

VLR-4/15/86 NRHP-11/6/86

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

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

1. Name

historic SHALANGO (DHL File No. 66-88)

and/or common N/A

2. Location

street & number VA Route 666 N/A not for publication

city, town Wicomico Church X vicinity of

state Virginia code 51 county Northumberland code 133

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name Louise Coles Bouldin

street & number P. O. Box 250

city, town Wicomico Church N/A vicinity of state Virginia Zip Code 22579

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Northumberland County Courthouse

street & number N/A

city, town Heathsville state Virginia Zip Code 22473

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title SHALANGO (DHL File No. 66-88) has this property been determined eligible? yes X no

date February, 1986 federal X state county local

depository for survey records Division of Historic Landmarks, 221 Governor Street Zip Code

city, town Richmond state Virginia Zip Code 23219

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date entered

7. Description

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

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

SUMMARY DESCRIPTION

Shalango is a large 2½-story frame house located off VA Rt. 666 on the Great Wicomico River in northeastern Northumberland County. Erected in 1855-56 by an unknown builder, the dwelling follows a standard "I-house" format, having a single-pile, central-passage plan and interior end chimneys. The house stands on a tall brick basement and is covered with a gable roof pierced by three dormers on either slope. A one-story late 19th-century porch with scroll-sawn decoration graces the front elevation. Shalango retains its original Greek- and Italianate-style interior detailing, and features a handsome three-story open well stair. The only outbuilding remaining on the property is a small, dilapidated secondary dwelling built in the 1930s. The nomination contains one contributing and one noncontributing building.

ARCHITECTURAL ANALYSIS

The main house at Shalango stands in a level yard shaded by tall maples. Flat cultivated fields stretch in four directions, and the mile-wide mouth of the Great Wicomico River flows within full view of the house 120 yards to the east. Shell Creek, edged with woods, borders the property 350 yards north of the house, and the Chesapeake Bay flows a mile east, just out of sight beyond Sandy Point. A long straight dirt lane leads directly toward the house from the county road. Although a number of outbuildings stood in the yard in the early part of this century, all have disappeared save for a vacant single-story, two-bay frame dwelling located at the north edge of the yard.

Measuring 51½ X 20 feet, the main block of Shalango features a tall basement of random American-bond brick pierced by three-over-three-light windows at the front. The main block is symmetrical on all elevations, having five-bay land and river fronts and gable ends without windows. The house was originally heated by matching interior end chimneys serving three flues each. Dining room and kitchen were originally located in the basement. The one-story rear wing, which extends across two-thirds of the river elevation, is probably original. When built, however, this rear lean-to consisted of a single room at the south end and a porch centered on the river entrance. In the early 1890s this rear porch was enclosed to form a dining room, and the former bedchamber was remodeled into a kitchen. At this same time the original single-bay front porch was rebuilt or remodeled to its present form.

Exterior detailing is simple, reflecting antebellum Virginians' predilection for plain exteriors. And, as is the case with most other Northumberland County houses of the period, the detailing is stylistically conservative. Large dentils embellish the cornice -- a decorative feature which first became fashionable in Virginia in the mid-18th century and which by and large had fallen out of use by 1830. Similarly, the cyma moldings on the cornice of the small gable-roofed basement entry at the south end of the house are of style popular in the late 18th and early 19th centuries.

Windows are of conventional form, with six-over-six-light sashes and original louvered shutters. Window trim is extremely simple, consisting of a single thin molding and plain wooden sills. The gable-roofed dormers are also plain, their only decoration being a

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 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/				
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian				
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater				
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation				
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)				

Specific dates 1855 – 56

Builder/Architect

Unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

One of the largest antebellum plantation houses in Northumberland County, Shalango is situated on the banks of the Great Wicomico River about one mile from the Chesapeake Bay. The main house, erected in 1855-56 for planter John Hopkins Coles, is still owned by his direct descendants. A 2½-story frame structure with central-passage plan and tall brick basement, it features Greek- and Italianate-style interior detailing, and a dramatic three-story open well stair, one of the few of its kind in the state. Unaltered except for turn-of-the-century remodelings of the front and rear porches, Shalango illustrates the increasing popularity of the "I-house" form in the Northern Neck in the mid-19th century.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The property now comprising Shalango farm belonged to several generations of the Gaskins family in the 18th and early 19th centuries. In 1832, Col. Edward Coles, father of the present dwelling's builder, purchased the land at public auction. At his death in 1842, this property, then comprising 483 acres, passed to John Hopkins Coles, the second of his three sons. Of uncertain origin, the name Shalango was first applied to the property in the early 1850s.¹ When Coles acquired the property, it had few if any improvements. By the time of the 1850 general reassessment of taxable real estate, buildings worth \$800 stood on the property. (These could have included a modest-size dwelling, perhaps an overseer's house, and several farm buildings.) Around 1855, Coles employed a builder--now unknown--to erect the present house, which was assessed at \$1500 in 1857.

