

Listed On:
 VLR 10/16/1973
 NRHP 01/18/1974

029-0006

Form 10-600
 (Rev. 3-72) UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
 NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
 INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE:
 Virginia
 COUNTY:
 Stafford
 FOR NPS USE ONLY
 ENTRY DATE

1. NAME
 COMMON:
 Hunter's Iron Works
 AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION
 STREET AND NUMBER:
 CITY OR TOWN:
 Falmouth vicinity
 CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:
 Seventh (J. Kenneth Robinson)
 STATE:
 Virginia
 CODE:
 51
 COUNTY:
 Stafford
 CODE:
 179

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate):

<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural	<input type="checkbox"/> Government	<input type="checkbox"/> Park	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/> Comments
<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> Industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Educational	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Religious	<u>woodland</u>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Scientific		

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY
 OWNER'S NAME:
 Mr. & Mrs. E. G. Blaisdell
 STREET AND NUMBER:
 CITY OR TOWN:
 Falmouth
 STATE:
 Virginia
 CODE:
 51

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION
 COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:
 Stafford County Court House
 STREET AND NUMBER:
 CITY OR TOWN:
 Stafford
 STATE:
 Virginia
 CODE:
 51

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS
 TITLE OF SURVEY:
 Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Survey
 DATE OF SURVEY: 1971
 Federal State County Local
 DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
 Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission
 STREET AND NUMBER:
 221 Governor Street
 CITY OR TOWN:
 Richmond
 STATE:
 Virginia
 CODE:
 51

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Hunter's Iron Works was built on the [redacted] Rappahannock River, [redacted] the eighteenth century towns of Fredericksburg and Falmouth. An advertisement for the sale of the complex in the Fredericksburg Herald of May 18, 1798, provides a description of the buildings then standing:

The Iron Works and Mills - - - consisting of a Forge 128 feet by 51 feet, eight fires and 4 hammers, a coal house 80 feet by 40 feet, a merchant mill 70 feet by 36 feet with two pairs of French burnstones (burstones). . . a grist mill 20 feet by 18 feet . . . a saw mill 55 feet by 11 feet . . . Contiguous thereto are a stable 54 feet by 27 feet . . . a nailery, a tanyard, coopers, carpenters, and wheelwright shops . . . and houses for the managers and workmen.

None of the walls of the buildings associated with the Revolutionary-period operation remain standing above ground level. However, rough-laid stone foundations of more than twenty structures are visible on the lowland beside the river and up the hill that rises above it. A number of building sites have been dug into in search of relics, but most are at least partially undisturbed. The area is wooded, the only modern encroachments being a telephone line bisecting the site and one modern house.

No detailed archaeological study has been made of the iron works, so the functions of most of the known buildings are undetermined. Specific sites of note within the complex are:

Building A - The stone foundations of this building, 27" thick and measuring 40' by 84', are referred to locally as the forge. The dimensions, however, are more closely comparable to the coal house mentioned in the 1798 advertisement. Trenches have lately been dug around the foundations, but the interior fill of the structure is largely undisturbed. A dark coal dust or ash layer lies beneath the sod within the walls.

Building B - A stone foundation between the dam and forge sites, measuring 28' by 27', and of unknown purpose.

Building C - 20' by 40' stone foundation of unknown purpose.

Building D - 16' by 20' stone foundation of unknown purpose.

Building E - Portions of a stone foundation are visible at this point. Two finely-worked stone blocks with decorative moldings on edges are visible in the loose rubble.

Dam - Stone rubble in a creek bed east of the forge appears to indicate the location of a dam, whose water supply provided power for the forge.

Brick Structure - The remains of an unusual brick structure were dug into during construction of a house atop the hill in 1973. The structure appeared to be narrow (10' or less wide), and proportionately long, although neither end was uncovered. Iron ingots marked "Occoquan" found in the ruins are probably from a furnace of that name which operated on Occoquan Creek in Prince William County from 1755 to 1765. Also found were oversized bricks

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7.
that had been exposed to extreme heat and pairs of various sized bricks that had been pressed together before firing. The latter may have formed a duct system used to heat the molds in a casting operation. Such a system is illustrated by Denis Diderot in "Sculpture, Forte des Statues Equestres," in plate volume 8 of L'Encyclopedie. The form of these bricks and the foundation's shape may indicate that this structure was associated with the casting process. Although the brickwork and fill were somewhat disturbed by mechanical excavation in 1973, most of the below-ground portion of the structure appears to be intact.

E.A.C.

3. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

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

SPECIFIC DATES: (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

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

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Called "one of the finest and most considerable iron works in North America" by the eighteenth-century traveler John David Schopf, Hunter Iron Works played a vital role in supplying equipment for American forces in the Revolutionary War. In addition to its historical significance, the site of Hunter Iron Works provides an exceptional opportunity to study, through archaeological excavation, the iron manufacture industry of the period.

James Hunter came to Virginia in 1746 at the age of 25, and in the next quarter century he established himself as a leading Falmouth merchant, and perhaps as early as 1750, started the iron works. In 1772 John F. D. Smith, traveling through the area, noted that Hunter was operating "a very valuable forge, and iron works." With the outbreak of war with Great Britain, Hunter's operation became important to the patriot cause. In May, 1776, 100 pounds of powder was allotted for testing arms at Hunter's and the gun manufactory at Fredericksburg, and in February, 1777, the Governor's Council requested Hunter to manufacture arms sufficient to equip a regiment of cavalry.

