

VLR-12/5/01 NRHP-3/13/02

NPS Form 10-900
(Rev. 10-90)

OMB No. 1024-0018

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: Rebel Hall

other names/site number **VDHR file no. 275-0010**

2. Location

street & number: 151 May-Fray Avenue not for publication -
city or town: Town of Orange vicinity -
state: Virginia code: VA county: Orange code 137 zip code: 22960

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 certifying official

3/13/02

Date

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF HISTORIC RESOURCES

USDA/NPS NRHP Registration Form
Rebel Hall
Orange County, Virginia

State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

=====
4. National Park Service Certification
=====

I, hereby certify that this property is:

____ entered in the National Register

____ See continuation sheet.

____ determined eligible for the
National Register

____ See continuation sheet.

____ determined not eligible for the
National Register

____ removed from the National Register

____ other (explain): _____

Signature of Keeper

Date
of Action

=====
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
- district
- site
- structure
- object

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Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u> 1 </u>	_____ building
_____	_____ sites
_____	_____ structures
_____	_____ objects
<u> 1 </u>	_____ Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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

 N/A

=====
6. Function or Use
=====

Historic Functions (enter categories in instructions)

Cat: _____ Sub: _____
 Domestic single dwelling

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: _____ Sub: _____
 Domestic single dwelling

=====
7. Description
=====

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

 Greek Revival

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation brick
roof tin
walls brick
other wood

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

- 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.
- 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.)

- 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 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance 1848-49

Dates: 1849.

Significant Persons.

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above):

Cultural Affiliation:

Architect/Builder unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.) **See continuation sheets**

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form
Rebel Hall
Orange County, Virginia

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9. Major Bibliographical References

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

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

Name of repository: **Va. Dept. of Historic Resources, Richmond, Va.**

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10. Geographical Data

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Acreage of Property 3/4 acre

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	17	752880	4236900	3	_____	_____
2	_____	_____	_____	4	_____	_____

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.) **See continuation sheet**

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.) **See continuation sheet**

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Rebel Hall
Orange County, Virginia

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11. Form Prepared By

=====

name/title **Paul Slayton Jr**, Organization. **N/A** date **Sept 20, 2001**

street & number **151 May-Fray Avenue**

town_of **Orange** state **VA**. zip code **22960** phone: **540/672-5431**

Consultant: **Paul Slayton, III, RA** organization: **Ponikvar Associates,**

Date: **Sept 1, 2001** street and number: **5700 SW 34th Street**

city of: **Gainesville** zip code: **32608** state: **Florida** phone: **352/378-1281**

=====

Additional Documentation

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Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets, with:

Maps

Photographs

=====

Property Owner

=====

name: **Paul C and Ann S. Slayton, Jr.**

street & number **151 May-Fray Ave** telephone **540/672-5431**

city or town **Orange** state **VA** zip code **22960**

e-mail: pslayton@ns.gemlink.com

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National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet
Section 7 Page 1

Rebel Hall
Orange County, Virginia

SUMMARY DESCRIPTION

Rebel Hall is a Greek Revival-style brick dwelling built in 1848-49 for Dr. James H. Minor. The house is located on a tree-shaded lot in the town of Orange, Virginia. The original block of the house has a symmetrical, three-bay façade and is only one room deep. Rising two full stories over a raised basement, the structure is of solid brick construction. A central hallway separates two equal and nearly identical rooms on each of the two floors and basement in the original block of the house. The double-run main stair has unequal legs with a landing at the rear wall of the main hall, while the basement stair is a narrow, straight-run stair.

The original block is covered by a shallow-pitched, standing-seam metal roof and features a central front gable. Simple modillions decorate the cornice. The wooden front porch is raised on brick piers, affording entrance at the basement level, and is centered on the façade. Brick stairs lead up to the main porch level, which features four Doric columns supporting a shallow hip roof. A simple rectangular four-light transom caps unusually narrow front double doors.

The structure has a wing off the rear, which was added to the original block around 1900. This gable-roofed wing is also of brick construction and has two rooms on each of two levels. The lower level of the wing is one step below the first floor of the main block, and is accessed through the central hall and the dining room. The upper level of this wing is at the level of the main stair landing.

