

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

Listed:
VLR 9/17/2015
NRHP 12/22/15

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Rock Cliff

Other names/site number: VDHR File No. 062-0438

Name of related multiple property listing:

Part of the Norwood/Wingina Rural Historic District (in the nomination process)

N/A

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

Street & number: 12615 Norwood Road

City or town: Wingina State: VA County: Nelson

Not For Publication: N/A

Vicinity: X

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

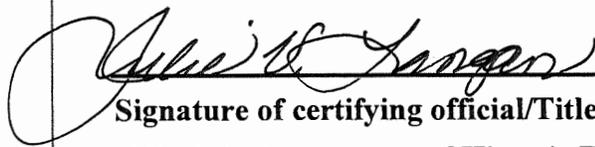
I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

national statewide local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

A B C D


Signature of certifying official/Title: _____ Date: 10/23/15
Virginia Department of Historic Resources
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official: _____ Date: _____

Title: _____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

Name of Property _____

County and State _____

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- ___ entered in the National Register
- ___ determined eligible for the National Register
- ___ determined not eligible for the National Register
- ___ removed from the National Register
- ___ other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

Rock Cliff
Name of Property

Nelson, VA
County and State

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>4</u>	<u>1</u>	buildings
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>5</u>	<u>1</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC: Single Dwelling. Secondary Structures

FUNERARY: Cemetery

HEALTH CARE: Doctor's Office

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC: Single Dwelling. Secondary Structures

FUNERARY: Cemetery

Rock Cliff
Name of Property

Nelson, VA
County and State

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

MID-19TH CENTURY

OTHER: I-house

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: WOOD: Weatherboard; BRICK; METAL: Tin

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

Rock Cliff is a 692-acre property located in Nelson County, Virginia, approximately 50 miles southwest of Charlottesville, and 50 miles northeast of Lynchburg. It overlooks the remnants of the historic James River and Kanawha Canal, and beyond it the flood plains which lead to the James River. The main house is a two-story, I-house sheathed in weatherboards, built in 1854 and extended in 1882. The domestic complex includes three contributing buildings: a smokehouse, an office, and a kitchen. A family cemetery dating back to the 19th century is located behind the primary dwelling and is a contributing site. A non-historic barn/garage is a non-contributing building. The oldest resource on the property is the office, built circa 1825, which was originally an overseer's dwelling. After the main house was built, Dr. William Andrew Horsley (1815-1887), great-grandfather of Rock Cliff's current owner, used the building as his doctor's office.

Narrative Description

Setting

Rock Cliff is located across from the bluffs of the James River in Nelson County, one mile west of the town of Wingina (formerly known as Hardwicksville), and approximately 20 miles southeast of Lovingston, the county seat. The house faces south, and looks across Norwood Road (SR 647), the CSX railroad (which was built on the towpath of the historic James River and Kanawha Canal), and the flood plains toward the James River. Until 2006, the land between

Rock Cliff
Name of Property

Nelson, VA
County and State

Norwood Road and the James River was included in the Rock Cliff property. A right-of-way across this tract continues to give access to the river and to Gantt Island.

The house is accessed via a .13-mile-long driveway from Norwood Road. An 11-acre pasture is located between the front lawn of the house and the public road. Many oak trees that are over a century old dot the yard; several of these are reputed to have been planted by Dr. Horsley. The three contributing outbuildings and the barn are located north of the main dwelling. A pasture behind the three outbuildings separates them from the family cemetery, a contributing site.

The 692-acre parcel is bordered on the west and east by woodlands and hayfields. Union Hill Road (SR 626) forms the northernmost border. The parcel is comprised of approximately 673 acres of timber and 19 acres of open land. Several creeks are found on the property; the largest, Haw Creek, crosses Norwood Road just west of Rock Cliff's entrance, and passes under the historic canal and towpath before emptying into the James River. In the 1950s the present owner and his father discovered an active still on one of the creeks, which produced 10,000 fifths of rye whiskey per day. A possible slave cemetery has been discovered in the woods to the west of Haw Creek but needs further investigation, and prehistoric artifacts have been unearthed on the low grounds bordering the James River. The property has never been subject to professional archaeological investigations.

