-with-garret hall-parlor-plan dwelling. Remnants of Georgian and/or Federal interior detailing, such as the paneled wainscots, six-panel doors, and door and window surrounds, support an early-nineteenth-century date of construction for the house. The wainscot moldings appear Georgian in inspiration, whereas the delicacy of the moldings (almost reeding) in the door and window surrounds suggest Federal influence (not to be expected before the 1810s in Mecklenburg County). The original house was probably similar in appearance to story-and-a-half dwellings with dormered gable roofs that survive throughout Mecklenburg County (one, Tallwood, stands or stood several miles west of Long Grass on State Route 826).²

To this original dwelling--small by the standards of the mid-nineteenth-century Southside gentry--the Tarry family added first a two-story wing about 1840, a new formal front for the house. Later, probably during the 1850s, they replaced the garret of the original house (now the south wing) with a full second story under a hip roof that harmonized with the roof of the new front section. This hypothetical two-phase progression of the antebellum additions is based on a comparison with other houses attributed to the likely remodeler of Long Grass, Jacob W. Holt (1811-80). Holt began to build houses in his native Prince Edward County in the 1830s; in the early 1840s he moved to Warren County, North Carolina (across the border from Mecklenburg) and established a career of regional scope. Most of Holt's work during the 1840s was restricted to Warren County, but in the 1850s he expanded his range to include counties on both sides of the state line, and he may have completed four Greek Revival and Italianate houses in Mecklenburg County by the eve of the Civil War.³

According to his biographer, Catherine Bishir: "Holt's design process involved several components: use of popular publications [and a] vernacular reliance on a conservative form and plan . . ." During the 1840s, Holt relied most on the Greek Revival designs of pattern-book

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 7Long Grass
Mecklenburg Co., Va.

author Asher Benjamin, but in the 1850s he shifted to the "more ornate and eclectic vocabulary" of William Ranlett's published designs. Holt's porches reflect the change: "Instead of the Doric simplicity of his [earlier] columned porches, he created luxuriant trellises of swags, pendants, arches, and brackets." The north and south porches at Long Grass provide a text book illustration of Holt's evolving methodology; the classicism of the north porch is typical of his 1840s commissions, whereas the freer ornamentality of the south porch has more in common with his work during the 1850s. The stylistic attributes of the two porches may indicate the construction first of the north wing at Long Grass about 1840, followed a decade or so later by the addition of a new porch and second story to the south wing. The 1850s enlargement provided extra living space for the Tarrys' oldest children, then entering their teens, and the two families of motherless children (relatives of Mary Tarry) who lodged with the Tarrys during the mid-1850s.⁴

Other Long Grass details point to Holt's involvement. The north entry--with its broad sidelights and elliptical fanlight--is comparable to other entries conceived by Holt during the 1840s, and the center-passage stair--with its paneled spandrel, scrolled tread brackets, and curved well--is also similar to Holt designs of the period, although such stair compositions were produced by other builders as well.⁵ Long Grass departs from Holt's corpus in other ways: the interior door surrounds appear more elaborate than other known Holt designs, and the curious four-panel doors they contain are unlike his simple two-panel Greek Revival doors or later more decorative doors (see below). The detailing of the south wing interior, however, does have more in common with Holt's standard 1850s work, especially in the diminutive trefoil cut-outs at the top of the pilaster panels in the two first-floor mantels. Also, the overall spatial planning of the house, with old and new dwellings linked by a hyphen in an H-shaped configuration, is typical of Holt enlargements of older dwellings.⁶

The four-panel doors mentioned above deserve further discussion. These feature three panels stacked vertically above the lock rail and a larger fourth panel below, and they are hung on cast iron butt hinges stamped "THO CLARK." The location and other aspects of Thomas Clark's hardware manufactory are at present unknown, but examples of his hinges have been identified elsewhere, appearing at Sterling Castle in Petersburg (1839), the Brugh House in Botetourt County (date unknown), and the church of St. Thomas and St. Denis in Berkeley County, South Carolina (1856).⁷ At both Long Grass and the Brugh House, the Clark hinges appear in conjunction with the same four-panel doors, raising the possibility that the builders of the houses were supplied with door and hinge kits from a single supplier.

