

VLR-6/14/00 NRHP-4/1/02

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 an 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 Aspen Lawn

other names/site number V.T. Drewry Farm, Rawles Tract/ VDHR File # 87-0177

2. Location

street & number 4418 Hicksford Road not for publication

city or town Drewryville, vicinity

state Virginia code VA county Southampton code 175 zip code 23844

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this 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 meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title _____ Date _____

Virginia Department of Historic Resources
State of 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 certifying official/Title _____ Date _____

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the 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 the 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(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2	0	buildings
2	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
4	0	Total

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling
DOMESTIC / SECONDARY STRUCTURE

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

WORK IN PROGRESS
DOMESTIC / SECONDARY STRUCTURE

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

EARLY REPUBLIC:Federal
MID-19th CENTURY:Greek Revival

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation BRICK
walls WOOD: Weatherboard
roof METAL: Tin
other _____

Narrative Description

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

Aspen Lawn
Name of Property

Southampton County, VA
County and State

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.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or 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

c. 1798 - 1890

Significant Dates

c. 1798

c. 1820

c. 1868

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

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:

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

Name of repository:

Library of Virginia

Aspen Lawn
Name of Property

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10. Geographical Data

Acreege of Property 600

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	18	282820	4061890
Zone	Easting	Northing	
2	18	283400	4061690
Zone	Easting	Northing	

3	18	281762	4058710
Zone	Easting	Northing	
4	18	281060	4058710
Zone	Easting	Northing	

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 Robin Boyd Rawles

organization _____ date _____

street & number 1205 N. Bay Shore Drive telephone 757-428-0231

city or town Virginia Beach state VA zip code 23451

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 SHPO or FPO.)

name James W. and Robin B. Rawles

street & number 1205 N. Bay Shore Dr. telephone 757-428-0231

city or town Virginia Beach state VA zip code 23451

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 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 Reduction Projects (1024-C018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Aspen Lawn
Southampton County, VA

7. Summary Description

Aspen Lawn is a late 18th century plantation, including original dwelling house, now being restored, and the remains of various outbuildings, set on its original tract of land, consisting of about 600 acres. The dwelling house is situated on a small hill, facing north, about 300 yards from Hicksford Road, the old road from Emporia (Hicksford) to Courtland (Jerusalem). This gently rolling tract of land consists of 65 cultivated acres and over 500 acres of forests, lowlands, and swamps. It is bordered on the south by the Meherrin River and was once home to the Meherrin Indians. Various artifacts, such as arrowheads, spear-points, blades, scrapers, hammerstones, and pottery shards, have been found over the years. A slave graveyard is located south of the dwelling, behind the third field. As late as the 1940s various people were buried there with their ancestors.

Located in the rural, lower section of Southampton County, known as St. Luke's Parish, at its westernmost corner, Aspen Lawn is surrounded for miles and miles by farm and timber land dotted with derelict houses and barns and post-WWII bungalows.

The dwelling house is known as Aspen Lawn through the recollection of two family members; however, it has been identified in writing as Meherrin River and the V.T. Drewry Farm and more recently as Rawles Tract.

The building is a two-story, double-pile, five-bay, frame structure of pegged, timber-frame construction over a high brick foundation. The overall dimensions are 40 feet wide by 30 feet deep. The weather-board siding is beaded with beaded corner boards. When repairing the siding, some hand-hewn siding was found on the first floor. The low hipped roof is of standing seam tin, an early 1980s replacement of the prior standing seam tin roof.

Originally the brick foundation was of Flemish bond on all four sides. This is documented in photographs. During the early 1980s, the foundation was collapsing, and a new foundation of running bond was

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Aspen Lawn
Southampton County, VA

Description (continued)

constructed using the old brick. The current owners would like to restore the brickwork.

The symmetrical five-bay facade has on the first floor a central double door with transom, flanked by two nine over nine light sash windows on each side. On the second story, there are five six over nine light windows.

There are now three existing exterior end chimneys. Evidence exists of an earlier fourth chimney that was only one story high.