When Rock Cliff's builder, Dr. William Horsley, died in 1887, he left 637 acres equally to his five children. These parts were subdivided among their heirs, resulting in pieces as small as 1/84th of the total. Over a 30-year period beginning in 1930, his grandson, Dr. W. A. H. Gantt (1892-1980) doggedly reassembled all the pieces.

Construction of the Main Dwelling, 1854 and 1880, Contributing Building

Tradition has it that the original section of Rock Cliff, a 3-bay I-house, was built around 1854 following Dr. William Horsley's purchase of the original tract of 458 acres, and the second section, a single-pile, side-passage plan, was added to the west end in 1882. In Dr. Horsley's daughter Ann Maria Perkins Horsley's diary she describes her father cutting a door on the second floor from the old house into the new addition, calling it "not pretty but convenient."

Exterior

Rock Cliff was built in two sections. The 1854 section is a wood frame, two-story, three-bay, side-gabled I-house sheathed with weatherboards. The 1882 addition is a two-story, three-bay, single-pile, side-passage plan. Except for one addition on the rear (north elevation), all walls are covered with original poplar weatherboards.

1854 Section

The foundation is made of brick, and there is a crawlspace underneath. The double--hung, wood, six-over-six window sash (72" tall) have many original glass panes and their original wood

Rock Cliff
Name of Property

Nelson, VA
County and State

shutters with operational louvers. The attic level has windows on both the east and west ends. The roof is covered with painted galvanized tin, and is in excellent condition. The one-story, three-bay front porch (south elevation) is enclosed with screens and has Doric columns and railing balusters; it was constructed in the mid-1990s. It is accessed by granite steps which were once part of a canal lock structure. The porch has a copper-clad flat roof, with a balcony that features a Chippendale-style railing. The balcony is accessed from the upstairs landing. Sheltered by the porch, the centered, primary entry has a four-panel door topped by a four-pane transom. In 1965 a two-level, seven-bay porch with rectangular balusters was added to the rear (north elevation) of the 1854 section, and also is now enclosed with screen.

There are centered, exterior brick chimneys on both the east and west gable ends of the 1854 section; the west chimney was partially enclosed after the 1882 addition was built. The bricks are laid in a stretcher-bond pattern, and tradition holds that they were made on the farm.

1882 Addition

The foundation of the 1882 addition is made of locally quarried, random rubble stone. The addition features a raised basement, accessed from both the west end and inside the house. A chimney form and split-lathe are found on the west wall of the basement. There is a crawl space underneath the remainder toward the east.

Seven original wooden window sash remain; six are 54" tall, double-hung, and six-over-six. All six are framed by their original louvered shutters. The seventh window, on the lower level, west end, has a single-hung, four-over-four sash. The remaining wood windows are all of more recent vintage, manufactured by Pella Corporation. They include double-hung, six-over-six, double-hung, four-over-four, and fixed and operable casement windows. All Pella windows have individual glass panes.

In 2000, the main dwelling was renovated based on a design by Charlottesville architect Doug Gilpin, Jr. A bay window, comprised of two, double-hung, six-over-six window sash and two casement sash, was installed on the first-story front (south elevation) side. A 22-foot-by-12-foot space was added to the back (north elevation) end of this section of the house, providing a seating area for the kitchen and a mudroom. A brick stoop was added to provide access to the mudroom. The second story features the aforementioned copper-clad balcony with wood Chippendale-style railing, which covers both the first-story rear extensions. The exterior walls of the 2000 space are covered with painted Hardiplank siding.

In 2009, the chimney on the west end of the 1882 addition was removed and rebuilt, and a single carport added. The carport has wood Doric columns and railings to match the front (south elevation) porch on the 1854 section and the second-floor balcony on the rear (north elevation) of the 1882 addition.

Interior

Rock Cliff
Name of Property

Nelson, VA
County and State

1854 Section

The 1854 part of Rock Cliff has a central-hall plan running north to south. The first floor, primary entrance's four-panel door is topped by a four-pane transom. The rear door has six panels. All four rooms in this section of the house have original heart pine flooring and 10-foot-high ceilings.