ARCHITECTURAL ANALYSIS

Rebel Hall was constructed in 1848-1849 for Dr. James H. Minor, an Orange surgeon and farmer, as the manor house of his 70-acre plantation.¹ Research has not been able to identify either the architect or master builder of this house. Given Dr. Minor's status, it is reasonable to assume that slave labor was prominent in the construction of the house.

The structure is constructed of red brick laid in American bond. Even the interior walls, all load bearing, are of solid brick construction. Interior chimneys at the north and south ends of the structure serve fireplaces in the six major rooms.

The interior woodwork of the house is executed in the Greek Revival style. Particularly well executed in design and craftsmanship are the classical door and window surrounds found in most rooms of the house. All of the trim is painted, while the first-floor doors

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are natural finished wood. Original door trim in the living room and library consists of either broad Doric pilasters or wide architrave trim supporting an unadorned entablature and a shallow, overhanging, triangular pediment. The door trim in the dining room and central hall consists of plain broad trim with unadorned corner blocks. The heart-pine doors feature four panels and original hardware. Tall first-floor windows in the living room extend from the floor to near the ceiling. They are flanked by Doric pilasters supporting a broad, flat architrave and a simple cornice that interrupt a molded cornice that surrounds the room. Wide, simple baseboards complete the trim around each room, with the addition of chair rails in the dining room, bedroom, and library.

The natural finished heart-pine fireplace mantels in each room complement the door and window trim with their Doric pilasters, a wide entablature, and a simple mantel shelf. The living room mantel bears the carved date, 1848.

Wide-plank heart-pine flooring is found throughout Rebel Hall. Happily, the floors in the original portion of the structure have never been modified or covered. Moreover, all woodwork is made of heart pine, with the exception of the rosewood handrail and newel posts on the main stairway. The newel posts have bases and capitals and taper toward the top. The stair treads and risers, as well as the rounded handrail and newel posts remain unpainted. The simple wooden balusters are rectangular in section. The stair stinger is trimmed with scrollwork, while paneling sets off the wall below the stair. The railing on the stairway to the basement is oak and its trim and paneling are painted.

According to local architectural historian, Ann Miller, the interior of Rebel Hall "is very similar to that at Dunlora near Rapidan, built around the same time. Although the actual workmen who built the two houses are not known, it is tempting to speculate that the hands, or at least the same pattern book, were involved in the construction of the two homes."²

Over the century and half the building has stood, certain changes have been made. For example, the exterior was painted white around 1938 to prevent weather erosion of the handmade brick used in the structure. The house was also electrified about 1900 when electric power became available in Orange. In the original structure, shallow excavations were drilled into the solid brick walls to permit electrical wiring to be installed. The chandeliers installed at that time in the living and dining rooms are still in use.

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Rebel Hall
Orange County, Virginia

When the present owners came into possession of Rebel Hall in 1985, they began a studied plan to carefully restore the 1849 structure as closely as possible to its original condition. Poorly planned and built closets were removed. Walls and ceilings were cleaned to the plaster and repaired. All woodwork was stripped and repainted. Fireplaces were opened and refurbished. Thus, with the exception of electrical fixtures and heating systems, the original house is very much as it had been in 1849.

There is evidence of a previous wing at the rear that created a T-shaped original building. While the present rear wing dates to 1900, doorways on both the first and second floors are obviously original, and demonstrate that the house has always possessed a rear wing. To reinforce this observation, the 1878 map of the town of Orange shows the footprint of an even larger rear wing on the building.³

Later Sanborn Company insurance maps show the footprint of the present rear wing.⁴

These documents also show that for the first two decades of the 20th century there was an L-shaped porch on the east and south sides of the rear wing.

Certain modifications have been made to provide contemporary service areas in the rear wing. Modern kitchen and laundry facilities have been constructed in this area and bathrooms were installed on each level. Despite the addition of modern conveniences, the essence of the 19th-century decor of the original structure has been assiduously and studiously maintained throughout the service areas of Rebel Hall.

The current front porch was added to the original structure in 1990. Around 1900, a larger Victorian-era porch, replete with sawn trim, replaced the original porch. Using structural evidence gleaned from 19th-century photographs of the original front porch, designer/builder John Bice, removed the Victorian porch and recreated the original in size and design.

