

Virginia Department of Historic Resources PIF Resource Information Sheet

This information sheet is designed to provide the Virginia Department of Historic Resources with the necessary data to be able to evaluate the significance of the property for possible listing in the Virginia Landmarks Register and the National Register of Historic Places. This is not a formal nomination, but a necessary step in determining whether or not the property could be considered eligible for listing. Please take the time to fill in as many fields as possible. A greater number of completed fields will result in a more timely and accurate assessment. Staff assistance is available to answer any questions you have in regards to this form.

General Property Information	For Staff Use Only DHR ID #: 054-0428
Property Name(s): <u>Meadowbrook Farm</u>	
Property Date(s): <u>1860-1900</u> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Circa <input type="checkbox"/> Pre <input type="checkbox"/> Post Open to the Public? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes X No	
Property Address: <u>11446 Cross County Rd</u> City: <u>Mineral</u> Zip: <u>23117</u>	
County or Ind. City: <u>Louisa County</u> USGS Quad(s): <u>Pendleton</u>	

Physical Character of General Surroundings	
Acreage: <u>112</u> Setting (choose one): <input type="checkbox"/> City <input type="checkbox"/> Urban <input type="checkbox"/> Town <input type="checkbox"/> Suburban X Rural <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation Corridor	
Site Description Notes/Notable Landscape Features: Meadowbrook Farm sits on a 112 acre tract off of Route 522 (Cross County Rd) in the Apple Grove area of Louisa County, Virginia. The contributing buildings located on the site include the two-story three-bayed dwelling house constructed c. 1897; the cabin, a two room, one and one-half story square notched log structure built c. 1860; Apple Grove Methodist Episcopal Church South built between 1892 and 1893.	
Secondary Resource Description (Briefly describe any other structures (or archaeological sites) that may contribute to the significance of the property: There are six renovated farm buildings. Five stand near the dwelling house. The sixth a corncrib stands next to the cabin. There is also one modern steel outbuilding located on the front of the property. Lastly, located between the dwelling house and Apple Grove Methodist Church is a cemetery. The cemetery has connections to both the family and the Church. It contains 26 graves some marked with complete markers showing name, dates, or initials, some marked just with irregular stones, and some counted by obvious depression within the area of marked graves.	
Ownership Category: X Private <input type="checkbox"/> Public-Local <input type="checkbox"/> Public-State <input type="checkbox"/> Public-Federal	

Individual Resource Information	
What was the historical use of this resource? Examples include: Dwelling, Grist Mill, Bridge, Store, Tobacco Barn, etc...	
<u>Dwelling - Farm</u>	
What is the current use? (if other than the historical use) _____	
Architectural style or elements of styles: <u>Vernacular and Victorian</u>	
Architect, builder, or original owner: <u>John J. Mills</u>	
# of stories _____ Condition: <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent X Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair X Deteriorated <input type="checkbox"/> Poor <input type="checkbox"/> Ruins <input type="checkbox"/> Rebuilt X Renovated	

Are there any known threats to this property? No

Resource Component Information

Please answer the following questions regarding the individual components of the resource. If the component does not exist, answer "n/a." If you feel uncomfortable in answering the question, please leave the space blank. Photographs of the features can also help our staff identify specific feature components. Usually, priority is given to describing features on the primary (front) facade of the structure.

Foundation: Describe the foundation that supports the structure. Examples include piers, continuous brick, poured concrete. House: course field stone foundation of local schist and mortar; Cabin: Quartz field stone and mortar; Church Green stone and Mortar

Structure: Describe the primary structural component of the resource. Include primary material used. Examples include log, frame (sawn lumber), and brick. Also include the treatment, such as a particular brick bond or type of framing, if known. House and Church: Wood-frame ; Cabin: Log

Walls: Describe the exterior wall covering such as beaded weatherboard or asbestos shingles. House and Church: Weatherboard; Cabin: square notched logs

Windows: Describe the number, material, and form of the primary windows. This includes the number of panes per sash, what the sashes are made of, and how the sashes operate (are they hinged or do they slide vertically) Have the windows been replaced? House: 5 on front façade; Cabin 2 on front facade

Porch: Briefly describe the primary (front) porch. List the primary material, shape of the porch roof, and other defining details. House has a wood bracketed porch. Neither other contributing structure has a porch

Roof: Describe the roof, listing the shape and the covering material. All contributing structures have seamed metal roofs.