A large parlor or living room runs front to back on the east side of the house. Its walls, like all interior walls in Rock Cliff, are plastered. Most of the plastering work was done by Murray Whitehead of Nelson County in 2000. The fireplaces in all four rooms have a shallow firebox, a carved wood mantel surrounding the fireplace, a frieze with a triangular center panel, and a wood mantelshelf. Two wood, built-in bookcases flank the front living room window (south elevation), and were built in 2000 by Lester Saunders of Arrington (Nelson County).

To the west of the hall is the dining room, which also runs front to back. A door on the west wall, north of the fireplace, leads into the 1882 addition.

The staircase leading to the second floor has a half landing along the front (south) wall. A small wood door underneath a double-hung, six-over-six window sash gives access to the second-story balcony over the front porch when the window is raised. The staircase features square newel posts and a molded wood railing with square balusters. A wood double door with individual glass panes gives access to the sleeping porch from the upstairs passage.

Both upstairs rooms are bedrooms; the room on the west end has a wood door on either side of the centered fireplace, which lead into the 1882 addition. The door on the south end is original, and the door on the north side is an exact copy of the original. A trapdoor in the ceiling of the west bedroom gives access to the attic.

1882 Addition

The wood, six-panel door from the dining room in the 1854 section gives access to the kitchen in the 1882 addition. The kitchen and sitting area have recycled heart-pine flooring, which was installed in 2000. A modern bathroom is located at the southeast corner of the first floor. Before 1975, the kitchen was located in the southwest corner of the first floor, and this room is now used as a den/library. The den, upstairs bedroom, and office all have original heart pine flooring. Fireplaces in both the den and the upstairs bedroom were rebuilt in 2009, when the exterior chimney was reconstructed. Each is a Rumford design and surrounded by a brick frieze while retaining the original carved wood mantel and mantelshelf.

A back stairway between the kitchen and the den leads to the second floor. A modern bathroom is located in the southeast corner of the second floor. A wood door gives access to the west bedroom in the 1854 section. An office on the north side, second floor, also has access to the west bedroom in the 1854 section. In this office, the original weatherboarding of the west wall, as it looked before the 1882 addition was built, as well as the (now) interior brick chimney is

Rock Cliff
Name of Property

Nelson, VA
County and State

visible. A French door with individual glass panes gives access to the second-floor balcony. A trapdoor in the upstairs bedroom gives access to the attic, which has a window in the west wall.

Secondary Resources

Locations of secondary resources are shown on the attached sketch map. The contributing and non-contributing resources are listed by number on the map, with the corresponding numbers shown in the inventory below.

Contributing Resources

2. Smokehouse 1854 contributing building

The smokehouse is a one-story, one-bay wood building, with a standing seam metal gable roof. Its batten door is located on the south elevation. The smokehouse is located near and to the northwest of the main dwelling.

3. Office 1825 contributing building

The doctor's office was built circa 1825, and is a one-story with loft, three-bay, post-and-beam wood frame building with cedar weatherboard siding, gable roof covered with standing-seam metal, brick foundation, and six-over-six and four-over-four double-hung window sash. Two windows and the weatherboards were installed in the 1990s. The interior walls are 8-12" horizontal planks, original to the building. There is a loft, accessed by a ladder and a batten door on the exterior east elevation. The office was originally an overseer's building. It is located to the north of the main house.

4. Kitchen 1854 contributing building

The summer kitchen is a one-story, one-bay wood frame building with a gable roof covered with standing seam metal, and a rubble-stone foundation. There are two six-pane window sash on the north and south elevations. A batten door is located on the east elevation. The building is located to the north of the main dwelling and to the east of both the office and the smokehouse.

5. Cemetery circa 1860 contributing site

The family cemetery is situated approximately 250 yards behind the main residence. It is surrounded by a wrought-iron fence, and ivy and periwinkle cover the ground. The earliest marked interment is Willie A. Horsley (died 1863), son of Dr. William Andrew Horsley, who built Rock Cliff (and who is the great-grandfather of the current owner). The most recent interment is Anna Legemaate (died 2009), mother-in-law of the current owner.