Architectural and stylistic evidence indicates that the building was raised to two full stories in the 19th century. The Federal-style doors, woodwork, and moldings, the hand-wrought nails, the H-L hinges, the L-shaped hewn corner posts found consistently on the first floor contrast with the later 19th century Greek Revival doors and moldings and the cut nails used consistently throughout the second floor.

The front porch was lost years ago to decay and neglect. The most recent porch, as shown in photographs, covered the front door and one window on each side. The roof was a shed roof. Photographs show paint shadows of two earlier porch roofs. One was a small pedimented roof covering only the front door. The paint shadows of this roof and shadows of pilasters on each side of the door can be seen in photos. As well, brick buttresses in the foundation just under the pilaster shadows supported an earlier porch. A hipped-roof porch covering the door and one window on each side of the door can be seen in paint shadows. The most recent porch was this same porch with a replacement shed roof. The front porch is now being reconstructed with a hipped roof, using original materials, such as handrails, baserails, and pilasters. The design is based on old photographs and the salvaged pieces, which will be used as they were originally.

Entering the front door of Aspen Lawn, the first floor plan is of a center passage, approximately 10 feet wide by 30 feet deep, with twelve foot ceilings, and two rooms on each side. The moldings and woodwork are original Federal period. The floors are original random-width heart pine. There is a louvered partition (c. 1870) that divides the hall. An early iron hook hangs from an exposed beam above the partition. This is the only evidence of any lighting fixture of any kind throughout. In the rear southwest corner of

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Southampton County, VA

Description (continued)

the center passage, a closed stairway winds to the second floor.

The walls are plaster with chairrails. Most of the original plaster was torn down, probably in the 1940s. The walls have been replastered over blueboard. The original plaster lathes were riven, beveled on the ends, overlapped, and nailed with hand-wrought nails.

The construction of the framing on the first floor is mortise and tenon, with pegged joints and diagonal braces. Framing members exhibit hand-carved Roman numerals used to aid in assembly. Corner posts are hand hewn in an L-shape and are one-story high. The window framing reveals evidence of an earlier larger window having been on the first floor.

Three of the four rooms have fireplaces. All mantels are original. Evidence of a fourth fireplace exists in the southwest room, where chairrail and floorboards have been patched.

Much original paint survives in the form of grained doors, chairrails, and moldings, and marbeled mantels and baseboards. In the northwest parlor room, bold black and white abstract marbeling is seen on the mantel and baseboards. This same marbeling extends to the center passage baseboards. The center passage chairrail and door frames are grain painted in a gold color with a painted (very faint now) egg and dart design. Several raised panel doors exhibit mahogany graining.

Most of the interior first floor doors are raised panel, Cross and Bible doors. Several have H-L hinges. In the southeast room, there is a double-hung, sash window with a jib door that once led to a porch connecting to a separate summer kitchen building. Originally this room could only be reached by the northeast room. There was no door from this room to the center passage. Late in the 1860s a door was cut (through the diagonal brace framing member) to the center passage.

The front and back doors are paneled double doors with applied moldings. An east exterior door in the northeast room is a wide six-panel door, with three over three panels.

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Aspen Lawn
Southampton County, VA

Description (continued)

In the rear half of the center passage, there is a mahogany-grained door that leads to the basement steps. Just beyond this basement passage is an unusually small grained door leading to the southwest room beyond.

In the English basement can be seen the mortise and tenon construction of the hand-hewn beams and sills, some still with tree bark. There is a fireplace. When the foundation was rebuilt in the early 1980s, the walls were reconstructed with cinderblock faced with the original brick. The interior of this foundation is now plastered. The original dirt floors are now covered with brick pavers to create a more usable interior space. Seven small apertures with vertical wooden bars pierce the foundation walls, providing light and ventilation.

On the first floor in the rear southwest corner of the center passage, just above the basement passageway, a closed stairway winds to the second floor.

The second floor exhibits Greek Revival characteristics in its moldings and two panel doors. The original paint colors and marbeled baseboards remain. The walls were plaster over wood lathes (with blunt-sawed ends, butted end to end) anchored with cut nails. After sustaining water damage they were replaced with plaster over blueboard. There is a large center hall with two rooms on each side. At the rear of the hall, the south side, a small space was partitioned, probably in the late 1860s when the partition was added downstairs. The hall wall on the west side curves just before it intersects with the front north wall, in order to accomodate the symmetrical placement of a window. This curved wall is plastered on the hall side and paneled on the bedroom side.