Like the main house, the Long Grass outbuildings display many interesting features, several of which are noted here. Three buildings--the ice house, smokehouse, and kitchen and laundry--share (or shared) beaded weatherboard siding with the main house and have wrought iron door

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 8

Long Grass
Mecklenburg Co., Va.

hardware, including the unusual staple pintles, probably produced by a single blacksmith operating on the Tarry plantation or nearby. The ice house and the later horse barn are notable for their multifunctionality and for features that demonstrate the forethought given to cooling and ventilation, especially the ventilation shafts and wall slits of the ice house. The pack house takes one of several forms used for such buildings by nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century Mecklenburg County farmers. Ordering pits such as the one under the pack house are common in North Carolina but they are not well documented in Virginia (owing largely to the lack of architectural survey in the Southside tobacco-growing region). The ca. 1895 livestock barn was built at the tail end of the use of cut nails in standard frame construction in rural Virginia; the doors of the horse and mule stalls may indicate a specialized early use of wire nails (or the stalls may be slightly younger than the rest of the barn).⁸ The livestock barn also features several cut nails with augmented (domed) heads in the construction of its east entry. Such nails were produced beginning in the 1830s and may have remained in regular use through the 1880s.⁹ Square-notching, as used for the tobacco barns and tenant house, is an unusual log notching technique in Virginia, and in the case of the Long Grass buildings suggests a late date of construction and unfamiliarity with (or intentional disregard for) regional log building traditions.

Integrity Statement

Long Grass has passed through the years with its historic complement of domestic and farm outbuildings largely intact, a fact that contributes much to the overall integrity of the complex. Individual buildings have also fared well, especially the main house, which has remained virtually unchanged since Jacob Holt's crew hammered its last nail before the Civil War. The schoolhouse--a building of considerable interest for the rarity of its type--is nevertheless classified as noncontributing due to the major alterations it has undergone in recent decades. Deterioration of most buildings has been arrested or reversed since the present owners acquired the property in 1992; only two twentieth-century buildings, a tenant house and a garage, could not be salvaged. In recent years, the schoolhouse and livestock barn have been purchased from the Army Corps of Engineers (which manages the lake shore adjoining the farm), reuniting these buildings with the rest of the property and better ensuring their continued survival.

Endnotes

1. Information on the historic functions of the various buildings on the farm is derived principally from interviews with Sudie Park, William B. Tarry, Jr., and Sally White.
2. Tallwood, File no. 58-58, Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Richmond; a similar house is pictured on p. 80 of *Land by the Roanoke*.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 9

Long Grass
Mecklenburg Co., Va.

3. Bishir, *Jacob W. Holt*, 2-4.
4. Ibid., 7-8; Baskervill, *Hamiltons of Burnside*, 99-100. According to family tradition, the second-floor bedrooms in the north wing were used by the Tarry daughters, whereas those over the south wing were used by the sons.
5. Ibid., 8-9. The stair in the ca. 1840 Edwin Edmunds House in Prince Edward County (pictured in Bishir's article) bears a strong resemblance to the Long Grass stair, except for the bottom newel arrangement.
6. Ibid., 13 and 22.
7. Willie Graham interview.
8. Ridout and Graham, "A Systematic Approach for Analyzing Buildings;" Priess, "Wire Nails in North America;" and Smith, "Chronological Development of Nails." William B. Tarry, Sr. (b. 1889) recalled this barn being built (William B. Tarry, Jr. interview).
9. Edwards and Wells, *Historic Louisiana Nails*, 40-41, 63.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 10

Long Grass
Mecklenburg Co., Va.

NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Summary

Long Grass, farmed by generations of the Tarry family since the early 1800s, ranks among Mecklenburg County, Virginia's finest domestic and agricultural complexes. The original section of the Long Grass house probably dates to the early nineteenth century; later, George Tarry engaged noted builder Jacob W. Holt to enlarge and modernize the house in the Greek Revival Style. Self-described "planter" George P. Tarry operated the 3,000-acre farm at the turn of the twentieth century, and it was he who built the farm buildings that stand on the property. Surrounding the main house are early domestic outbuildings such as a log schoolhouse, a kitchen and laundry, a smokehouse, and an icehouse. The farm buildings, located further afield, include a livestock barn and carriage house, a log tenant house, a packhouse with ordering pit, and two tobacco barns.

Justification of Criteria

Long Grass is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under criteria A and C in the areas of agriculture and architecture. The property is agriculturally significant for its farm buildings, which illustrate the operation of one of the area's most prosperous late-nineteenth-century farms. Under architecture, the Long Grass house is significant for its early-nineteenth-century architectural detailing and for the accomplished Greek Revival fabric attributed to Jacob W. Holt. The large collection of domestic and agricultural outbuildings also possess architectural significance. The period of significance for the property extends from ca. 1800, the estimated date of construction for the original section of the house, to 1945, encompassing the long period of construction and use associated with farming on the property. Long Grass is significant at the local level.

Acknowledgements

The consultant was aided by a number of individuals in the preparation of this report. Sudie and Bruce Park, owners of Long Grass, sponsored the project, conducted preliminary research, and provided numerous insights into the historical and architectural development of the property. Catherine Bishir of the North Carolina Division of Archives and History provided information on Jacob W. Holt, and Jerry Clouse of the Pennsylvania Historic and Museum Commission and Willie Graham and Carl Lounsbury of the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation helped track down information on hinge-maker Thomas Clark. Others who assisted the project included staff members of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, the Virginia State Library, the

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 11

Long Grass
Mecklenburg Co., Va.

Circuit Court of Mecklenburg County, the Mecklenburg County library system, and the Virginia Room of the Roanoke Public Library.

Historical Background

The early history of Long Grass is somewhat obscure. In 1813, George Tarry (1740-1818) willed two parcels--one of them being Long Grass--to his son, also named George Tarry (1801-1884).¹ The younger Tarry acquired the property upon reaching the age of 21, and he built the original section of the present house soon after, or he moved into an existing dwelling (the stylistic attributes of the original dwelling are too vestigial to be conclusive). In addition to inheriting land from his father, the younger Tarry also acquired slaves; by 1840, twenty-four of his sixty-five slaves cultivated the broad tobacco fields of the 1,939-acre Long Grass plantation.²

Tarry married Mary Euphemia Hamilton (1815-1887) in 1832, and the couple enlarged their modest story-and-a-half house during the following decade, probably in 1839-1840, the year of a substantial increase in the value of buildings at Long Grass.³ According to family tradition, the Tarry's had the house enlarged while they were traveling in Europe on their honeymoon.⁴ Stylistic attributes of the ca. 1840 Greek Revival addition suggest it was the work of Jacob W. Holt, a prominent builder in the Virginia-North Carolina borderland; if so, the addition ranks among Holt's earliest documented work (see architectural analysis in Section 7). In 1850, the Tarry's family included Mary, age 12, and George (Patrick), age 9, as well as a twenty-one-year-old schoolmaster named Theodore A. Rideout.⁵ Rideout tutored the Tarry children and others from surrounding farms in the log school house that stands to the south of the main house.⁶ In 1854, Patrick Hamilton Baskervill and several brothers and sisters were sent to live with the Tarrys after the death of their mother. Baskervill recalled that the plantation "was called Laurel Hill and included a large, comfortable house and well kept grounds . . . the house was well appointed with servants, carriages and horses, and other such things usual then in the homes of Virginia ladies and gentlemen."⁷