Non-Contributing Resource

6. Barn/Garage 2008 non-contributing building

The barn/garage contains two, single-car bays, one double-car bay, and two workshops. It is wood frame sheathed in Hardiplank siding and has a tin roof. It is situated to the northeast of the main dwelling.

Rock Cliff
Name of Property

Nelson, VA
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

Rock Cliff
Name of Property

Nelson, VA
County and State

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

HEALTH/MEDICINE

Period of Significance

1854-1965

Significant Dates

1854

1882

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Gantt, Dr. William Andrew Horsley

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Rock Cliff
Name of Property

Nelson, VA
County and State

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

Rock Cliff, built circa 1854 and 1882, is a portion of an original 1738 land patent by Dr. William Cabell (1699-1774) of Warminster, now in Nelson County, Virginia. The patent involved a 4800-acre tract of river bottom land that stretched from Warminster upriver 15 miles. John Cabell (1743-1815) was the last of Dr. Cabell's five children to die; at the time of his death the Cabell family owned nearly 60,000 acres, on both sides of the James River. Dr. William Cabell was the first Englishman to enter the mountainous region west of the mouth of the Rockfish River for the purpose of permanent settlement, but the area has drawn human habitation for a long time, as evidenced by the Native American artifacts that have been unearthed on the Rock Cliff property, both in the low grounds and along the James River. Rock Cliff is locally significant under Criterion A in the area of Health/Medicine because it served as the local center of medical services when its builder, Dr. William Andrew Horsley, lived there. He visited patients and also saw them in his doctor's office, a building which still stands on the property. Rock Cliff is locally significant under Criterion B in the area of Health/Medicine because of its association with Dr. William Andrew Horsley Gantt (grandson of Dr. Horsley), who was born there in 1892. Dr. Gantt worked with Dr. Ivan Pavlov from 1925 to 1929 in Leningrad, and later established a Pavlovian laboratory at Johns Hopkins University. He received the Lasker Award in 1946 and was nominated for, but did not receive, the Nobel Prize in 1970. Dr. Gantt lived at Rock Cliff until 1910, when he left home to study at the University of North Carolina, but returned to Rock Cliff often throughout his lifetime. Rock Cliff's period of significance begins in 1854 with the purchase of the land and the construction of the house by Dr. William Andrew Horsley and extends to 1965, the traditional fifty-year cutoff for properties where historic activities continued into the more recent past, as Dr. W. A. H. Gantt's association with Rock Cliff continued throughout his active career in medical research. Rock Cliff meets Criteria Consideration C as it is the birthplace of Dr. W. A. H. Gantt and is the location of his burial, but its significance is based on its association with his productive medical career.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Historical Overview

Prior to 1607, the land along the James River between present-day Richmond and the Blue Ridge Mountains had long been inhabited by Native Americans. The Monacans occupied five villages along the James River; the westernmost village was said to have been located near Wingina, one mile east of Rock Cliff. Over the years, many Native American artifacts have been unearthed on Rock Cliff lands, including bowls, arrowheads, and pieces of pottery. Artifacts excavated during field investigations in the vicinity by archeological teams from Longwood University and the University of Virginia are on display at the Wingina General Store, at the crossroads of James River Road and Norwood Road.

Rock Cliff
Name of Property

Nelson, VA
County and State

In 1738, Dr. William Cabell patented a 4,800-acre tract of choice river bottom land from below Swan Creek, upriver 15 miles. In eastern Virginia, pressures to obtain more land for the cultivation of tobacco caused landowners to look west of the fall line. According to Briscoe Guy, “Dr. Cabell’s prime motive for moving to this wilderness area was probably the profits to be reaped in the development of frontier lands. He realized that this land was in the path of civilization moving up the river and would soon become very valuable.” At the confluence of Swan Creek and the James River Cabell constructed a tobacco warehouse, a wharf, and a mill; this commercial establishment would eventually become the town of Warminster.

The land on which the primary dwelling at Rock Cliff was built is part of the original grant to Dr. William Cabell, and thus is associated with Dr. Cabell’s contributions to further European settlement in a region previously occupied by Native Americans. Rock Cliff itself was constructed by a direct descendant of William Cabell. The multiple-branched Cabell family’s three-century tenure in the area is an enduring testimony to William Cabell’s skill and foresight in selecting this area for permanent settlement.