There are three fireplaces with original mantels in the northeast northwest, and southeast rooms. The southwest room, unlike the first floor, shows no sign of ever having had a fireplace.

Ceilings on the second floor are ten feet high and floors are original random-width, heart pine. Windows are six over nine lights.

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Southampton County, VA

Description (continued)

Behind Aspen Lawn the bulk of the 600 acres stretches south to the Meherrin River, several miles beyond. Directly behind the house can be found the remains of two outbuildings. The summer kitchen, which at one time sat on brick piers and stood a few feet behind the southeast corner of the house, was pushed off of its unstable piers in the 1940s and moved back about 35 feet. All that remains now is the tin roof and some framing. There is also a small frame barn with tin roof kept barely standing by the volunteer trees that sprung up around it in this vicinity. A tobacco barn, recently renovated for storage, sits beyond the field west of the house.

The Drewry family left Aspen Lawn, as their primary residence, in the 1890s. Since then the house has been intermittently occupied by share-croppers and renters. Since the early 1960s the house has been vacant. The Drewry family never sold Aspen Lawn, and probably because of this the house never suffered twentieth-century modernizations, such as the introduction of bathrooms and kitchens or electricity or layers of paint. The house was simply "patched" as needed, but for the most part neglected and eventually left to deteriorate. In the 1980s, the structure was near total ruin. At that time steps were taken to insure its survival. The windows were boarded, the roof was replaced, and the crumbling foundation was rebuilt. The house is now owned by V.T. Drewry's great-granddaughter, Robin Boyd Rawles, and her husband, James W. Rawles, Jr. They are currently restoring the house.

INVENTORY:

HOUSE - CONTRIBUTING BUILDING
TOBACCO BARN - CONTRIBUTING BUILDING
BARN (RUINOUS) - CONTRIBUTING SITE
SMOKE HOUSE - CONTRIBUTING SITE

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Aspen Lawn
Southampton County, VA

8. Statement of Significance

Aspen Lawn remains an example of post-revolutionary vernacular plantation architecture, sitting undisturbed on its original tract of land: land with a documented pre-history of having been home to the Meherrin Indians. The dwelling house is exemplar of the material culture of the planter society of lower Southampton County. Although constructed at the turn of the century, Aspen Lawn was renovated several times later in the 19th century to meet the changing needs of plantation life. The architecture is exemplar of the building methods and materials typical of the post-revolutionary period through the post-civil war period when the house was abandoned as a primary residence.

Daniel Crofts, in his book Old Southampton, Politics and Society in a Virginia County, 1834-1869, points out that the Nottoway River divides the county into two distinctly different regions, which he designates Upper Southampton County and Lower Southampton County. With the Nottoway River providing a natural boundary, he characterized the Upper County as being predominantly populated by small land owners, owning few if any slaves. Lower Southampton County, by contrast, was characterized as having most of the large land and slave-owning plantations. (Crofts, Daniel. Old Southampton, Politics and Society in a Virginia County, 1834-1869. Charlottesville, VA, 1992.)

Known locally as having once been a stagecoach stop, Aspen Lawn is situated approximately 300 yards south of and facing Hicksford Road, the old route from Emporia (Hicksford) to Courtland (Jerusalem). The land has been farmed continuously for over 200 years. Now consisting of approximately 600 acres, there are 65 cultivated acres and over 500 acres of forests, lowlands, and swamps. The southern boundary is the Meherrin River. This area was once home to the Meherrin Indians of the Iriquois Tribe. Many artifacts have been collected over the years. In November of 1993, Jacqueline Hernigle of the Department of Historic Resources visited the farm. In her brief visit, she identified several Woodland Indian sites. (Virginia Department of Forestry, Stewardship Program, "Rawles Tract", Historic Resources Component, November 23, 1993).