After the Civil War, Long Grass figured as one of the largest and most prosperous farms in the Palmers Springs district of Mecklenburg County, despite the economic dislocations of the Reconstruction era. The 1870 agricultural census schedules describe a farm of 1,200 improved acres and 2,000 unimproved acres valued at \$37,000, making it the largest landholding of the sixty-two farms reported for its district. By 1880, the farm had shrunk to 1,500 total acres, 500 acres tilled, but at \$12,000 Long Grass represented the most valuable farm in its district. Tobacco production increased during the 1870s, from 5,000 pounds in 1870 to 15,000 pounds in 1880.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 12

Long Grass
Mecklenburg Co., Va.

In 1870, the Tarry household contained George and Mary, their son George Patrick (1841-1908) and his wife, Mary Guy Rawlins (1847-1923), and several others, including a millwright named Samuel Meacham.⁸ George P. gradually assumed responsibility for running his father's farm during the period. The 1870 census listed him as a young "farmer;" by 1880 he styled himself "assistant manager" of the farm, and it may be assumed that daily operations had passed to him from his seventy-eight-year-old father. An 1884 business directory listed him as one of the area's principal farmers, and he may have been involved in two farming partnerships, Tarry & Harris and Tarry & Park.⁹ By the beginning of the twentieth century, George P. Tarry's landholdings amounted to 3,236 acres, 2,745 acres comprising the core Long Grass portion.¹⁰

The Tarrys supplemented their farm income with proceeds from Tarry's Mill, established at the nearby confluence of Nutbush Creek and the Roanoke River by 1864. In 1870, the water-powered grist and sawmill produced \$11,200 worth of corn meal and \$60 worth of lumber; several years later the mill was chosen as the site of one of several warehouses opened by the Mecklenburg Boat Company, which shipped freight between Clarksville and Gaston. A post office also located at Tarry's Mill, and the postmaster in 1884, Thomas A. Park, may have been one of George P. Tarry's farming partners. Tarry's Mill ceased operations between 1897 and 1917, perhaps after George P.'s death in 1908.¹¹

George P. Tarry's status as one of Mecklenburg's more prosperous farmers made him a logical choice as the county's delegate to the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1901-02. The convention was called to reform the state's Reconstruction-era constitution, and it led to the establishment of the state Corporation Commission and the disfranchisement of black voters, among other changes that strengthened Virginia's conservative Democratic power base well into the twentieth century.¹² Tarry's relative dissociation from local politics may have recommended him for the job, since he represented a constituency that had narrowly voted against holding the convention in a 1900 referendum. According to one account, he was "nominated and elected not only without his solicitation, but against his protest."¹³ As a Democrat, Tarry numbered among eighty-seven other delegates from his party (as opposed to twelve Republicans), and he served on two standing committees, the Committee on the Organization of Counties and the Committee on the Reduction of Expenses. He voted in favor of implementing the reforms drafted by the convention, and in recognition of his work he received the bur oak that still shades the front yard at Long Grass.¹⁴

Upon George P. Tarry's death in 1908, Long Grass passed to Mary G. R. Tarry, and after her death in 1923 it passed to her son, William Burwell Tarry, Sr. (1889-1962). During the 1930s and 1940s, the neighboring Matthews family leased Long Grass and farmed the property. William B. Tarry, Sr. and his wife, Evelene Royster Tarry (ca. 1896-1988), returned to live on the farm in 1950 and made several minor modernizations to the house, including adding the

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 13

Long Grass
Mecklenburg Co., Va.

second story to the hyphen between the north and south wings, and installing a kitchen in the parlor of the south wing.¹⁵ In the early 1950s, a substantial portion of the farm's rich bottom land along the Roanoke River and Nutbush Creek was inundated by the John H. Kerr Reservoir, much to the Tarrys' consternation.¹⁶ After William, Sr.'s death, the farm passed to Evelene. Long Grass was purchased by its present owners in 1992.