In 1763, Dr. William Cabell deeded part of the land granted to him to his son Col. William Cabell (1730-1798). Col. William added to this land extensively, which eventually encompassed 25,000 acres. Col. William’s grandson, Mayo Cabell, sold 458 acres of land to his cousin, Dr. William Andrew Horsley, great-great grandson of Dr. William Cabell, who descended from Dr. Cabell’s daughter, Mary Cabell Horsley; on this tract, the main dwelling, known as Rock Cliff, would be built. The land was originally part of Albemarle County, then Amherst County, and eventually Nelson County.

The dwellings that were established on the land owned by Dr. Cabell and his five children were mostly located on land that was accessible to creeks and rivers, mainly the James and Tye rivers. These bodies of water were important for transportation of crops grown on the river bottom lands and for the establishment of mills.

Even though the Rock Cliff property included river bottom land, crops were not the main source of income for the Horsley family, and records do not show the family held a large number of enslaved workers. After the Civil War, emancipation of enslaved workers did not have the devastating effect at Rock Cliff that was experienced at other Cabell family properties, and Rock Cliff’s owners were able to live on Dr. William Andrew Horsley’s nominal income from his medical practice.

Upon the death of Eliza George Perkins Horsley, Dr. Horsley’s widow, the 637 acres he left to her were divided equally among their five living children. These parcels were subdivided among their heirs, resulting in pieces as small as 1/84th of the total. Dr. William Andrew Horsley Gantt (1892-1980), grandson of Dr. William Horsley, reassembled all the pieces into one 637-acre whole. At present, Rock Cliff encompasses 692 acres.

Criterion A – Health/Medicine

Rock Cliff
Name of Property

Nelson, VA
County and State

Dr. William Andrew Horsley (1815-1887), who built Rock Cliff, was a graduate of the Medical Department of the University of Pennsylvania. His medical diploma is part of the papers stored at Rock Cliff. Based on the diaries of his daughter, Anna Maria Horsley, it has been determined that Dr. Horsley practiced general medicine, including setting broken bones, delivering babies, and treating a variety of diseases. His daughter's diaries mention diphtheria, small pox, and yellow fever, all of which were fairly common communicable diseases prior to the development of vaccines. She mentioned workers who lived on the Rock Cliff property coming to her father's office to be treated and wrote of him preparing medicines in his office.

Even though one of the present outbuildings served as Dr. Horsley's office, his daughter's diaries indicate that he most often rode out to see his patients. She wrote, "...he will probably have to sit up again with Mrs. L.L., ...; this will be the fifth night he has sat up with her." Cabell's dedication to his profession continued through the end of his life. In 1887, she writes that Dr. Horsley "...struggled out to visit a patient and returned after being absent a day and night." Most often he traveled on horseback, although she also mentioned him being carried across a dam and climbing up the Buckingham cliffs on the other side of the James River to see patients.

As has been pointed out before, Rock Cliff did not derive its main income from flood plain crops. Rather, the family depended on Dr. Horsley's doctor's fees. According to Anna Maria Horsley, occasionally his lower-income patients paid with goods rather than cash, such as "a string of red peppers." She added that "Father practices on them as objects of charity." When, in 1881, smallpox was rumored to have broken out in the vicinity, she recorded, "Father has offered to vaccinate free of charge all who desire it." While Dr. Horsley's medical practice apparently was not financially thriving, it was representative of how medicine was practiced during the 19th century. Distances were great, especially in still-thinly settled rural areas. Many patients were unable to travel and very often depended on a doctor's ability and willingness to come to them, and to treat them in a barter- rather than cash-based transaction.

Civil War at Rock Cliff

Given Dr. Horsley's modest income, it is not surprising that Rock Cliff was not constructed on the same scale as some of the "grander" Cabell houses along the James River. His profession, however, meant that the Horsley family's income was sufficient to hold on to their property after the Civil War, whereas numerous plantation owners lost their holdings after suffering huge financial losses during the war and seeing their enslaved workforces freed in its aftermath.