Since 1749, when John Myrick, Sr. bought land on the Meherrin River from James and Mary Barrow and subsequently from William and Rebecca Lee, this farm has been handed down from one family member to the

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8. Statement of Significance (continued)

next. (Southampton County Deed Book 1, pg. 93 and pg. 377). At his death in 1771, John Myrick, Sr. owned several houses and three plantations, in addition to his Meherrin River property. In his will, he bequeathed to his son John Myrick, Jr. "all my land on the Meherrin River that I bought of Thomas Barrow and William Lee and his son William Lee." The will specifically indicated John Myrick's residence as being on one of his other plantations. There is no indication of any dwelling house on his Meherrin River land. (Southampton County Will Book 2, pg. 246).

In 1773, two years after his father's death, John Myrick, Jr. married Martha Edmunds, whose father, Howel Edmunds, also owned land on the Meherrin River. (Southampton County Marriage Register, 1750-1853, pg. 19; Southampton County Will Book 2, pg. 307). During the year 1778, John Myrick, Jr. was appointed Surveyor of the highway. (Southampton County Order Book 1778-1784, Pg. 42, November 12, 1778). In the year 1780, John Myrick was appointed Captain of the County Militia. (Southampton County Order Book 1778-1784, pg. 112, April 13, 1780).

Through out his life, John Myrick, Jr. was taxed for owning one 500 acre tract of land. The 1782 Southampton County Land Tax books list John Myrick, JR. as owning one 500 acre tract of land worth 125 pounds. The value of this 500 acre tract increases in the Land Tax books as follows:

1782	125 lbs.
1783	377 lbs., 1 shilling, 8 pence
1795	381 lbs., 5 shillings
1798	1270 lbs., 84 shillings

Although Tax Records indicate some improvements were made on this land prior to 1795, the major jump in value of 889 lbs., 79 shillings indicates that this was the period when Aspen Lawn was constructed. In 1796, John Myrick, Jr.'s mother Ann had died. Perhaps the occasion of her death prompted his need for new housing or perhaps he came into some family money. This construction date is also supported by Aspen Lawn's building construction methods and materials. The pegged, timber-frame construction, hand-hewn beams, siding, and L-shaped corner posts, wrought nails, riven lathes, H-L hinges, and Federal woodwork, the Georgian-style plan with large center passage, high brick foundation all support the post-Revolutionary

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8. Statement of Significance (continued)

War period of construction.

In 1801 Southampton County Land Tax books list this property as John Myrick, Jr. estate. In the February, 1801 Chancery Court of Southampton County, the John Myrick, Jr. estate was described as follows:

"a valuable estate both real and personal...being considerable and but very few debts charged thereon..."

The estate was ordered to be divided. Martha Myrick, his widow, received as her dower 280 acres of land described as the plantation. The remainder of the land was divided between John, David, James, Suzannah, Mary Ann, and Edmunds Myrick, all children of John and Martha Myrick. At the time of the division of the estate, John Myrick, Jr. owned 39 slaves which were divided between his widow and children. The final decree dividing the estate was recorded in Chancery Court records in February of 1805. A plat of the land accompanies the written descriptions of the various boundaries. (Southampton County Judgments and Orders Book, 1803-1805, pg. 375; Southampton County Chancery Court Papers, 1804-1806, pg. 678).

Martha Myrick died in 1805. Her will was presented in the Southampton County court in December of 1805. (Southampton County Will Book 6, pg. 94).

With the death of his parents John and Martha Myrick, David Myrick added to his 140 acre inheritance from his father and his share of his mother's dower by buying various siblings' shares of the plantation. In 1805, he bought from his sister Susan (Suzannah) Lundy land described as "one-fourth of Martha Myrick's dower on the north side of the Meherrin River...including one-fourth of the mansion house..." (Southampton County Deed Book 11, pg. 295, July 17, 1805). In 1806, David Myrick bought his brother John's 140 acres and John's share of their mother's dower lands. (Southampton County Deed Book 11, pg. 405, March 23, 1806). In 1811, David Myrick purchased land from neighbor James Harris that had previously been held by his mother, Martha Myrick, as part of her dower. (Southampton County Deed Book 12, pg. 320, March 28, 1811). He also purchased land from his brother Edmunds in 1807. (Southampton County Deed Book 11, pg. 396, February 6, 1807).