John Hopkins Coles (1825-1880) was orphaned at age sixteen or seventeen, and may have lived at the home of his guardian, William Harding of Springfield, until he came of age. In 1851 he married Louisa Josephine Harding (1832-1884), daughter of John Hopkins Harding of Cloverdale farm in southeastern Northumberland. The young couple lived at Cloverdale until Coles had Shalango built ca. 1855-56. (Some of the portraits and furnishings presently in Shalango are said to have been brought there by Louisa from Cloverdale).²

Coles and his wife had three children who lived to adulthood. Coles served in Company C of the 15th Virginia Cavalry during the Civil War, and sat on the county court as a magistrate for a number of years before his death.³ He served as a trustee of Wicomico Methodist Church and was instrumental in having the present brick church built in 1859. Coles seems to have been a moderately successful farmer, but was not nearly as wealthy as his father-in-law. Coles held onto the 483 acres he had inherited from his father, but at the time of his death had increased his holdings by only 23 acres. The personal property tax book of 1857 shows that he owned nine adult slaves, nine horses, and household and

9. Major Bibliographical References (See Continuation Sheet # 4)

Coles, Mildred L. "Coles Family of Northumberland County," manuscript, 1978; copy provided by Lela Bouldin Tomlin of Wicomico Church, Va.

Hudnall, Ada Kelly. "Shalango" manuscript (documentary research notes), VDHL File No. 66-88, Richmond, Va.

Northumberland County Deed Books, Land Tax Books, Order Books, Personal Property Tax

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property approx. 25 acres

Quadrangle name Reedville, VA

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A	1 8	3 8 3	7 8 0	4 1 8 7 1 9 0
	Zone	Easting		Northing
C	1 8	3 8 3	9 1 0	4 1 8 6 7 0 0
E	1 8	3 8 3	6 4 0	4 1 8 7 0 7 0
G	[]	[]	[]	[]

B	1 8	3 8 3	9 2 0	4 1 8 6 8 8 0
	Zone	Easting		Northing
D	1 8	3 8 3	6 3 0	4 1 8 6 7 1 0
F	1 8	3 8 3	7 2 0	4 1 8 7 1 2 0
H	[]	[]	[]	[]

Verbal boundary description and justification Beginning at a point in the middle of a dirt lane leading to the main house approximately 500' W of said house and approximately 6500' E of intersection of VA 666 with VA 665; thence extending approximately 300' S; thence approximately 900' E to shoreline of Great Wicomico River; thence following said shoreline

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries (See Continuation Sheet#4)

state	N/A	code	county	N/A	code
state	N/A	code	county	N/A	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Division of Historic Landmarks Staff

organization Division of Historic Landmarks date February, 1986

street & number 221 Governor Street telephone (804) 786-3143

city or town Richmond state Virginia Zip Code 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 National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title H. Bryan Mitchell, Director
Division of Historic Landmarks

date September 10, 1986

For NPS 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

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

**National Register of Historic Places
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SHALANGO, Northumberland County

Continuation sheet #1

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7. DESCRIPTION -- Architectural Analysis

return cornice. The two-piece window centered over the front porch suggests that the original porch had an upper deck. This window probably replaced an original doorway when the porch was remodeled in the 1890s.

The front porch, which was constructed when the present owner, now 95, was a little girl, shows the influence of the then-current Eastlake style as well as the Italianate style of a generation earlier. Set on a tall brick foundation with arched openings at the sides, it features paired solid-wood posts and a hipped roof with intersecting gable. The porch's projecting cornice breaks beneath the flush-board tympanum. The porch railing features slender turned balusters and a rectangular-section handrail with beaded edges. The posts, which are enlivened by fancy chamfering, are said to have been carved on the farm. The railing balusters, as well as the spindle frieze and elaborate scroll-sawn brackets, were probably manufactured in Baltimore or some other Chesapeake port and brought in by steamboat.

The original interior detailing is more elaborate and up-to-date than that on the exterior. Windows and doors are enframed by Greek-style architraves with crossettes. The trim in the north parlor, to the left of the passage, is the most ornate in the house. There, openings have heavily molded enframements with T-shaped heads, and windows have paneled aprons.