Although Rock Cliff emerged from the war financially stable, the Gantts were not spared by military activities in the area. In late February 1865, the army of Union General Philip H. Sheridan set off from Winchester, Virginia, to attempt to cut off one of the last Confederate supply lines by destroying the Virginia Central Railroad and the James River and Kanawha Canal. If possible, the troops were also ordered to capture Lynchburg and to join the army of M. G. Sherman in North Carolina. Sheridan's forces made their way down the Shenandoah Valley to Staunton, headed east to Charlottesville, and from there to Scottsville on the James River, along

Rock Cliff
Name of Property

Nelson, VA
County and State

the way destroying water tanks, warehouses, and railroad bridges that might have been of use to Confederate troops.

By March 7, 1865, Sheridan's troops reached Hardwicksville (now Wingina), one mile east of Rock Cliff. Fifteen years later, Anna Maria Horsley (1853-1915) wrote in her diary about "...seeing Sheridan's ruthless raiders possess themselves of everything of value on the place [Rock Cliff] and what they could not take off they destroyed... riding into the porch." Such experiences were not uncommon for civilians in the path of both Union and Confederate troops in the war's waning months, as both sides needed supplies to continue fighting.

Part of Sheridan's plan was to cross the James River; the bridge at Wingina was one of only three bridges in the area. At the time, the river was rain-swollen and unfordable. By the time the troops arrived at the bridge, they found it had been burnt. According to family history, Dr. Horsley was among those responsible for the bridge's destruction. His daughter wrote he "left with the negro man [*sic*] and together with some other men, had blown up the bridge across the James River to slow the southward progress of Sheridan's army."

Criterion B – Dr. William Andrew Horsley Gantt

Dr. William Andrew Horsley Gantt, son of Ann Maria Horsley and grandson of Dr. William Horsley, was born at Rock Cliff in 1892; his father died when he was three years old. His mother taught him and his younger brother in the one-room schoolhouse building that now stands east of the nominated property's historic boundary. The schoolhouse at some point was donated to Nelson County and is purported to have housed the first public school in Nelson County. The County sold the schoolhouse back to the Gantt family in the 1930s. It was left to the present owner's son by Dr. Gantt.

William A. H. Gantt spent his formative years at Rock Cliff. Starting at age 12, he attended Miller School, west of Charlottesville, on a scholarship. In 1910, at the age of 18, he enrolled at the University of Virginia, then moved to Greensboro, North Carolina, in 1913 to teach high school physics and chemistry several years. After he had earned enough money, he continued his studies, and graduated from the University of North Carolina in 1917. Three years later he received his medical degree from the University of Virginia.

After his internship, and while doing his residency in gastroenterology at the University of Maryland Hospital, Dr. Gantt traveled to Russia in 1922, where he served as Chief of the Petrograd Unit of the American Relief Administration (A.R.A.). President Hoover, at the request of Russian Leader Vladimir Lenin, had agreed to send Americans, including doctors, to Russia for a short period of time to assist with famine relief. With one week's notice, Dr. Gantt, a man with a compassion for human suffering, left with a small suitcase and plans to stay for three months. While he was there he began a study of the effects of war and famine on the health of Russian citizens. He gathered data and recorded oral histories for the purpose of developing a history of Russian medicine. It is here that he met Dr. Ivan Pavlov, winner of the 1904 Nobel Prize in Medicine. Dr. Gantt's interpreter, who had at one time worked for Pavlov, took him to

Rock Cliff
Name of Property

Nelson, VA
County and State

meet the scientist now known for his studies of the conditional reflex based on the use of a bell and salivating dog. Gantt was captivated by Pavlov as a scientist and a person stating that the meeting was a mark, "from which I can date my whole subsequent professional life." He obtained a position working nights in one of Dr. Pavlov's laboratories and stayed until 1923 when the American Relief program ended.

After the A.R.A. left Russia, Dr. Gantt spent time in England and Finland trying to, and finally succeeding in, getting a visa to return to Russia in 1925. He was determined to get back because, upon his departure, Dr. Pavlov had given him a personal letter inviting him to study under him. The difficulty in obtaining a visa was due to Lenin generating propaganda among the Russian people that Hoover and the A.R.A were all spies. Lenin did this to suppress their popularity, which was a result of the enormous amount of relief they had provided during the severe famine.