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Aspen Lawn
Southampton County, VA

8. Statement of Significance (continued)

In 1811, David Myrick married Phoebe Turner. (Southampton County Marriage Register 1750-1853, pg. 211). He was appointed a Justice of the Peace in 1814. In 1816, David Myrick died, leaving behind his widow and a four year old daughter, Mary. Phoebe married David's brother James in 1818. (Southampton County Order Book 1816-1819, pg. 27, November 18, 1816; Southampton County Marriage Register 1750-1853, pg. 272).

In 1819, the court ordered that David Myrick's property be divided into three equal parts and to assign to Phoebe Myrick, "late widow of David Myrick, that third part on which the dwelling house is, to hold for term of her life as dower." (Southampton County Order Book 1816-1819, pg. 369). Phoebe Myrick held 244 acres as her dower. David Myrick's orphan, Mary, inherited 437 acres. It was ordered that David Myrick's debts be settled by the sale of his slaves. Phoebe Myrick's dower also included nine slaves, and Mary Myrick inherited nine slaves. (Southampton County Order Book 1816-1819, pg. 198).

In 1818 Phoebe's second husband James Myrick applied for a license to operate an ordinary in his home and was granted one. (Southampton County Order Book 1816-1819, pg. 369). Local and family lore holds that Aspen Lawn was once a stage coach stop.

In 1820, Land Tax books show another jump in property value on land still listed as David Myrick Estate. In 1819, the assessed value for David Myrick's land was \$1,089.54. In 1820, this value jumps to \$3,400.00. With this increase in value, it is assumed that Aspen Lawn was renovated. Perhaps this was the period when the house was raised to two full stories. Perhaps James and Phoebe Myrick wanted more space to operate an ordinary. The second story construction materials and methods are of a later period than the first floor. Cut nails and Greek Revival doors and moldings are found throughout the second floor. In addition a curved wall on the second floor serves to accomodate the symmetrical placement of a second story window over a pre-existing first floor window. Also, in the southwest room there is no indication of any fireplace having ever existed, as on the first floor.

In 1820, for the first time, land taxes indicate a separate value added to the property for buildings. For this Meherrin River tract the value indicated is \$600.00. Ed Chappell and Julie

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Aspen Lawn
Southampton County, VA

8. Statement of Significance (continued)

Richter in their paper "Wealth and Houses in Pre-Revolutionary, Virginia" in the 7th Edition of Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture, Exploring Everyday Architecture, noted that in Southampton County in 1820, the "median Value" in this category was \$200.00, the average value in 1820 in Southampton County was \$351.08.

James Myrick died in 1838. The assessed value of the buildings on Phoebe Myrick's dower land remains at \$600.00 until 1840 when it dips to \$400.00. Phoebe Myrick died in 1847.

In an inventory and appraisal of Phoebe Myrick's property done in 1848, the following furnishings were listed, in addition to various farm implements, livestock, carriages, crops, etc:

2 feather beds and furniture, 2 looking glasses, 1 walnut table and bottle case, parcel pictures, 1 desk and parcel books, 1 sett Windsor chairs, 8 rush bottom chairs, 1 curtain bed and furniture, 1 chest drawers and dressing table, 1 walnut table and bottle case, 1 Buffet and contents, 1 small table and candlesticks, 1 feather bed and furniture.

(Southampton County Will Book 14, pg. 256, January 4, 1848).

Mary Myrick, orphan daughter of David Myrick, married James Drewry in 1832. (Southampton County Marriage Register 1750-1853, pg. 430). James Drewry was the youngest son of Humphrey Drewry of Cedar Grove Plantation in Drewryville, VA, located about four miles east of Aspen Lawn. James Drewry never left his home Cedar Grove, which he eventually inherited from his father. Mary Myrick Drewry, after six years of marriage, died at the age of 24. She left behind two sons, one an infant, in James Drewry's care. She is buried in the Drewry family cemetery behind Cedar Grove. James Drewry inherited his wife's property. Although he never lived at Aspen Lawn, he increased its acreage over the years.

