

VLR-9/16/82 NRHP-7/7/83

OMB NO. 1024-0018
EXP. 12/31/84

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

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received
date entered

1. Name

historic The Clinch Valley Coal and Iron Company
and/or common The Williams House (preferred) (VHLC 92-15)

2. Location

street & number 102 Suffolk Avenue N/A not for publication
city, town Richlands N/A vicinity of ~~Congressional district~~
state Virginia code 51 county Tazewell code 135

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name Miss Mary E. Williams; W.R. Williams; Elizabeth Wherley; Martha W. Thompson
street & number 309 Suffolk Avenue
city, town Richlands N/A vicinity of state Virginia

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Tazewell County Courthouse
street & number Main Street
city, town Tazewell state Virginia

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title None previously recorded has this property been determined eligible? ___ yes no
date N/A N/A ___ federal ___ state ___ county ___ local
depository for survey records N/A
city, town N/A state

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input checked="" 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
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		date <u>N/A</u>

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

SUMMARY DESCRIPTION

Originally built as a development office, the Williams House is a 2 1/2-story Georgian Revival building with weatherboarded walls, symmetrical facade, hipped roof and dormers. The building has a simple dignity, and with its long front porch is typical of the many Georgian Revival dwellings built through the Middle Atlantic and Southern states in the early 20th century. The building stands in the heart of the comparatively young town of Richlands, surrounded by commercial structures. Its formal, domestic character, and its surrounding yard present a noticeable contrast to the comparatively bland adjacent buildings and give it the true character of an architectural landmark for the community.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

The Williams House is a simple rectangle measuring 50' by 30' with two principal floors and a finished attic. It is set on a stone foundation that rises two feet above grade. The structure of the building is of light wood framing, and weatherboard siding. A wide, raised porch is attached to the front of the building and runs its entire length. The porch roof is supported by six slender Tuscan columns. The windows opening onto the porch and the front door itself are imposing in their large scale. A small oval window beside the door is trimmed with four stylized keystones.

There is some question as to whether the original roofing was slate or wood shingles. Asphalt shingles now cover the hipped roof. Of particular interest are widely spaced modillions around the corner and the pedimented dormers. Giving the house an accent is the scrolled pediment center dormer with its urn finial. An early drawing shows a low balustrade running the perimeter of the roof; it is not certain if the balustrade was ever installed. Projecting from the roof are two brick chimney stacks.

Inside are two floors with amply sized rooms and ten foot ceilings. A large basement runs underneath the entire first floor. There is also a finished attic, lit by the dormers. A grandly scaled stair with turned balusters

(See Continuation Sheet #1)

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" 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 checked="" 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 1890

Builder/Architect Clinch Valley Coal & Iron/Unknown

Statement of Significance (In one paragraph)

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

With its construction in 1890 tied to the founding of Richlands, the Williams House is this Southwest Virginia town's most historically important house. The building was one of the first to be built in Richlands and served as the main office of the investment group that planned and founded the town. The building's architecture is testimony to the grand dreams of that group; its oversized windows and other architectural features were commensurate with their intention to make Richlands the Pittsburgh of the South. The building was later used as the first hospital in Richlands and was associated with one of the more prominent people in Richlands's history, Dr. W.R. Williams.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND:

Throughout most of the nineteenth century, the area known as Richlands contained only a few farms and a small village. In the 1880s, however, the nearby coalfields of Pocahontas, Virginia were opened up, and soon the coal lands surrounding Richlands began to attract attention. A group of Philadelphia businessmen, led by banker Evans R. Dick, descended on the region in the late 1880s and began the development of a new coke and iron-manufacturing town. The Clinch Valley Coal and Iron Company was organized in 1887 by these businessmen to act as their principal operating agency. Plats for the new town were recorded in the Tazewell County Courthouse in May of 1890 and construction began immediately.

One of the first buildings to be erected in Richlands in 1890, the present Williams House was originally a three-story office building for the Clinch Valley Coal and Iron Company that reportedly cost \$7,500 to construct. In fact, the small oval window next to the front door of the Williams House once served as the pay window for the company.

Richlands was incorporated in 1892, but the town's boom days did not last long. A financial depression in 1893-1894 forced the northern financial backers of the town

9. Major Bibliographical References

WILLIAMS HOUSE Advertising Brochure published by the Clinch Valley Coal and Iron Company - no date. (Private Collection of Mr. C. W. Thompson.)
(See continuation sheet #3.)