From 1925 to 1929, Dr. Gantt studied with Dr. Pavlov at the Institute of Experimental Medicine. Dr. Gantt considered Pavlov's work to be of equal importance in the scientific world as that of Darwin. With energy, dedication, and an insatiable curiosity, he studied Pavlov's work on conditional reflex for 5 years. He taught himself Russian, and in 1928 translated and published *Pavlov's Lectures on Conditional Reflexes*. Gantt also admired Pavlov for his philosophical and political stances. Pavlov refused to take material favors from the Soviets and was an outspoken critic of Marxism, all of which he got away with because Lenin revered him as the father of Russian physiology. Dr. Gantt transcribed many of Pavlov's speeches to English for exposure in the United States. While in Russia, Dr. Gantt also met the author John Dos Passos. They hiked through the Caucasian Mountains and established a lifelong friendship.

After his return to the United States in 1929, Dr. Gantt was invited to found the Pavlovian Laboratory at the Johns Hopkins University Department of Psychiatry. He remained there until his retirement in 1958. He was also instrumental in founding a second Pavlovian Laboratory at the Veteran's Administration facility in Perry Point, Maryland. His scientific investigations yielded new and extensive data in the field of behavioral biology, most notably as it related to pharmacology, psychiatry and cardiology. He formed the theories of schizokinesis and autokinesis which became the foundation of our modern understanding of the link between stress and psychological suffering and physical illness. Other highlights of his professional career include his book *Russian Medicine*, published in 1937, and his translation and publication of Pavlov's *Lectures on Conditioned Reflexes: Conditioned Reflexes and Psychiatry*. Over the course of his long and productive career, Dr. Gantt published seven books and authored seven hundred articles. In 1946, Dr. Gantt received the Lasker Award for his research for *Experimental Basis for Neurotic Behavior*. In 1950, he received the American Heart Association award for his work on cardiac conditioning. Five years later, Dr. Gantt founded the Pavlovian Society, and served as its president for ten years, also serving as editor of the *Pavlovian Journal of Biological Science*. In 1970, he was nominated for, but did not receive, the Nobel Prize in Physiology/Medicine.

Throughout his long professional career, Dr. Gantt traveled all over the world, giving lectures and attending conferences. He never missed an opportunity, however, to return to Rock Cliff

Rock Cliff
Name of Property

Nelson, VA
County and State

whenever time permitted. The present owner, his son, Mr. Andrew Gantt, remembers local people driving up to Rock Cliff in the 1940s and 1950s, to be seen by his father in the same doctor's office that his grandfather, Dr. William Anderson Horsley, had treated patients. Although Dr. Gantt was a research scientist and not a practicing medical doctor, he always carried a small black physician's bag with him wherever he went. At Rock Cliff he made an effort to help local residents as a sort of general practitioner. Local residents knew that when he was there, which was usually most of the summer along with other scheduled visits, they could call on him for medical treatment. He was also known to make house calls to those within the local neighborhood, all without charge. Dr. Gantt, forever a faithful friend and compassionate man, received much personal satisfaction from his time spent helping local residents and considered it to be following in the tradition established by his grandfather, William Andrew Horsley. Additionally, Dr. Gantt brought his laboratory dogs to Rock Cliff for the summer to get them out of the severe heat of the sixth floor Baltimore laboratory cages where they lived. His son recalls one particularly famous experimental dog named Nick that he was responsible for feeding every day at the farm, often sharing with him some of his canned dog food.

It can be said that Rock Cliff was a touchstone in the life of Dr. Gantt; a place to connect with family and maintain local ties with the community of Nelson County. The importance of Rock Cliff to his life is seen in his 30-year effort, beginning in 1930, to reassemble the original Cabell-Horsley acreage, which had been repeatedly divided and subdivided through inheritances. The efforts of this remarkable man ensured that Rock Cliff was once again in one piece and remained in the family. He was buried in the family cemetery at Rock Cliff following his death in 1980.