Endnotes

1. Mecklenburg County Will Book 8, p. 276. The 100-acre core of the Long Grass parcel may have belonged to Jonathan Tanner and James Robertson in 1806 (Mecklenburg County deed indexes). The elder Tarry resided on another parcel, which he willed to his son Edward.
2. Mecklenburg County Deed Book 21, p. 174; 1840 United States census, Mecklenburg County population schedules. The 1864 Gilmer map of Mecklenburg County shows the Tarry slave quarters located approximately one-half to one mile southwest of the Long Grass house.
3. Moore, *Cemetery and tombstone records*, 154; Mecklenburg County Land Tax Books, 1837A-1850B, microfilm at the Virginia State Library, Richmond. The value of buildings on the George Tarry property increased from \$2,000 in 1839 to \$5,000 in 1840.
4. William B. Tarry, Jr., interview. It is not known when the Tarry's took their honeymoon.
5. 1850 United States census, Mecklenburg County population schedules.
6. Sally White interview.
7. Baskervill, *Hamiltons of Burnside*, 99-100. Assuming that Baskervill was correct in referring to the property as Laurel Hill (a name not known to modern descendants of George, Sr. and Mary E. Tarry), the name was probably changed to Long Grass by George P. Tarry, who referred to it as such in his 1903 will.
8. 1870 United States census, Mecklenburg County population schedules. Later, a black women named Catherine Tarry (ca. 1840-ca. 1935) was employed by the Tarry's as a cook and nurse. "Aunt Cat" lived in a two-story cook's house that stood near the pack house (Sally White and William B. Tarry, Jr. interviews).
9. Chataigne, *Chataigne's Virginia Gazetteer . . . 1884-'5*, 413.
10. Mecklenburg County Land Book, 1902.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 14

Long Grass
Mecklenburg Co., Va.

11. Ibid.; "Map of Mecklenburg County" (1864); 1870 Mecklenburg County industrial schedules; Bracey, *Life by the Roaring Roanoke*, 218; *Virginia State Gazetteer . . . 1897-'98*, 763; *Virginia Business Directory . . . 1917*.

12. McDanel, *Virginia Constitutional Convention*, 11-59.

13. Baskervill, *Hamiltons of Burnside*, 100.

14. McDanel, *Virginia Constitutional Convention*, 19, 157 and 161; *Manual of the Constitutional Convention*, 17; *The Clarksville Times*, September 9, 1971.

15. Sudie Park, personal communication.

16. William B. Tarry, Jr., interview.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 15

Long Grass
Mecklenburg Co., Va.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities. *Land by the Roanoke*. Richmond, Va.: Whittet & Shepperson, Printers, 1957.

Baskervill, Patrick Hamilton. *The Hamiltons of Burnside, North Carolina*. Richmond, Va.: W. E. Jones' sons, inc., 1916.

Bishir, Catherine W. "Jacob W. Holt: An American Builder." *Winterthur Portfolio* vol. 16 no. 1 (Spring 1981): 1-31.

Bracey, Susan L. *Life by the Roaring Roanoke: A History of Mecklenburg County*. Mecklenburg County, Va.: The Mecklenburg County Bicentennial Commission, 1977.

Chataigne, J. H., comp. *Chataigne's Virginia Gazetteer and Classified Business Directory, 1884-'5*. Richmond: J. H. Chataigne, 1884.

Chataigne, J. H., comp. *Chataigne's Virginia Gazetteer and Classified Business Directory, 1893-94*. Richmond: J. H. Chataigne, 1893.

The Clarksville Times (Clarksville, Va.).

Edwards, Jay D., and Wells, Tom. *Historic Louisiana Nails: Aids to the Dating of Old Buildings*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University, 1993.