In the 1850s and until 1868, James Drewry's Meherrin River land is listed in the Land Tax books as having buildings valued at \$200.00.

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8. Statement of Significance (continued)

It is not currently known who lived in Aspen Lawn during this period.

In the Land Tax books of 1868, the value of the buildings on James Drewry's Meherrin River tract jumps to \$1500.00. With this increase in value, it is assumed that Aspen Lawn was renovated for the use of James Drewry's son, Vernon Drewry. Various changes were made, such as the addition of a louvered partition across the rear half of the first floor center passage. Catherine Bishir noted in her study of Jacob Holt that during this period Jacob Holt designed several houses in the georgian plan with center passages that were divided by a wall pierced with a louvered partition. The partition maintained air circulation, while adding an element of privacy to traffic at the back of the hall. (Bishir, Catherine. "Jacob W. Holt: An American Builder." from Common Places, Readings in American Vernacular Architecture. Edited by Dell Upton and John M. Vlach. Athens, Georgia. 1986. pps. 447-481.)

At this time a doorway was also cut from the first floor southeast room into the center passage. Door molding and the door style itself point to this period of construction. Would this room have originally been a chamber characterized by Dell Upton as the "most private first floor room... the chamber, often only accessible through the dining room."? (Upton, Dell. "Vernacular Domestic Architecture in Eighteenth Century Virginia." From Common Places, Readings in American Vernacular Architecture. Edited by Dell Upton and John Vlach. Athens, Georgia. 1986. pps. 315-335.)

In addition, at this time, a wall was built on the second floor at the rear of the hall creating a small storage or dressing room.

The decorative painting from this period is also obvious. In the parlor, the mantel and baseboards are marbeled in an abstract white on black pattern. The original paint colors remain. The woodwork in the center passage is grained in brown and gold with an egg and dart motif, now very faint.

Vernon T. Drewry married Adrienne D'Cordaville Powell on April 11, 1871. She moved into a recently renovated Aspen Lawn. Their four children, Minnie, Mamie, Vernon Julian, and Adrienne were born at Aspen Lawn. They left Aspen Lawn in the early 1890s and moved to Portsmouth, VA. James Drewry, at his death in 1878, left his Meherrin River land to be divided between his two sons, V.T. and

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Aspen Lawn
Southampton County, VA

8. Statement of Significance (continued)

J.W. Drewry. Vernon T. Drewry was to have first choice of lots and was to pay his brother \$800.00, presumably for the house.

After moving to Portsmouth, VA, Vernon Drewry kept the farm, renting the land to sharecroppers, who often occupied a part of the house. He maintained part of the house for his own use. At his death in 1930, he left the part of the land containing the dwelling house to his daughters Minnie and Adrienne. Adrienne Drewry Duncan bought her sister's share of the property at public auction in the 1940s. (Southampton County Plat Book 4, pg. 210.). At Adrienne's death in 1980, she left the farm to her children Mildred Duncan Boyd, Mary Lea Duncan Johnson, Nancy Duncan Anderson, and her deceased son's children Drewry Duncan and Ann Duncan Leary. It is now owned by her granddaughter, Robin Boyd Rawles and her husband, James W. Rawles, Jr.

One of the few extant examples of Lower Southampton County planter architecture, Aspen Lawn exemplifies architectural periods from the late 18th century, the time of its construction as a 1 1/2 story dwelling, to the Greek Revival period, when the house was raised to two full stories, to the post-civil war Victorian period, when the house was renovated for the use of the Drewry family. Aspen Lawn is currently being restored by the great-great granddaughter of James Drewry, Robin Boyd Rawles, and her husband, James W. Rawles, Jr.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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Continuation Sheet

(Name of Property)
(Location)

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Aspen Lawn
Southampton County, VA

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

(Name of Property)
(location)

