1. NAME

Common:
Rich Neck Farm (Preferred)

Alternative:
Rich Neck: Richneck Plantation

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER: 0.8 mile east of Mill Farm Run; northwest side of Route 633; 1.3 miles northeast of intersection of Route 633 and Route 616.

3. CLASSIFICATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY (Check One)</th>
<th>OWNERSHIP</th>
<th>STATUS</th>
<th>ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>District xx BuildingS</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>Occupied</td>
<td>Yes, Restricted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site xx Structure</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Unoccupied</td>
<td>Unrestricted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Object</td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>Preservation work in progress</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate):

- Agricultural
- Commercial
- Educational
- Entertainment
- Industrial
- Military
- Private Residence
- Religious
- Park
- Preserve
- Transportation

COMMENTS: House empty

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

Owner's NAME:
Frank W. and Sue W. Jones

STREET AND NUMBER:
Route 31

CITY OR TOWN:
Surry

STATE:
Virginia 23883

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:
Surry County Courthouse

CITY OR TOWN:
Surry

STATE:
Virginia

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS (2) (see continuation sheet F1)

TITLE OF SURVEY:
(1) Historic American Buildings Survey Inventory

DATE OF SURVEY:
1959

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
Library of Congress

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:
Washington

STATE:
D. C.
Situated amid the flat farmlands of Surry County a mile from the James River, Rich Neck possesses a distinguished assemblage of buildings with many striking and unusual features. Approached along a long, straight drive, the house is shaded by several large trees. Two large granaries flank the drive and behind the house are several minor outbuildings. A slight wooded slope falls away behind the house.

The Rich Neck plantation house is a story-and-a-half, gambrel-roofed brick building laid in three-course American bond. It is set on a high basement which has no water table but is lit by double grills with horizontal wooden mullions, spanned by jack arches. There are five bays of openings across the front of the house, but only three across the rear. All of the first-floor windows have nine-over-nine sash and stuccoed jack arches; the shed dormers in the steep lower slopes of the gambrel have six-over-six sash. Two exterior end chimneys with corbelled caps and stepped weatherings stand at each end, and between each pair, a pent projects. That on the east end has been converted into a bathroom; in the west pent are an exterior entrance and a buttery. A houndstooth brick cornice is used at the eaves of the main block and of the pents, and the gables of the house are parapeted. The lower slope of the roof is covered with round-butted wood shingles, and the upper slopes are roofed with standing-seam sheet metal.

Rich Neck has a double-pile plan with a central passage. The passage is divided laterally by a doorway behind which it broadens to accommodate a two-run, open-well stair. This is very simple, having an open string, two rectangular balusters to a tread, an oval banister, and a square beaded newel which runs the full height of the first floor.

The east parlor, like the rest of the first-floor rooms and the passage, has a molded chair rail and wainscoting throughout. The mantel is embellished with fluted pilasters framing the fireplace opening, a tall frieze with a central tablet flanked by molded panels, and a deep, heavily molded architrave surround is diagonally reeded, and the firebox has been filled in to accommodate a stovepipe.

There is a similar but less elaborate mantel in the west parlor. The central tablet is omitted, and the frieze is decorated with a single horizontal molded panel. The fluting on the pilasters is more delicate, and the reeding is absent from the surround. From this parlor, one enters the buttery in the pent, which retains its original shelving.

The rear rooms have plainer mantels similar to those in the front. All of the mantels on the second floor are alike. They have architrave surrounds under a single horizontal recessed panel and an unmolded shelf.

The plan of the second floor is similar to the first. However, the single-run closed stair to the attic rises from the front part of the passage.

The basement is entered from the center bay of the rear and consists of four rooms and an entrance vestibule. All of the doorways have handsome batten doors with large wrought HL hinges and wooden box locks, some of (see continuation sheet #2)
Rich Neck, with its handsome farmstead set in the midst of a broad, open field, presents a vivid impression of life on a prosperous but unpretentious plantation in early-nineteenth-century Southside Virginia. Long connected with the Ruffins, one of the prominent families of Southside Virginia, Rich Neck possesses a collection of buildings which are among the best preserved and most noteworthy of their type in the region.

A 550-acre tract, which included the present Rich Neck, was granted to William Nusum in 1636. Of this grant, 275 acres came into the possession of Robert Ruffin sometime before 1675. Rich Neck was owned by the Ruffins until 1865.

The Ruffin family figured in Virginia's social and intellectual history throughout the colonial and early national periods. Its most notable member was Edmund Ruffin, an agricultural pioneer and Southern nationalist during the War between the States and a descendant of several early residents of the Rich Neck plantation. In addition, the Ruffins were connected to such other prominent families as the Harrisons, the Skipwiths, and the Cockes.