SETTING

Rebel Hall is set back from the street in contrast to nearby houses. Originally built a short distance north of the tiny village of Orange Court House, the house now sits among residences that have been built in the last 152 years. Despite the fact that the property has been squeezed down to three-quarters of an acre, Rebel Hall remains majestically tall on

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Rebel Hall
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a rise of land and stands alongside a Victorian companion; the two of them overlooking a neighborhood of frame four-square cottages built in the 1930s.

The land on which Rebel Hall sits slopes gently toward May-Fray Avenue on the west and Barbour Street on the south. Hugh old ash, maple, magnolia and walnut trees shade the building. A wisteria-covered gazebo graces the lawn on the north side of the house. To the south, the current owners have developed an English-style formal garden, featuring English boxwood shrubs, dogwoods and pyracantha. Brick and white-graveled pathways separate planting areas.

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Rebel Hall
Orange County, Virginia

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Rebel Hall was built in 1848-49 for Dr. James H. Minor, a prominent surgeon and farmer, in Orange, Virginia. The two-story brick house is one of a handful of antebellum houses surviving in the town and the only one executed in the Greek Revival style. Especially noted for its interior woodwork, which is exceptionally well executed and preserved, Rebel Hall is one of the best expressions of the Greek Revival style in all of Orange County. Located on a spacious tree-shaded lot at the edge of the commercial area of the town, Rebel Hall has maintained its architectural integrity due to the care and maintenance of several prominent families that have owned the property over the last one hundred and fifty years. During the Civil War the Bull family extended hospitality to Confederate soldiers and generals alike, thereby earning a new name for the house by which it has been known ever since.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Rebel Hall was built on a segment of the original 6,500 acres granted to Col. James Taylor II in 1722, then devised to his son, Erasmus Taylor and thence to his grandson, John Taylor.⁵ In 1841, Thomas Slaughter acquired 70 acres from the John Taylor estate "on the road leading from the court house to Barnett's Ford." In 1847, Dr. James H. Minor, an Orange County farmer-physician acquired this property, and the following year he began construction of the building, now called "Rebel Hall," at the southeast corner of his property, "...just north of Isaac Shepherd's meadow."⁶

In 1855 Dr. Minor sold the house and land to Dr. Horace Dade Taliaferro, and on March 16, 1859 Dr. Taliaferro conveyed the house and four acres to Dr. Peyton Grymes of Selma Plantation, who was serving as trustee for his stepdaughter, Sarah Taliaferro Dade Bull. Sarah's family would put their impress on this house for almost a half-century.⁷

In 1859 Sarah Bull was the 44-year-old widow of patent-office official, Marcus Bull II, who had inherited Wood Park plantation, near Rapidan. Finding agricultural pursuits not his forte, Marcus sold Wood Park and took a position in the federal government as an inspector in the Patent Office in Washington, D.C. With a beautiful home on K Street in

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Orange County, Virginia

Washington, the young Bull family had a full and active social life in the nation's capital. However, tragedy struck in 1858 when Marcus developed an illness which quickly led to his death. Thereupon, Sarah returned to Orange, bringing with her five teenage daughters, little son, Markie, and two orphaned nieces, Fanny Page and Hattie Hume.

With the assistance of her stepfather, Dr. Grymes, Sarah sold the K Street residence and returned to her girlhood home at Selma Plantation in Orange. Shortly thereafter, the young widow moved her family into the house purchased from her cousin on Barnett's Ford Road in the village of Orange Court House.⁸

The Bull family was scarcely settled in their new home when the Civil War erupted. Sarah opened her home to a constant flow of Washington friends "refugeeing" south. Then in the early summer of 1861, a troop train carrying South Carolina troops to Manassas on the Orange and Alexandria Railroad, derailed just in front of the Bull home. Quickly, the Bull family turned their home into a temporary hospital for the injured soldiers.⁹

As the war heated up, parents coming up from the Deep South to seek their sick and wounded sons were drawn by Sarah's reputation for hospitality to make the "house by the side of the Orange and Alexandria Railway" their Virginia base.

