

VLR-12/2/69 NRHP-2/16/70

Form 10-300
(July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

STATE: Virginia	
COUNTY: Powhatan	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

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

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

1. NAME

COMMON:
Powhatan Court House Preservation Zone

AND/OR HISTORIC:
Powhatan Court House

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER: .2 mi. north and south of the intersection of Rt. 13 and
Rt. 300, extending .1 mi. east and west of the same intersection.

CITY OR TOWN:
Powhatan Court House

STATE Virginia	CODE 45	COUNTY: Powhatan	CODE 145
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3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Comments _____ _____

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
Powhatan County

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:
Powhatan

STATE: Virginia	CODE 45
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5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:
Powhatan County Court House, Clerk's Office

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:
Powhatan

STATE: Virginia	CODE 45
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6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
Historic American Buildings Survey Inventory

DATE OF SURVEY: 1969 Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
Library of Congress

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:
Washington

STATE: District of Columbia	CODE 08
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SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

(Check One)

Excellent Good Fair Deteriorated Ruins Unexposed

(Check One)

Altered Unaltered

(Check One)

Moved Original Site

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Powhatan County Court House is a stuccoed temple-form Greek Revival edifice measuring approximately forty feet by fifty-four feet. The facade features two fluted Greek Doric columns with the portico in antis. The sides of the building are eight bays long, with the bays separated by Greek Doric pilasters. Long narrow windows are located in the first, third, and fifth bays from the front, on each side. According to the original specifications, the door and window frames were to be sanded in imitation of stone. Except for the rear, the building is crowned by a full Doric entablature but with no triglyphs. A later projection off the rear of the structure contains the jury room and the judge's chamber. Regrettably, the interior has been remodelled more than once so that little original fabric remains. However, original portions do include the front doors, sections of the rear gallery, and the enclosed stairways to the gallery. The insides of the doors to the gallery still have their old grained decoration. The flat coffered ceiling is also an original feature.

East of the court house, and aligned with it, is the former clerk's office, a late-eighteenth century one-story, T-shaped brick structure. Beyond that is the present clerk's office, an unpretentious brick erected in 1949. West of the court house is a small, one-story Italianate frame office building. Behind the court house is the early-nineteenth century former jail. In the southeast corner of the court square is the town pump, while in the southwest corner is the Confederate monument. The tree shaded square contains approximately two-and-a-half acres and is surrounded by a low brick wall. Around the square are several handsome but unpretentious frame residences as well as several picturesque stores. On the west side of the square is the large late-eighteenth century tavern, a two-and-a-half story brick structure fronted by two-level galleries.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

3. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century | |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|---|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | | | |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Powhatan County was formed in 1777 from the eastern part of Cumberland County and was named to honor the Indian "emperor" who had ruled the tribes of Eastern Virginia in the early years of the colony. According to the act establishing the new county, a town to contain the county buildings was to be laid out near the center of the county. Originally called Scottville after General Charles Scott of the Continental Army, the name of the town or county seat was later changed to Powhatan Court House because it was being confused with Scottsville in nearby Albemarle County.

It is believed that the first permanent court house was erected in 1783 since an appeal for bids on such was issued in that year. The present court house was erected in 1848-49 to replace the earlier one which by that time had begun to decay. There is strong circumstantial evidence that the design for the new building was the work of the famous American architect Alexander Jackson Davis. Prior to the building of the court house, Davis had designed Belmead, the plantation mansion of Phillip St. George Cocke, located several miles to the north. Cocke served as one of the building commissioners for the new court house, and the county order book entry for January 7, 1850, states that the building was built "according to the plan and drawing procured by the undersigned Ph. St. George Cocke." Because of the unusually sophisticated and knowledgeable handling of Greek architectural forms on this superb little building, it seems obvious that an architect of considerable skill was involved. However, at present, it can only be assumed that Cocke's now lost drawings were executed by A. J. Davis; the builder was Lewis Johnson of Hanover County.

The town of Powhatan Court House is significant not only because of the architectural quality of its court house, but also because of the unspoiled character and completeness of the courthouse complex itself. Still standing are the former clerk's office which was probably built in the same period as the first court house, the former brick jail, and the impressive late-eighteenth century Scott's or Powhatan Tavern adjacent to the court square.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Campbell, Leslie Lyle, Dance Family in Virginia. Lexington, Va.: 1951.
 Gaines, William H., Jr., "Courthouses of Cumberland and Powhatan Counties,"
Virginia Cavalcade, Vol. XVII, No. 3 (Winter 1968), 38-41.
 Powhatan County Chancery Orders, 1848-1850.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE			LATITUDE		LONGITUDE
	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	37°	32'	40"	77°	55'	15"
NE	37°	32'	40"	77°	55'	00"
SE	37°	32'	20"	77°	55'	00"
SW	37°	32'	20"	77°	55'	15"