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 1/2 acre
 Quadrangle name Richlands, Va. Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A	<u>117</u>	<u>4290210</u>	<u>410153210</u>	B			
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C				D			
E				F			
G				H			

Verbal boundary description and justification Property: Lots 20, 21, 22 in section 2, Plan A of Richlands as shown on a plat dated May 6, 1890 (Deed Book 26, Page 1). Beginning at a point on the SW side of Suffolk Ave. at the intersection of Front St. and said ave., thence extending approximately 150' W along N side of Front St.,
 (See Continuation Sheet #3)

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

state	<u>N/A</u>	code	county	<u>N/A</u>	code
state	<u>N/A</u>	code	county	<u>N/A</u>	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title C.W. Thompson, Mgr. for the Three Sisters; Bart Phelps, Asst. Dean, UCLA, AIA
 organization N/A date August 1, 1982
 street & number 309 Suffolk Avenue telephone 703-964-6621
 city or town Richlands state Virginia

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 H. Bryan Mitchell
 H. Bryan Mitchell, Executive Director
 title Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission date SEP 16 1982

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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THE WILLIAMS HOUSE, TAZEWELL COUNTY, VA

Continuation sheet #1

Item number #7

Page 1

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7. Description--Architectural

ascends the double height entry hall. A small winding stair off the kitchen rises from the basement to the attic story. The arrangement of rooms downstairs is informal and without hallways. Upstairs rooms are entered directly off the stair hall. Four rooms have fireplaces, all made of brick. The upstairs and the attic have the original wide wooden flooring.

The scale of the Williams House is set by the entrance from the front porch. The front door, over four feet wide, is flanked by two suitably oversized floor-to-ceiling windows. For a house this size, the rooms are few but large.

The Williams House floor plan is a simple one. The entry hall is the heart of the house. Downstairs, the dining room and two sitting rooms open directly onto the entry hall, a large room in itself. Peeking from under the curve of the huge staircase is the original pay window. A service hall leads to the kitchen and pantry rooms.

Upstairs, three bedrooms open onto the balustered stair hall which overlooks the downstairs entry. In addition, there are two bathrooms, one with a leaded glass window and a back bedroom. On the third floor, the attic has five full-scale rooms.

A narrow yard and an iron fence remove the building from the sidewalk. A large yard at the rear accommodates an accessory building. The outbuilding (a small one-story building) is done in the same style as the larger building. The building stands in downtown Richlands, in the middle of the business district. The house at present is unoccupied and somewhat deteriorated although rehabilitation and adaptive reuse is planned.

Prepared by CWT/BP, AIA

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THE WILLIAMS HOUSE, TAZEWELL COUNTY, VA

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Continuation sheet #2

Item number #8

Page 1

8. Significance--Historical Background

to give up their interests, bringing development in Richlands to a sudden halt. The Clinch Valley Coal and Iron Company continued to own the office building until 1901, when both the property and the building were sold to Dr. William R. Williams for \$4,458.

Dr. Williams, educated at William and Mary and the Medical College of Virginia, came back to Richlands in 1897 to establish a medical practice. In 1902, he married Mattie Lou Peery, a sister to the future Governor of Virginia, George C. Peery. As no hospital existed in Richlands at that time, Dr. Williams used a small outbuilding at the Williams House as an operating room and housed patients in his home. Mrs. Williams acted as nurse for the sick and cooked their meals as well. In 1913, Dr. Williams obtained a large piece of property in the center of town and founded the Mattie Williams Hospital, the first modern hospital in Richlands.

Dr. Williams was also prominent in areas other than the medical profession. He founded the First National Bank in Richlands in 1908, served as president of the Virginia Harlan Coal Corporation, and had extensive interests in farming and livestock raising. Dr. Williams continued to reside in the Williams House until his death in 1943. Since then, the children of Dr. Williams have occupied the home.

Plans are underway to restore the house and donate it to the town of Richlands to be used as a public library.

- Footnotes:
1. Deed Book 26, pp. 1-15.
 2. Clinch Valley News, October 3, 1890.
 3. Conversations with Miss Mary Williams.

Prepared by CWT

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THE WILLIAMS HOUSE, TAZEWELL COUNTY, VA