Among many luminary guests were Generals Robert E. Lee, "Stonewall" Jackson, William "Billy" Mahone, and future Virginia Governor, William (Extra Billy) Smith. Countless Confederates of lesser ranks and reputations flocked to the Bull residence.

Dashing General J.E.B. Stuart and his young artillery chief, Major John Pelham were among the guests at Rebel Hall. John Pelham was visiting with the Bulls when he received word that an action was brewing at Kelly's Ford, near Culpeper.¹⁰ Immediately, Pelham flagged a train heading north. In Culpeper the young officer borrowed a horse from another lady friend, Bessie Shackelford, and raced to the sound of battle. Unhappily, the gallant Pelham lost his life in that cavalry action. Local legend has it that as the young hero's body lay in state in the State Capitol, his casket was covered with a Confederate flag which had been sewn by the Bull girls.

The Bull home is one of the three private residences shown on the official Confederate Army plat for the village of Orange made during the winter of 1863-64 when the Army of Northern Virginia was encamped along the Rapidan River in Orange County.¹¹

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Thus, little wonder that the Bull home came to be known as "Rebel Hall." The name and its legends were enhanced by the fact that each of the Bull girls wed Confederate Army veterans.

Anne, the eldest, married Thomas Reveley, Jr., who had served in Company F, 1st Battalion of the Virginia Reserves. He was among the troops who surrendered at Appomattox Court House in April, 1865. Their daughter, also named Anne, went to France in 1918 as a Red Cross nurse. She died there in the great influenza epidemic.

Mary married Lieutenant Mercer Slaughter of the Orange Artillery. Mercer left the Virginia Military Institute at the outbreak of hostilities in 1861. Their only son, Vivian, serving as an officer in the British Army in World War I, was killed in Flanders.

Fanny married Capt. Hugh M. Patton. He was the great uncle of General George S. Patton of World War II fame.

Nellie married Hancock Lee Willis, who served as a dashing trooper and scout in the famous Black Horse Troop of the 4th Virginia Cavalry. Unhappily, Nellie died just a few short months after their marriage.

Louise (Lulie) married Lt. Thomas S. Keller of Charlottesville. Their son, Thomas S. Keller, Jr., became a colonel in the United States Army during World War I. The *Orange Observer* reported that he was in attendance at St. Thomas Church in Orange on November 22, 1918 when a memorial service was held for his war-victim cousins, Anne Reveley and Vivian Slaughter.

Claim to the name "Rebel Hall" was reinforced in February 1901 when the Thirteenth Virginia Regiment, Chapter 441, of the United Daughters of the Confederacy was organized at Rebel Hall. Anne Bull Reveley and daughter, Anne Dade Reveley, were, of course, charter members.¹² This unit of the UDC held their 100th anniversary meeting at Rebel Hall in February 2001.¹³

On September 25, 1906, after the death of Anne Bull Reveley, Marcus Bull III, his wife, and others sold Rebel Hall to George and Bessie Tayloe. The Tayloes soon demonstrated

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Rebel Hall
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they would maintain the reputation of Rebel Hall as a hospitable haven. In November 1908, when much of Orange's business district was destroyed by fire, the Tayloes shared their home with the Morris family who had lost their store and home in the conflagration.¹⁴

On September 17, 1910, the Tayloes transferred title of the property to Orange druggist, John Randolph Grymes. Dr. Grymes sold the Rebel Hall property to L.S. Macon in 1920.

During the Great Depression of the 1930s, Mr. Macon rented the house to the Brawner Downer family. Though times were hard, Rebel Hall hospitality continued. Mrs. Downer writes: "It was during the depression [and] Brawner was still working for the railroad but money was scarce. We lived at Rebel Hall, a large brick house with a large yard and large rooms. I boarded four girls that (sic) worked at the American Silk Mill... They paid me \$3.00 a week board and .50 cents for their laundry."¹⁵

In 1938, the L.S. Macon estate transferred title to the property to William C. Newman. He, too, had a bevy of attractive daughters who kept Rebel Hall a place of revelry and hospitality.

In 1960, Mr. Newman's daughters and heirs transferred title of the property to their sister, Margaret Newman Shelton and her husband, Herbert. During the last decade of Shelton ownership, Rebel Hall stood rather quiet as widowed and aged Herbert Shelton lived alone in the house.

