

VLR-2/16/82 NRHP-7/8/82

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

For HCERS use only

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

received

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Brick House

and/or common Woodlands (Preferred)

2. Location

street & number Route 659 N/A not for publication

city, town White Plains vicinity of congressional^{5th} district (W.C. Daniel)

state Virginia code 51 county Brunswick code 025

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial <input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment <input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government <input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial <input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military <input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Susan B. Meredith (Mrs. A. Russell, Jr.)

street & number Box 32

city, town Lawrenceville N/A vicinity of state Virginia 23868

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Brunswick County Courthouse

street & number

city, town Lawrenceville state Virginia 23868

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

(1) Historic American Buildings Survey Inventory
title (2) (See Continuation Sheet #1) has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1958 federal state county local

depository for survey records Library of Congress

city, town Washington state DC

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			N/A

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

SUMMARY DESCRIPTION

Woodlands is a stately 19th-century plantation house set in a spacious park of old trees and a broad lawn deep in the countryside of southern Brunswick County. The grounds are entered from the east via a circular drive, just off State Route 659 near Pole Creek. The house at once appears as the quintessential Southern planter's home, however, it has had an interesting architectural evolution that is apparent only after a detailed examination of the fabric and interpretation of the records. It has been thought for many years that the northwest corner of the structure began as a small, two-story brick cottage built in the 18th century by the Harrison family. However, it seems evident that the house actually began as a two-story "I" house in 1831 with the earliest section consisting of the main block, or east section, and that the northwest corner, or ell, was added while the main part of the house was under construction to accommodate the recently widowed Rebecca Wilkins Brodnax and her three small children. (Rebecca Wilkins Brodnax was the sister of John L. Wilkins, the builder of the main part of the house.) An examination of the brickwork shows the same type of Federal mortar joints used in both sections. Like most Federal "I" houses of central and southern Virginia, the original section was probably covered by a gable roof.

ARCHITECTURAL ANALYSIS

The appearance of this substantial but not particularly elaborate farmhouse was drastically altered in 1860 by Alexander J. Brodnax (son of Rebecca Wilkins Brodnax), who based his scheme on a plan published in Samuel Sloan's The Model Architect (1860). Brodnax's copy of the book with his notations on the plan is still in the Woodlands library. In its present form the house is dominated by the massive 1860 hexastyle portico covering the entire east facade. The portico columns are tapered octagons supporting a broad pediment with an open tympanum containing an arched pediment window and bracketed eaves. Although the portico is Italianate in character, rather than the usual Greek Revival, it bears no relationship to any plate in Sloan. On the other hand, family tradition has it that the portico was inspired by that on Berry Hill, the Bruce family home in Halifax County. Indeed, the general character of the remodeled facade does recall Berry Hill. With the addition of the portico, the entire roof of the house was rebuilt so that the ridge now extends from east to west rather than north-south. Markings on the brick of the side walls indicate that the walls were raised approximately a foot when the roof was altered. The bracketed cornice, likewise, was extended all around the house at the time. The alterations also included the addition of the southwest parlor and room above in the angle formed by the rear ell. Apparently the brickwork on the south wall of this addition was poorly executed, as it deteriorated to the point that it recently had to be stuccoed over.

The remodeling entailed the alteration of a number of the windows, primarily those on the first floor. Most of the second-story windows remain in their original frames. On the facade the first-story windows were lengthened to the portico floor and set into new Italianate-type frames. The sashes were also changed in favor of 4/4 panes. All of the windows are topped by flat lintels with turned corner blocks. Disturbance of the brickwork above the east windows suggests that the arches may have originally been different. The present louvred blinds probably date to the 1860 remodeling. The main (east) entrance was also changed -- it presently consists of Italianate paneled doors with transom and sidelights containing contemporary panes of colored glass with foliated decorations. (Several of the panes have been replaced with clear glass.) Similar panes are found in the transom of the rear entrance.