Graham, Willie. Personal communication, Williamsburg, Va., February 16, 1995.

Henderson Daily Dispatch (Henderson, N.C.).

Jeffress, Thomas D. *Hand-book of Mecklenburg County, Virginia*. Richmond, Va.: The Dispatch Steam Presses, 1892.

Leonard, Cynthia Miller, comp. *The General Assembly of Virginia, July 30, 1619-January 11, 1978: A Bicentennial Register of Members*. Richmond: Virginia State Library, 1978.

Manual of the Constitutional Convention of Virginia, 1901. Richmond: J. H. O'Bannon, 1901.

"Map of Mecklenburg Co. Va." Jeremy Francis Gilmer Collection, Virginia Historical Society, Richmond, Va.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 16

Long Grass
Mecklenburg Co., Va.

McDanel, Ralph Clipman. *The Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1901-1902*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1928.

Mecklenburg County deed, land book, plat, and will records. Mecklenburg County Courthouse, Boydton, Va., and the Virginia State Library, Richmond.

Mecklenburg County, Virginia: Its History, Resources, and Advantages. Mecklenburg County, Va.: 1907.

The Mecklenburg News (Clarksville, Va.).

Moore, Munsey Adams, comp. *Cemetery and Tombstone Records of Mecklenburg County, Virginia*. vol. 1. Chase City, Va.: published by the author, ca. 1982.

North Carolina Division of Archives and History, Survey and Register Branch, Raleigh. National Register files for properties in Warren County designed by or attributed to Jacob W. Holt.

Park, Sudie. Personal communication, Raleigh, N.C., and Mecklenburg County, Va., December 1994 through February 1995.

_____. "Long Grass Plantation." Virginia Department of Historic Resources Preliminary Information Request Form, 1993.

Priess, Peter. "Wire Nails in North America." *Association for Preservation Technology Bulletin*. vol. 5 no. 4 (1973): 87-92.

Ridout, Orlando, V, and Graham, Willie. "A Systematic Approach for Analyzing Buildings," comments from "The Investigation of Historic Buildings," a workshop given May 11, 1994 at the Vernacular Architecture Forum Annual Meeting, Charleston, S.C.

Schreiner-Yantis, Netti, ed. *A Supplement to the 1810 Census of Virginia*. Springfield, Va.: 1971.

Smith, H. R. Bradley. "Chronological Development of Nails." Museum Pamphlet Series, Number 7. Shelburne, Vt.: The Shelburne Museum, 1966.

Tarry, William B., Jr. Telephone interview, Sebring, Fl., February 13, 1995.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 9 Page 17

**Long Grass
Mecklenburg Co., Va.**

United States Census. Mecklenburg County free and slave population, agricultural, and industrial schedules, 1840 through 1880.

Virginia Constitutional Convention Directory, 1901. Richmond: J. L. Hill Printing Company, 1901.

Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Richmond. Site files for Mecklenburg County.

Virginia Business Directory and Gazetteer, 1917. Richmond: Hill Directory Co., Inc., 1917.

Virginia State Gazetteer and Business Directory, 1897-'98. Richmond: J. L. Hill Printing Co., 1896.

White, Sally T. (daughter of William B. Tarry, Sr.). Telephone interview, Warrenton, N.C., February 6, 1995.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 18

Long Grass
Mecklenburg Co., Va.

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundaries of the Long Grass nominated parcel are shown on the 1:200-scale map that accompanies this report.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundaries of the Long Grass nominated parcel correspond to the present boundaries of the parcel on which the surviving domestic and farm buildings are located, plus the livestock barn and plus adjoining fields and woodlots on the north side of SR 826 that contribute to the historic agricultural character of the property.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number Exhibit Page 22

Long Grass
Mecklenburg Co., Va.