Hattie Shelton Gerdson inherited the property from her parent on March 24, 1985. In July 6, 1985, Mrs. Gerdson transferred title to the property to the present owners, Paul C. and Ann S. Slayton.¹⁶ The Slaytons have worked to return the property to its early splendor and to continue in the tradition of Sarah Taliaferro Dade Bull to maintain Rebel Hall a beacon of hospitality in the community

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Rebel Hall
Orange County, Virginia

END NOTES

- ¹ Miller, Ann, *Antebellum Orange*, p.25.
- ² Ibid
- ³ 1878 map of range County Court House, Orange, Va.
- ⁴ Sanborn Maps of Town of Orange, 1905, 1909, 1919 and 1931
- ⁵ Joyner, Patent map.
- ⁶ Orange County Deed Book, 1847
- ⁷ Hume, 1862 Diary, pp 17-18.
- ⁸ Ibid
- ⁹ Hume 11861 Diary, pp 37-38.
- ¹⁰ Freeman, *Lee's Lieutenants*, Vol. 2, pp 455-457. and Hurst, *Soldiers, Stories, etc.*, p 225.
- ¹¹ Confederate Army plat of Orange Court House, 1863
- ¹² Hurst, op cit., p 240.
- ¹³ UDC Magazine, Aug 2001, p. 34.
- ¹⁴ Orange Review, Nov. 13, 1908
- ¹⁵ Cowherd, *Things I Remember*, p. 71.
- ¹⁶ All title changes recorded from Orange County Deek Records, and reported in Miller, op. cit., p. 25.

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**Rebel Hall
Orange County, VA.**

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCES

Books

- Cowherd, Gladys Alma Payne Downer, *Things I Remember*, A.B. Hirschfield Press, Denver, Colorado, 1999
- Freeman, Douglas Southall, *Lee's Lieutenants, Volume 2, Cedar Mountain to Chancellorsville*, Charles Scribner's sons, New York, 1943
- Hume, Fannie Page, *1861 Diary of Miss Fannie Page Hume*, Intro. By James T. Cortada, Orange County Historical Society, Orange, Va. 1983.
- Hume, Fannie Page, *The Fanny Page Hume Diary of 1862*, J. Randolph Grymes, Jr., Ed., Orange County Historical Society, Orange, Va., 1994.
- Hurst, Patricia J., *Soldiers, Stories, Sites and Fights, Orange County, Virginia. 1961-1865*. Self-published, Rapidan, Va. 1998, (Available at Orange County Historical Society, Orange, Va., 22960).
- Miller, Ann L., *Antebellum Orange*, Orange County Historical Society, Orange, Va. 1988
- Scott, William Wallace, *History of Orange County, Virginia*, Richmond, Va., E. Wade Co. 1907
- Thomas, William H.B. *Orange, Virginia - the Story of a Court House Town*. McClure Press, 1972

Magazines & Newspapers

- Historic Garden Week in Virginia 2000*, Mrs. Edwin P. Munson, Cadmus Professional Communications, Richmond, VA., 2000
- Orange Observer, Nov 13, 1908
- UDC Magazine*, Volume LXIV, Numbr 3, March 2001

Maps

- Map of Orange Court House, Orange County, Va., 1878, (Republished 1998 by Gray & Pape, Inc, Richmond, Va.),

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**Rebel Hall
Orange County, VA.**

Joyner Patent Map. Joyner, Ulysses P., 1976, (available at the Orange County Historical Society, Orange, Va., 22960

Maps of Orange, Va., 1905, 1909, 1916 and 1931, Sanborn Map Company, 11 Broadway, New York, N.Y.

Plat of Town of Orange, prepared by Confederate Army Engineers, winter of 1863, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

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Rebel Hall
Orange County, Virginia

Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description:

Rebel Hall consists of all the property designated by Orange County as parcel 044A20036000, located at 151 May-Fray Avenue, in the town of Orange, Virginia.

Boundary Justification:

The boundary of the nominated property includes the house and lot that have historically been known as Rebel Hall in Orange, Virginia.

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

REBEL HALL
ORANGE COUNTY,
VIRGINIA

UTM Reference:

17/752880/
4236900