Mantels throughout the house are quite simple, being of a Greek Revival type common to this region in the mid-19th century. They are characterized by simple pilasters, a broad plain frieze, and heavily-molded Federal-style shelf. The only exception is the mantel in the north parlor, which boasts a simple Greek key fret below the cap of either pilaster.

The most interesting feature of the house is its three-story open well, open string stair, which rises dramatically at the rear of the twelve-foot-wide central passage. Curving at the front of the upper landing, it creates a handsome profile when viewed from below. The stair is characterized by its refined detailing, which is uniform at all three levels. At main-floor level the stair has a paneled sprandrel forming a partition behind which runs an enclosed stair to the basement. The scroll-sawn applied tread brackets are Italianate in style, and the stringer is decorated by a billet frieze of alternating rod-shaped blocks. The railing consists of plain rectangular-section balusters, two to a tread, painted white. In contrast, newels and handrails are of varnished walnut. The molded handrails are ramped and eased at each landing, and the Federal-style colonette newels with drop soffits are uniform throughout. The one exception is the massive Italianate-style main newel at the base of the stair. It, like the rest of the turned work and applied decoration, was probably executed in Baltimore or some other city and installed at Shalango by local workmen.

The basement and back wing are of special interest because they illustrate the change in location of cooking and dining spaces that took place throughout eastern Virginia during the postbellum period. The original interior kitchen (there was also a detached kitchen, now gone) occupied the north basement room, which is paved with brick. Opposite it, at

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7. DESCRIPTION -- Architectural Analysis

the south end of the basement, was the wooden-floored dining room, which communicated with the main floor via a partially enclosed straight-run stair. By the late 19th century, basement dining and cooking areas were being supplanted by rear kitchen and dining wings. In the 1890s the son of Shalango's original owner had the back porch enclosed to create an upstairs dining room, and remodeled the rear-wing bedroom into a kitchen with cook stove. An interesting feature can be seen in the dining room closet: between two shelves, on the back wall of the closet, is the handprint of a five-year-old girl. The present owner of Shalango, Louise Coles Bouldin, remembers her father lifting her into place and instructing her to press the palm of her hand there into the wet plaster.

In the early part of this century, Shalango retained many of its original outbuildings and farm structures, including a dairy, kitchen, smokehouse and springhouse. A large barn, said to be older than the house, stood in the barn lot to the north of the dwelling, and nearby stood a group of former slave cabins. Except for the barn, none of these structures were photographed, but their locations have been plotted on a map and if left undisturbed could prove worthy of archeological investigation.

Shalango also had a formal garden that ran the full 350 feet between the house and the river. Planted with boxwood, lilacs, crepe myrtles and other shrubs, trees and flowers, it was torn up after the Depression and turned into farmland. Several large maple trees still stand in the yard, however. The largest two are said to be older than the house, while the others were planted around the turn of the century.

In summary, Shalango is a quintessential large Northern Neck plantation house of the late antebellum era. Except for changes made to two porches in the 1890s, the house remains unaltered. Although it lacks its original outbuildings, it does retain its handsome unspoiled setting overlooking the mile-wide Great Wicomico River.

JMO

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8. SIGNIFICANCE -- Historical Background

kitchen furnishings worth \$300. Judging from this, it might be fair to say that the Shalango mansion was more impressive a house than that belonging to most men of his standing. Indeed, it may have represented an attempt to match the seats of his wife's Harding kinsmen, including such houses as Cloverdale, Wheatland, Springfield and Edge Hill.⁴

In 1886, several years after the deaths of John H. and Louisa Coles, the 506-acre Shalango tract was partitioned among their three children. Edward Everette Coles (1858-1925), husband of Evelyn M. Coles and father of the present owner, inherited the main house and 104 acres immediately surrounding it. Irene Coles Lewis (b. 1857), the eldest child, inherited 208 acres to the north of Edward's tract across Shell Creek, a farm that was later named Idlewild. The youngest son, John Randolph Coles (1861-1925), inherited 194 acres south of the main house, along the ⁵ Sandy Point road. This farm, which he called Black House, was later renamed Rose Haven.

In 1945, after the death of Evelyn M. Coles, Shalango passed to her daughter Evelyn Louise Coles Bouldin, who was born in the house in 1890. Mrs. Bouldin, who still owns the property, lived at Shalango all her life until recently, when she moved to her daughter's residence a few hundred yards northwest of the old house. Shalango is temporarily unoccupied, but Bouldin descendants are committed to maintaining the house in its original condition.

JMO

¹ Shalango is also spelled Shelango. The name first appears in the 1852 Northumberland Land Tax Book.

² According to Mrs. Chares (Lela) Tomlin, daughter of the present owner, several pieces of furniture in the north parlor were brought from Cloverdale. These include a pair of Rococco-Revival marbletop tables and a similarly styled pair of upholstered settees.