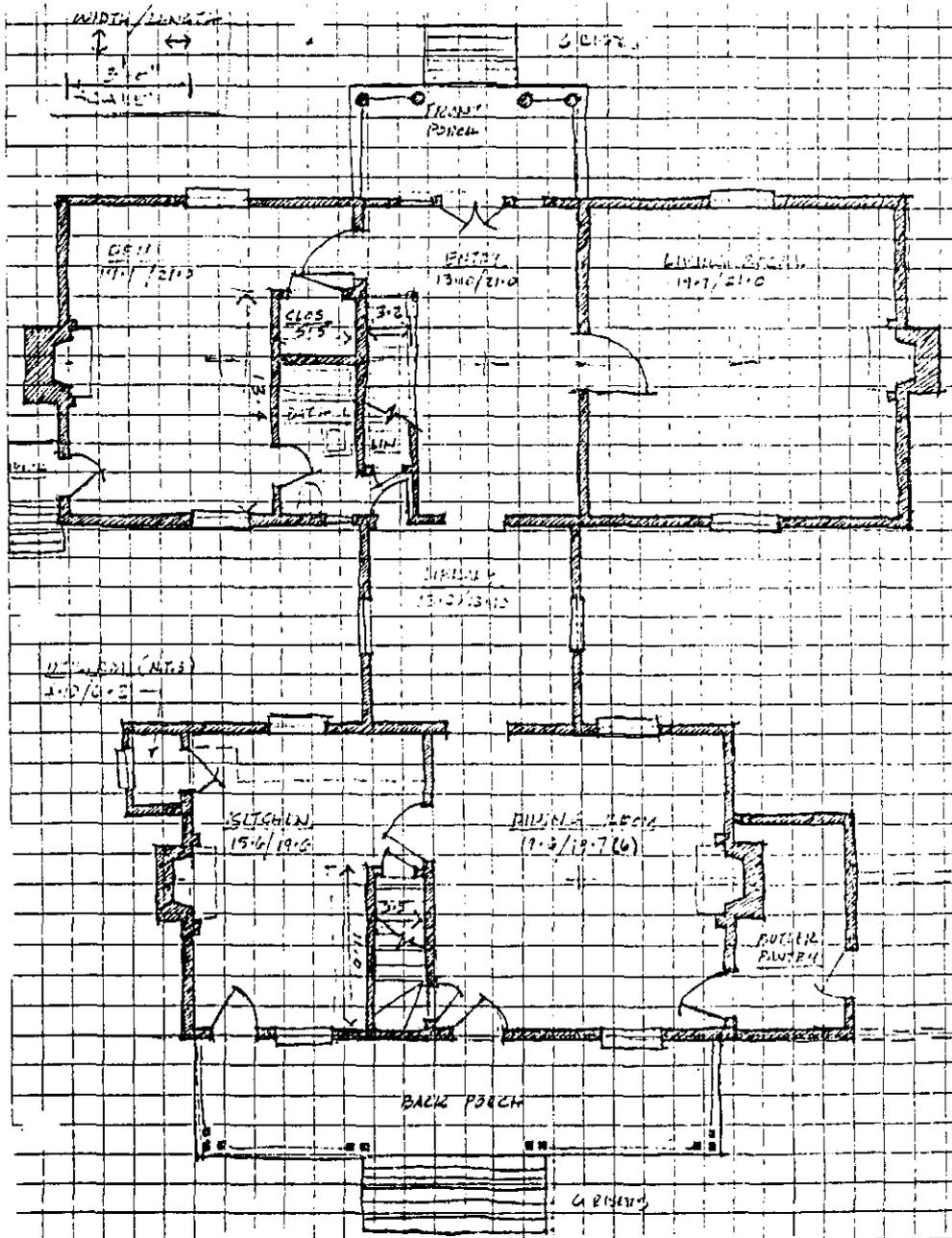


Exhibit A. First-floor plan of Long Grass (based on sketch plan by Peter Jacobsen, ca. 1990). Each square represents one foot. North is to the top of the plan.