Chimney(s): List the number of chimneys and the materials used. Include the brick bond pattern if possible. House has three interior chimneys. Two are visible from the front of the house, a third that existed on the south side of the L has been completely rebuilt; the Cabin has one interior central chimney

Architectural Description of Individual Resource: *(Please describe architectural patterns, types, features, additions, remodelings, or other alterations. A sketch of the current floor plan would be appreciated)*

Meadowbrook Farm sits on a 112 acre tract off of Route 522 (Cross County Rd) in the Apple Grove area of Louisa County, Virginia. The contributing buildings located on the site include the two-story three-bayed dwelling house constructed c. 1897; the cabin, a three room, one and one-half story square notched log structure built c. 1860 with a 1925 shed addition at the back; and Apple Grove Methodist Episcopal Church South built between 1892 and 1893. There are also six renovated farm buildings.

The two-story three-bayed dwelling house was built c. 1897 by John J Mills for his son-in-law, Dr. Henry F. Harris and daughter Leckie Mills, grandparents of the present owner Stephen C. Harris. The weatherboard-clad house has a course field stone foundation of local schist and mortar. Originally only a root cellar existed beneath the house, which was designed with the front façade and the north side forming an L. Inside the L was located the kitchen for the dwelling as a separate one-story structure built on posts with a shed roof. The kitchen was enclosed and made a part of the larger dwelling house sometime between 1930 and 1935. Today the kitchen section of the dwelling is distinguishable from the original by a bay window on the south side. In 1987 the present owner raised the north section of the house up and dug a partial basement. The raised basement on the north side has a brick and mortar foundation. Even though the new basement was dug the existing floorboards were only reinforced. The large beams that originally supported the house remain in place.

The front façade of the dwelling boasts a centered gable roof with enlarged eaves and brackets. Though the covering of the roof has been replaced the roof framing including the original gutter system remain. The one-

story bracketed front porch sits beneath the center gable. The windows are two-over-two sash windows and have been replaced. However, the replacements were custom-built to exactly match what was there originally. There are five windows on the front façade, four on the north, and two on the south side. There are also two interior chimneys the tops of which have been rebuilt. Originally a fireplace also existed on the south side of the L. However it has been completely rebuilt and modernized.

Behind the dwelling house are five renovated farm buildings and one modern building. They are presently used as barns and sheds for the working farm. The buildings were renovated around 1990 so that all now have board and batten exteriors. Several buildings date to the first quarter of the 20th century. One still has its original interior framing of rough logs and a second still has its original roof. The present owner added a pond to the property and that feature separates the dwelling and barns from the northern section of the farm where the cabin and corncrib are located.

The cabin is located on the north side of the pond. The ax-hewn square notched log structure is the oldest structure presently standing on the property and dates to c. 1860. The cabin is one-and-one-half stories with two rooms on the ground floor and a full attic above. The foundation of the cabin is quartz fieldstone. A kitchen was added to the back of the east side of the cabin around 1925. The front façade is two bayed each having its own window and door. A center placed chimney opens into both rooms. A door next to the fireplace near the front façade connects the two front rooms. The stairway to the upper story is accessible only from the east side of the structure. The roof and rafters of the cabin were replaced sometime between 1955 and 1960 after sustaining damage from a fallen tree. A 1931 corncrib is located next to the cabin.

The final contributing building is the Apple Grove Methodist Episcopal Church South built between 1892 and 1893. The church is a weatherboard-clad building with a course green stone foundation. The seamed metal roof is probably not original but it is not known when it was replaced. There are three six over six windows on both the north and south sides of the church large parts of which remain. The exterior shutters also remain on the south side of the structure. A decorative vent was placed on the front façade above the entrance. The sanctuary floor is raised about three feet above the ground and the exterior stair is missing. The church was built as one large room with a slightly raised platform at the front. The interior was plastered and the ceiling is open to the rafters, which still retain the decorative brackets. The original pulpit is still inside the church as well. Located east of the church between it and the dwelling house is a cemetery. The cemetery has connections to both the family and the church. It contains 26 graves some marked with complete markers showing name, dates, or initials, some marked just with irregular stones, and some counted by obvious depression within the area of marked graves.

Significance Statement: Briefly note any significant events, personages, and/or families associated with the property. (Detailed family genealogies are not necessary.) Please list all sources of information. It is not necessary to attach lengthy articles or genealogies to this form. Normally, only information contained on this form is forwarded to the State Review Board.

Meadowbrook Farm was originally the residence of Alexander W. Mills (1824-1894) and his wife Oteria Yeamans Mills (1844-1929). Alexander and his wife probably lived in the cabin as it is the oldest structure on the property built sometime around 1860. When Alexander died in November of 1894 his brother John J. Mills (1833-1919) sold the property to his son-in-law, Dr. Henry F. Harris.¹ Though Alexander lived there his brother John who owned a general store in Apple Grove had control of the property. John J Mills built the existing dwelling house for his son-in-law Henry Harris and his daughter Leckie Mills Harris around 1897.²

Henry Francis Harris was born in Louisa County. He was the son of William H. Harris and Mary Hiter Harris who lived with William's father Jeremiah at Sunny Side, which stands just north of Apple Grove. William H. Harris died in a Confederate Hospital in Richmond in 1864. His only son Henry attended the University of Maryland and graduated with a degree in dentistry. Henry married Leckie Mills around 1892 and began his practice in the county. Dr Harris used a room on the second floor of the dwelling house as an office.³ His dentist's chair and some of his equipment are on display at the Louisa County Museum.