The success of the iron works was a matter of concern for Virginia's Revolutionary-period government. Patrick Henry wrote in May, 1777: "As there was no Manufactory of Iron in the State which was carried on to such an Extent, and to Purpose of such vast Importance as Mr. Hunter's near Fredericksburg, I took the Liberty of promising him the Assistance of the Public in the Prosecution of his works on a more enlarged Plan." Accokeek Iron Works was not supplying sufficient iron for Hunter's "many extensive factories, slitting, planting, and wire mills," so also in May, 1777, the assembly acted to allow Hunter to take over the Accokeek operation.

Governor Jefferson wrote to Hunter on January 10, 1781, to inform him that he had ordered General George Weedon, commander of the Fredericksburg militia, to protect the iron works from Tarleton's Raiders. Hunter replied on January 25 that he too had taken steps to defend the industry from attack. Hunter's letter gives some indication of the great quantities of equipment which he supplied to the Continental Army. He requested payment of a warrant for \$50,000 in tobacco and for certificates from General Gates totalling \$120,000.

James Mercer described the significance of the iron works in an April 14, 1781 letter to Jefferson:

It is from Mr. Hunter's Works that every camp kettle has been supplied for the continental and all other troops employed in this State, and to the southward. All the anchors for this State and Maryland and some for the continent have been produced from the same works; that without the assistance of the bar iron made there, even

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2.

the planters hereabouts and to the southward - - -
would not be able to make bread to eat.

A communication from Hunter to Colonel Oliver Towles of November 22, 1781, describes some of the equipment he was producing. He had lately resumed the manufacture of small arms, and his workmen were repairing the machinery used for grinding and boring of guns. Supplies ready for use included "one traveling Forge with its utensils and Harners complete," approximately 500 bridle bits and a quantity of curry combs, and 1,000 horsemans swords "to the pattern forwarded from General Green's Army by order of Colonel Washington." The pattern referred to was a British sword captured at Guilford Court House, which had been sent to Hunter in March to be reproduced. Another reference of November, 1781, notes that the iron works produced stove pipes for military hospitals.

Hunter never received payment for much of the supplies he produced, and the iron works ceased to be a viable operation soon after the Revolution. John Schopf, who visited Falmouth in 1783-84 stated however, that Hunter's was then still a major industry. He further noted that "More than 6-800 tons are worked there yearly . . . These works are distinguished besides a rolling and a slitting mill, and of this there are only two or three in America." Hunter died in 1784, and in 1798 the iron works were advertised for sale. The property was occupied by soldiers during the War Between the States, and artifacts of that period indicate that some of the buildings surviving from Hunter's operation may have been occupied then.

Only a limited amount of archaeological work has been done on Revolutionary-period manufacturing sites in the United States. Although some of Hunter's building sites have been disturbed, careful excavation of the iron works complex could provide much information about one of Virginia's major industries of the period and eighteenth century iron manufacture in general. The iron work's wooded and unspoiled situation, located on the outskirts of Fredericksburg, a city itself closely associated with the American Revolution, makes it a site worthy of park designation and development.

E.A.C.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Darter, Oscar H., Colonial Fredericksburg and Neighborhood in Perspective, New York, 1957.
 Diderot, Denis, Encyclopedie, Recueil de planches, vol. 8, Paris, 1771.
 Leu, Reinhart, map of Hunter's Iron Works remains, 1973, Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission files.
 McIlwaine, H. R., Official Letters of the Governors of the State of Virginia, Richmond, 1928.
 Schopf, John D., Travels in the Confederation, 1783-84, A. J. Morrison, trans., Philadelphia, 1911.
 Swan, E. G., Virginia Historical Index, Roanoke, Va., 1934-36.

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	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW				0 " "	0 " "	
NE						
SE						
SW						

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **35 acres.**

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
 Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission staff
 ORGANIZATION: Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission DATE: October, 1973
 STREET AND NUMBER: 221 Governor Street
 CITY OR TOWN: Richmond STATE: Virginia CODE: 51

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

<p>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:</p> <p>National <input type="checkbox"/> State <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Local <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Name: <u>Junius R. Fishburne, Jr., Director</u> <u>Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission</u> Title: _____ Date: _____</p>	<p>I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.</p> <p>_____ Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation</p> <p>Date: _____</p> <p>ATTEST:</p> <p>_____ Keeper of The National Register</p> <p>Date: _____</p>
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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY MAP FORM
(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with map)

1. NAME		
COMMON	AND/OR HISTORIC	NUMERIC CODE (Assigned by NPS)
Hunter's Iron Works		
2. LOCATION		
STATE	COUNTY	TOWN
Virginia	Stafford	Falmouth vicinity
STREET AND NUMBER		
3. MAP REFERENCE		
SOURCE	DATE	SCALE
U.S.G.S. [REDACTED] Fredericksburg, Virginia	1966	1:24000

REQUIREMENTS: PROPERTY BOUNDARIES, WHERE REQUIRED, AND NORTH ARROW.



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM
(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with photograph)

1. NAME		
COMMON	AND/OR HISTORIC	NUMERIC CODE (Assigned by NPS)
Hunter's Iron Works		
2. LOCATION		
STATE	COUNTY	TOWN
Virginia	Stafford	Falmouth vicinity
STREET AND NUMBER		
3. PHOTO REFERENCE		
PHOTO CREDIT	DATE	NEGATIVE FILED AT
Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission	1973	Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission; Richmond, Va.

4. IDENTIFICATION
DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.

1. Cut sandstone block from Building E.