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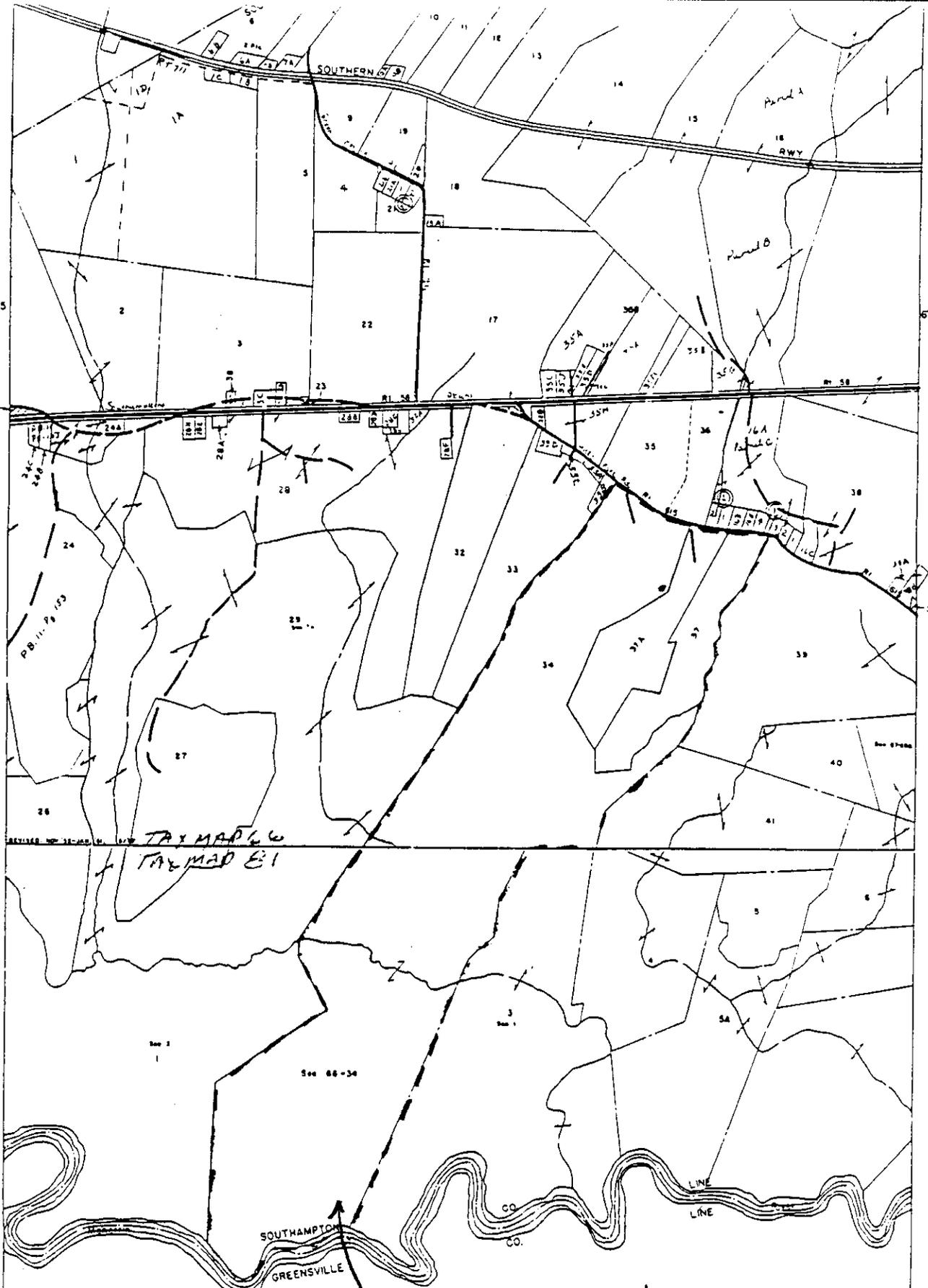
Aspen Lawn
Southampton County, VA

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary of Aspen Lawn is shown as the dotted line on the accompanying Southampton County Tax map, Drewryville District, Tax Map 66, Tax Map 81.