³ John H. Coles' portrait hangs at Northumberland Courthouse. Another portrait, recently restored, hangs at Shalango.

⁴ These four Harding family houses still stand, and are described in Lucy Waring's Hardings of Northumberland County and Their Related Families (Wicomico Church, Va., 1971).

⁵ Waring, p. 46; and interview with Lela Tomlin, Feb. 24, 1986, Wicomico Church, Va.

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SHALANGO, Northumberland, County

Continuation sheet # 4

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9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES (con't.)

Books, Will Books.

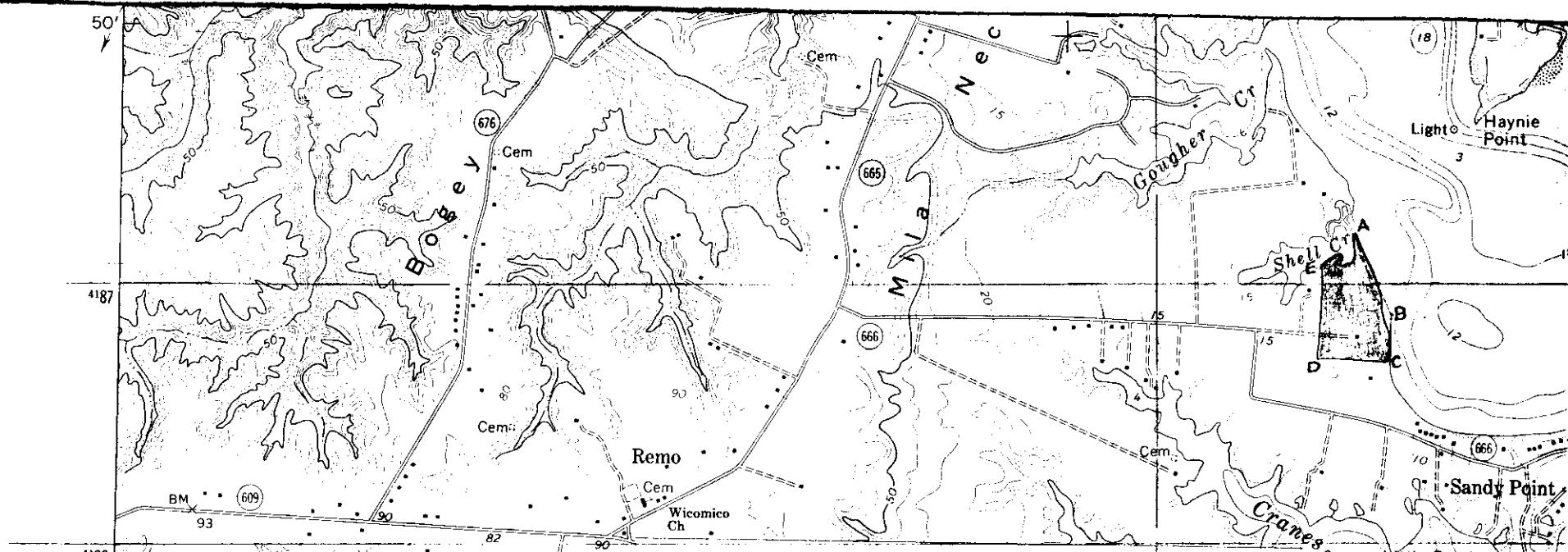
Waring, Lucy L. Hardings of Northumberland County and Their Related Families. Wicomoco Church, Va.: Privately Printed, 1971.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA -- Verbal Boundary Description (con't.)

approximately 350' N; thence continuing approximately 200' NNW; thence continuing approximately 200' N; thence continuing approximately 900' NW; thence continuing approximately 300' S; thence continuing approximately 150' WSW; thence continuing approximately 100' NE; thence continuing along shoreline approximately 300' SW; thence approximately 900' S to point to origin.

Boundary Justification

The boundaries include the main house and yard, as well as potentially significant archeological sites in the "old barn lot" to the north of the house. They also include the important scenic vista between the house and river, as well as enough land to the west of the house to maintain the rural ambience of the property. The nominated acreage extends to the natural boundaries of Shell Creek on the north, and to a small wooded marsh on the south.



USGS 7.5' quadrangle (scale: 1:24000)
Reedville, Va. 1968

SHALANGO, Northumberland County, Va.
UTM References:

- A- 18/383780/4187190
- B- 18/383920/4186880
- C- 18/383910/4186700
- D- 18/383630/4186710
- E- 18/383640/4187070