Continuation sheet #3

Item number #9, 10

Page 1, 1

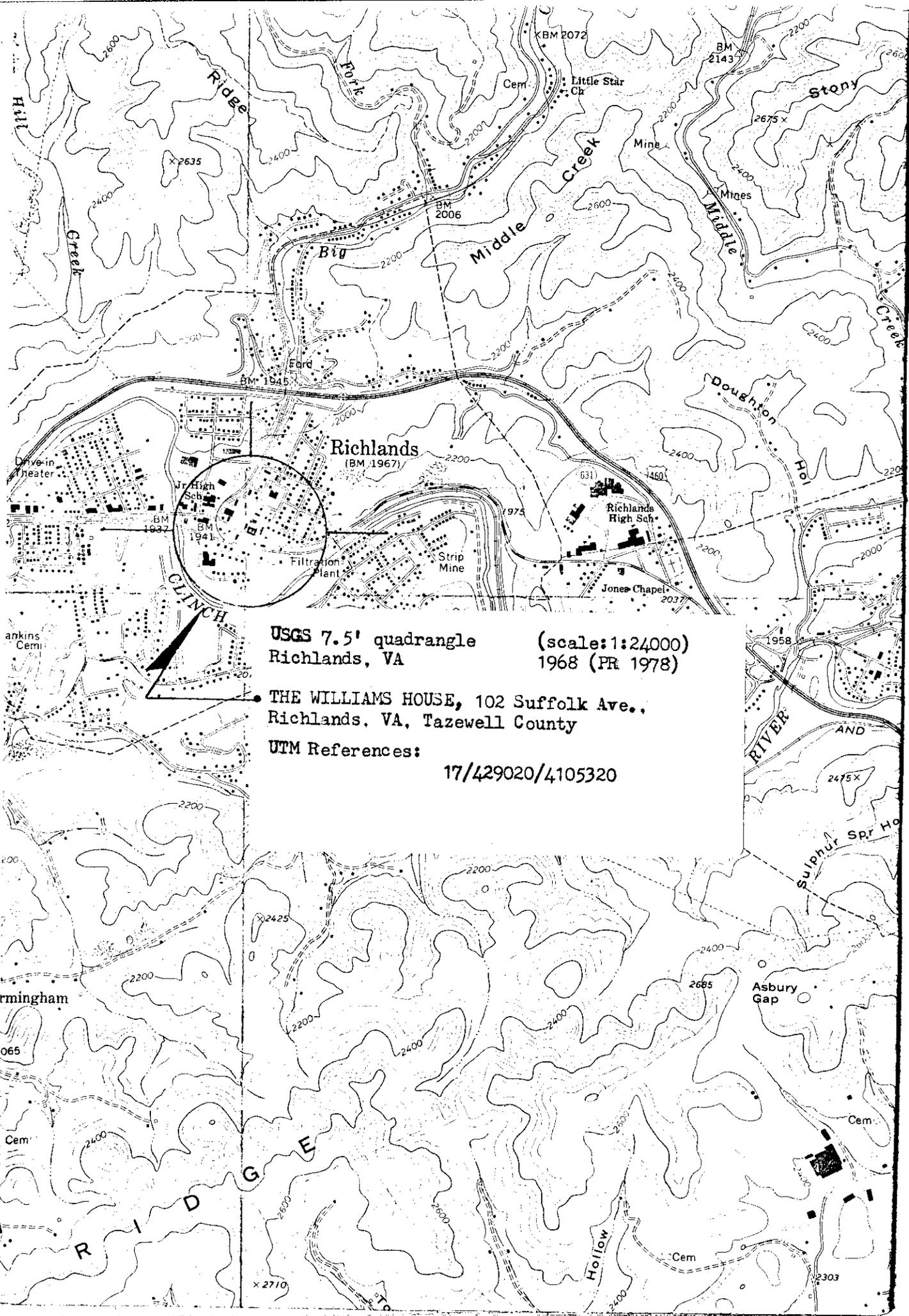
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9. BIBLIOGRAPHY (cont.)

- WILLIAMS HOUSE (cont.)
2. Clinch Valley News - October 3, 1890.
 3. History of Richlands - sourcebook prepared by Dean Herrin (in Historic Crab Orchard Museum, Tazewell.)
- Dr. W. R. Williams
1. History of Virginia, Vol. VI (Virginia Biography) - Published by the American Historical Society, 1924, pp. 377-8.
 2. Newspaper clippings and biographical materials (papers of C.W. Thompson).
 3. Conversations with the Williams family.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA--Verbal Boundary Description & Justification

thence approximately 75' N, thence approximately 150' E to a point on the W side of Suffolk Ave. approximately 75' N of intersection of Front St. and said ave.; thence approximately 75' S along W side of Suffolk Ave. to N side of Front St., the point of origin. Boundary Justification: The nominated property consists of approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ acre. The bounds have been drawn to correspond with those of lots 20-22 in Section 2, Plan A of Richlands plat, May 6, 1890 found in Deed Book 26, p. 1.



USGS 7.5' quadrangle (scale:1:24000)
Richlands, VA 1968 (PR 1978)

• THE WILLIAMS HOUSE, 102 Suffolk Ave.,
Richlands, VA, Tazewell County

UTM References:
17/429020/4105320