Verbal Boundary Justification

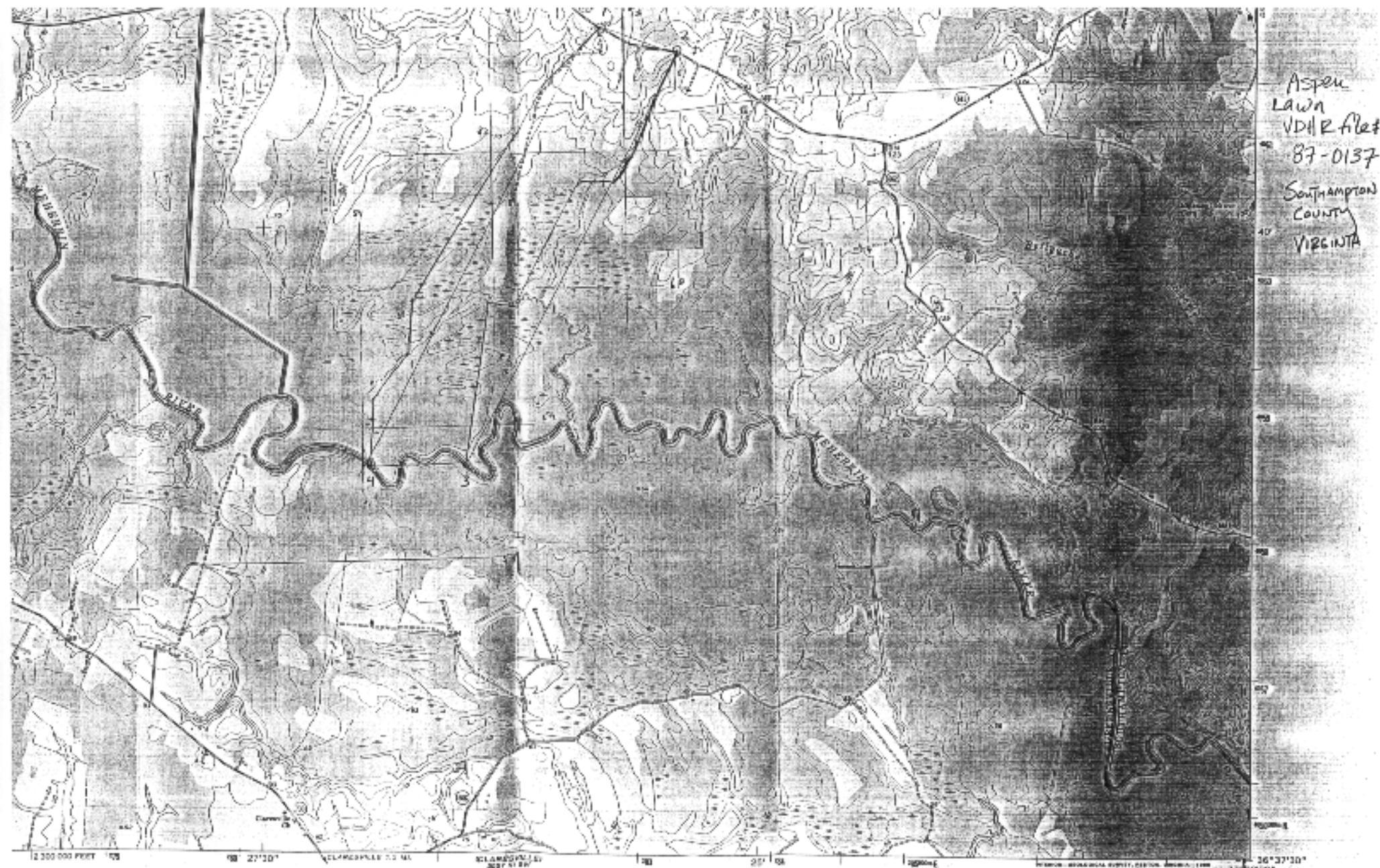
The boundary includes the original plantation house, derelict outbuildings, fields, forests, lowlands, swamps and woodland Indian sites that have historically been part of Aspen Lawn and that maintain historic integrity.



66
81

66
81

ASPEN LAWN
SOUTHAMPTON COUNTY
VIRGINIA DHR 87-137



Aspen
Lawn
VDH R file #
87-0137
Southampton
County
VIRGINIA

12 300 000 FEET
27°30'
SCALE 1:25,000
26°37'30"

Survey