(See Continuation Sheet #1)

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates 1831; 1860 **Builder/Architect** Attributed (1860) Jacob Holt

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Woodlands, a Brunswick County farmhouse, is architecturally significant as an outstanding example of a ca. 1831-33 "I" house remodeled into a highly stylized temple-front residence. The transformation was influenced to a large degree by Philadelphia taste and fashion; the house plan was adapted by Alexander J. Brodnax from Samuel Sloan's The Model Architect soon after Brodnax married Ellen A. Mallory of Philadelphia in 1854. The architectural features of the 1860 remodeling show a stylistic similarity to the documented works of Jacob Holt, a Southside builder who built Shadow Lawn and Eureka in neighboring Mecklenburg County. The Brodnax family acquired the house site at the beginning of the 19th century, and the property remains in the hands of Brodnax descendants.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

William Edward Brodnax, a descendant of an early Brunswick County family, inherited substantial legacies from his parents in 1771 and 1789. His name first appears in the local record books in 1783 when he purchased land on the north side of the Meherrin River from James Mason of Greenville. In 1795 he began to assemble his second tract about fifteen miles southwest of the courthouse, acquiring 800 acres on Pole Creek from Col. Frederick Jones of Mecklenburg. In 1799-1800 he purchased 1,834 acres from Benjamin Harrison, and in 1801 and 1803 he acquired land adjoining this parcel from James H. Harrison, John Love, and Nathaniel Harrison. There is no indication that any of the Harrisons ever maintained a residence on these tracts or, indeed, if there were any houses on them. In 1807 he purchased an additional 454 acres from James Robinson and completed this tract in 1812 with a purchase from Joshua Winfield. These parcels of land are all listed separately in the land tax books until 1814, when they are consolidated into one tract of 4,145½ acres "on Poplar Creek and its waters [i.e. "Pole Creek"] 15 miles SW of courthouse." The dwelling Woodlands now stands on part of this tract.

William E. Brodnax wrote his will over a period of several years, beginning sometime before 1827, and added several codicils before the will was recorded in county court on March 28, 1831. Ann Brodnax Wilkins inherited from her father "all that I purchased of Benjamin Harrison and Nathaniel Harrison adjoining, and one hundred acres to be taken of that tract called Theo^s Harrison on the most convenient manner for timber with the least injury to the balance of the said Theo^s Harrison tract." Ann had married John L. Wilkins in 1828. Her brother, Alexander Brodnax, married Rebecca Ann Wilkins, sister to John, in 1824. Alexander lived at the Hermitage, a residence formerly owned by his father, William E. Brodnax.

Ann's inheritance was put in the name of her husband who appears as a landowner for the first time in 1832. In 1833, the land tax book recorded the sale of two parcels of land

9. Major Bibliographical References

Brunswick County Will Books, Deed Books, Land Tax Books.
 Richmond, Va. Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Archives. Brunswick County file #12-38,
 Woodlands.
 Sloan, Samuel. The Model Architect. Philadelphia, 1860.

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property 33 acres

Quadrangle name White Plains, VA

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A

1	8
---	---

2	3	3	1	6	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

4	0	6	0	0	1	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

 Zone Easting Northing

B

1	8
---	---

2	3	3	1	7	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

4	0	5	9	8	9	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

 Zone Easting Northing

C

1	8
---	---

2	3	2	8	4	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

4	0	5	9	6	7	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

D

1	8
---	---

2	3	2	6	4	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

4	0	5	9	7	0	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

E

1	8
---	---

2	3	2	8	1	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

4	0	6	0	1	0	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

F

--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--

G

--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--

H

--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Verbal boundary description and justification Beginning at a point on W side of VA 659 about 3,250' NW of the N intersection of VA 659 and VA 611; thence extending about 1,350' SW; thence about 650' WNW; thence about 375' S along said side to point of origin.
 (See Continuation Sheet #4)

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code county N/A code

state N/A code county N/A code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Staff

organization Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission date January 1982

street & number 221 Governor Street telephone (804) 786-3144

city or town Richmond state Virginia 23219

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

H. Bryan Mitchell

H. Bryan Mitchell, Executive Director
 title Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission

date FEB 16 1982

For HCRS use only

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

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