John J. Mills and his wife Annie M. Mills (1850-1919) lived next door to their daughter and son-in-law on an adjoining piece of property in a house that later burned. The building that housed his general store in Apple Grove still exists but has been heavily altered. However, besides being a merchant John J. Mills had a large impact on the make up of Apple Grove through his patronage of several local institutions including the Apple Grove Methodist Episcopal Church South that sits on Meadowbrook Farm. In 1892 John J. Mills and his wife Annie M. Mills sold for a small sum a one-and-one-half acre piece of land on Meadowbrook Farm to the trustees of Apple Grove Methodist Episcopal Church South for the land to be used as a church.⁴ Malcolm Harris in his book *A History of Louisa County, Virginia* credits John J. Mills with both building and maintaining the church at Apple Grove.⁵ The Apple Grove Church never had a permanent congregation but was used primarily for revivals or by traveling preachers. There was a clause in the deed that if the land ever ceased being used as a church then the property would revert to Mills or his heirs. Henry F. Harris repossessed the land in 1938 after it had not been used as a church for some time.⁶

However, the Apple Grove Church was not the first John J. Mills had supported. In 1877 he had sold a half acre of land to the New Anna Baptist Church, which still stands today in Apple Grove. A congregation of African-Americans who were probably former slaves used the New Anna Church. The three trustees of the church Cornelius Jackson, Daniel Baker, and Waller Anderson were illiterate signing the deed for the land with only a mark.⁷

John J. Mills did not confine his patronage to the church. In 1898 he sold one half acre of land to the Cuckoo School District. The District built what is known today as the Apple Grove School on the property. The original building still stands with several additions added throughout the 20th century. The school remained in use by the County through the 1970's and today is a private residence.⁸

Meadowbrook Farm is not only significant for its architecture but also for its connections to the history of Louisa County as a whole. It was the home of Dr. Henry Harris who as a dentist treated hundreds of county residents. The property also has a strong connection to Henry Harris's father-in-law John J. Mills, who is buried in the cemetery on the property. John J. Mills served as a prominent merchant but also as patron of two local churches and the area's school.

Notes

¹ Louisa County Deed Book 14, p. 14

² In 1898 the value of the property in the county tax records increased by \$200 for buildings added.

³ Claudia Anderson Chisholm and Ellen Gray Lillie, *Old Home Places of Louisa County*, (Orange, Va.: Green Publishers, 1979), 57, 94, 102.; Malcolm H. Harris, *History of Louisa County, Virginia*, (Richmond: The Dietz Press, 1936), 340-342.

⁴ Louisa County Deed Book 12, p. 399

⁵ Harris, *Louisa County*, 214

⁶ Louisa County Deed Book 56, p. 21

⁷ Louisa County Deed Book 3, p. 723

⁸ Louisa County Deed Book 17, p. 93

Legal Owner(s) of the Property (For more than one owner, please use a separate sheet.)

Mr. Mrs.
 Ms. Miss Stephen C. Harris
(Name)

11446 Cross County Rd Mineral VA 23117
(Address) (City) (State) (Zip Code)

[Redacted] [Redacted]
(Email Address) (Daytime telephone including area code)

Owner's Signature: _____ Date: _____
•• Signature required for processing all applications. ••

In the event of corporate ownership you must provide the name and title of the appropriate contact person.

Contact person: _____

Daytime Telephone: () _____

Applicant Information (Individual completing form if other than legal owner of property)

Mr. Mrs.
 Ms. Miss [Redacted] [Redacted]
(Name) (Firm)

[Redacted] [Redacted] [Redacted] [Redacted]
(Address) (City) (State) (Zip Code)

[Redacted] [Redacted]
(Email Address) (Daytime telephone including area code)

Applicant's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Notification

In some circumstances, it may be necessary for the department to confer with or notify local officials of proposed listings of properties within their jurisdiction. In the following space, please provide the contact information for the local County Administrator or City Manager.

Mr. Mrs. Dr.
 Miss Ms. Hon. C. Lee Lintecum County Administrator
(Name) (Position)

Louisa P. O. Box 160
(Locality) (Address)

Louisa VA 23093 540-967-0401
(City) (State) (Zip Code) (Daytime telephone including area code)

Please use the following space to explain why you are seeking an evaluation of this property.
For placement on the National Register of Historic Placement and Tax Credits

Would you be interested in the State and/or the Federal Rehabilitation Tax Credits? Yes No
 Would you be interested in the easement program? Yes No