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **65 acres**

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Staff, Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission, James W. Moody, Jr., Director

ORGANIZATION: **Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission** DATE: **November 14, 1969**

STREET AND NUMBER:
Room 1116, Ninth Street State Office Building

CITY OR TOWN: **Richmond** STATE: **Virginia** CODE: **45**

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name _____
Dr. Edward P. Alexander, Chairman
 Title Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission

Date _____

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: _____

ATTEST:

 Keeper of The National Register

Date: _____

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

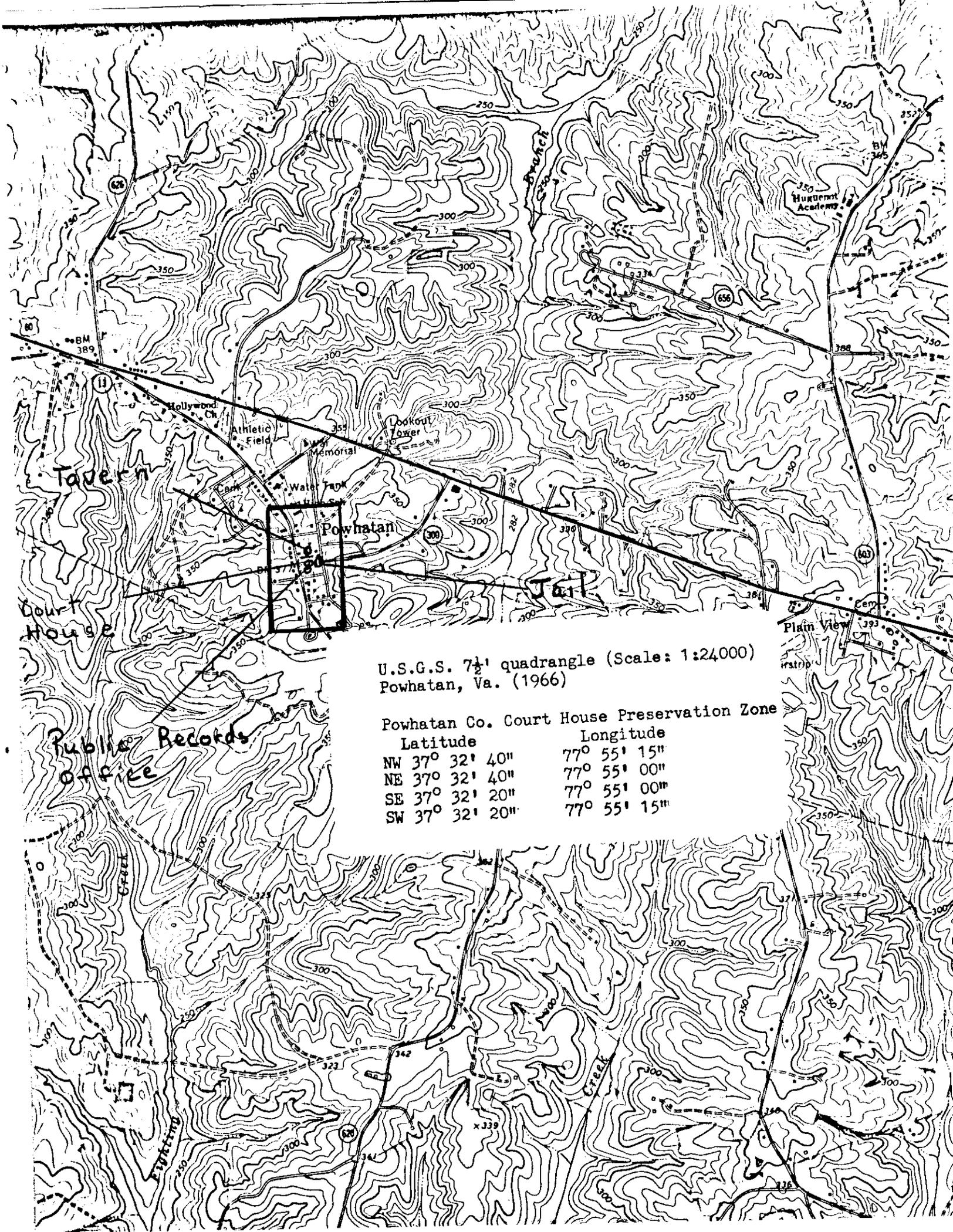
**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE Virginia	
COUNTY Powhatan	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Number all entries)

4. Robert R. Jones (owner of Tavern)
Mutual Building
Richmond, Virginia



U.S.G.S. 7½' quadrangle (Scale: 1:24000)
 Powhatan, Va. (1966)

Powhatan Co. Court House Preservation Zone

	Latitude	Longitude
NW	37° 32' 40"	77° 55' 15"
NE	37° 32' 40"	77° 55' 00"
SE	37° 32' 20"	77° 55' 00"
SW	37° 32' 20"	77° 55' 15"