It was probably during the tenure of William E. B. Ruffin, who was a minor when he inherited Rich Neck in 1802, that the present house was built. With its parapeted gables, its shed dormers, its houndstooth cornice and its vertical emphasis, features commonly associated with seventeenth-century American buildings, the Rich Neck house is a good example of the reversion to these pre-Georgian forms in the early nineteenth century. Its decoration, though plain, is almost entirely intact, as are its minor details, such as its sash, hardware, and doors.

The granaries at Rich Neck are of as antiquated a form as the house. They use a "tilted false plate" framing system in which the rafters are notched over a square "false plate" which is set diagonally on the ends of the tie beams. These are in turn half-lapped and cantilevered out over the wall plate. This form of construction ceased to be used in Virginia houses in the first quarter of the eighteenth century. While the date of these granaries is uncertain (they may predate the house, but it is possible, on the evidence of the nails and the mortar joints in the underpinning, that they are contemporary with it), it is evident that they are at any rate very late examples of the use of this feature. They appear to be antiquated as well in their ten-foot bays, a feature found in many excavated
### Geographic Data

- **Acres of Nominated Property:** 6 acres

- **Quadrangle Name:** Surry, Va.
- **UTM References:**
  - **Zone Easting Northing:**
    - **A:** 1.8 [34, 441.04] [60, 163.08]
    - **B:** [zonation]
    - **C:** [zonation]
    - **D:** [zonation]
    - **E:** [zonation]
    - **F:** [zonation]

- **Quadrangle Scale:** 1:24000

- **Verbal Boundary Description:**
  - Beginning at a point on N side of State Route 633, about 4400' SE of the confluence of College Run and Mill Farm Run; thence extending about 350' NW, crossing private drive; thence extending about 650' NE across open field; thence extending about 500' SE to N side of 633; thence extending about 700' SW along...

### Miscellaneous

- **Name and Title:** Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Staff
- **Organizational:** Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission
- **Date:** June 1975

- **Street and Number:** 221 Governor Street
- **City or Town:** Richmond
- **State Code:** Virginia 51

### 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 [X]

- **Name:** Junius R. Fishburne, Jr., Exec. Director
- **Title:** Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission
- **Date:** JUN 17 1975

### National Register Verification

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

- **Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation**
- **Date:**
- **ATTEST:**
  - **Keeper of The National Register**
  - **Date:**
Rich Neck Farm, Surry Co., Va.

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

(2) Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Survey 1975 State

Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission
221 Governor Street
Richmond, Virginia code: 51

10. Geographical Data

VBD: (cont'd) said side to point of origin.
7. **DESCRIPTION**

Rich Neck Farm, Surry Co., Va.

which have been removed. There is a fireplace in the southeast room and relieving arches are at the chimney bases in the other three rooms. The centering used to construct these arches is still in place.

The house is remarkable for the number of original accessory features which survive. Much original sash, most of the doors, hinges (many with their leather washers), locks, and other hardware remain.

The outbuildings at Rich Neck add to the plantation's importance. This is especially true of the two granaries. These buildings are both approximately 20 by 40 feet, set on brick piers. They retain much of their original beaded weatherboarding. They take the form of three-bay, side-opening English barns but are in reality divided into two equal, non-communicating compartments, approximately 20 by 20 by 10 feet. Both use an antiquated "tilted false plate" form of construction, with the rafters resting on a square timber set diagonally and supported by the ends of the tie beams which are cantilevered over the plate. There is a pole lean-to attached to the south end of the east granary, and the west granary has been enlarged by the addition of a full-length pole lean-to ell across the rear.

Behind the house are a nineteenth-century smokehouse, an early- and mid-nineteenth-century office, an outhouse, a well house, and a chicken house, all built in the twentieth century. All of these are frame buildings.

**BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION** The boundaries have been drawn to include the dwelling house, significant outbuildings and the approach from the county road.
seventeenth-century sites in Tidewater Virginia, but not so regularly in later buildings. Finally, their use of the side-opening "English barn" model is unusual in a region in which end-opening buildings, often with side lean-tos, are the rule for granaries, cribs, and other large outbuildings.

William E. B. Ruffin was the last of his family to reside at Rich Neck. After his death in 1860, it was necessary to sell the plantation to the Jacob Faulcon estate to satisfy a debt. It was purchased at auction by William A. Warren in 1881 and descended to Walker P. Warren as one of a group of five important Surry County farms which included Bacon's Castle. Mr. and Mrs. Frank W. Jones purchased Rich Neck in 1973.