Conclusion

Rock Cliff is one of many houses built by the Cabell family in Nelson County and neighboring areas. Some of the dwellings predated Rock Cliff, and some were larger and more elaborate, reflecting the important roles played by many Cabell descendants, such as Joseph Carrington Cabell (a friend of Thomas Jefferson; he was instrumental in the establishment of the University of Virginia, and of the James River and Kanawha Canal). Few of the original dwellings are still extant. For example, Liberty Hall, home of Dr. William Cabell, and Edgewood, home of Joseph Carrington Cabell, both burned to the ground. Union Hill, built in 1775 for Dr. Cabell's oldest son, was moved to Goochland County, Virginia. However, three of the Cabell family houses, Montezuma (1790), Bon Aire (1798) and Soldier's Joy (1783), are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. All have passed out of the hands of Cabell family descendants. Today, Rock Cliff is the only dwelling that has been continuously owned and occupied by descendants of Dr. William Cabell. In that respect, it is unique.

Today the main house retains a high level of integrity of location, setting, materials, design, feeling, and association. A high percentage of historic fabric has been retained, such as the flooring, window sash, and weatherboards. The configuration of the rooms in both the original house and the 1882 addition has changed very little, and renovations have been respectful of the house's original style. In fact, one Cabell cousin commented, when she inspected the space added onto the kitchen, that "no Yankee dollars were spent here."

Rock Cliff
Name of Property

Nelson, VA
County and State

Rock Cliff's direct association with the provision of medical care for the local community throughout the 19th century, along with the home front experience during the Civil War, exemplify the multiple layers of history that occurred here during the property's period of significance. After surviving all these events, Rock Cliff then became the home of a world-renowned scientist who, amidst his many achievements, also dedicated himself to reassembling the lands of his family homeplace.

Rock Cliff
Name of Property

Nelson, VA
County and State

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Brown, Alexander. *The Cabells and Their Kin*. Richmond, VA: Garrett and Massey, 1939.
Cabell, Randolph Wall. 20th Century Cabells and Their Kin. Franklin, NC: Genealogy Publishing Service, 1993.

Guy, Briscoe B., "Ghost Town of the Virginia Countryside". Paper written for the University of Virginia, 1947.

Historic Resources of Nelson County: Identification and Assessment. The Thomas Jefferson Planning District, 1993.

Horsley, Anna Maria (Nannie P.) "Journal". Excerpts from diaries written at Rock Cliff, 1879-1883 (handwritten).

John Hopkins Medical Institute. "W. Horsley Gantt, 24 October 1892-26 February 1980, Biography." Accessed online at www.medicalarchives.jhmi.edu/sgml/gantt-bio.htm.

Kelly, Gerard R., ACSW, "A Last Link to Pavlov: W. Horsley Reflects." *Arch Gen Psychiatry*, Volume 35, December 1978.

Last Will and Testament of Eliza George Perkins Horsley. Family papers stored at Rock Cliff, 1907.

MacKinnon, Dean, M.D., "W. Horsley Gantt." *John Hopkins Medicine, Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences*. Accessed online at www.hopkinsmedicine.org/psychiatry/about/anniversary/stars/horsley-gantt.html.

Minardi, Archer Guy. Cabell Family Homes. Self-published, 2008.

Nelson County (Virginia). Deed Books 14, 19, 20 and 23. Circuit Court Clerk's Office, Nelson County Courthouse.

Nicholas, Richard. Sheridan's James River Campaign of 1865 Through Central Virginia. Charlottesville, VA: Historic Albemarle, 2012.

Osborne, Kathryn Michan. Descendants of Mary Cabell Horsley. Radford, VA: Commonwealth Press, Inc., 1978.

Survey of Architectural Resources; Norwood and Wingina Vicinities; Nelson County, Virginia. Lynchburg, VA: HistoryTech, 2014.

Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Property Survey Form, Intensive Level.

Rock Cliff
Name of Property

Nelson, VA
County and State

The W. Horsley Gantt Papers. Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins Medical Institutions, 1986.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
 - Other State agency
 - Federal agency
 - Local government
 - University
 - Other
- Name of repository: Department of Historic Resources, Richmond, VA

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): DHR No. 062-0438

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 692.84

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Latitude: 37.661040 | Longitude: -78.756580 |
| 2. Latitude: 37.666030 | Longitude: -78.745940 |
| 3. Latitude: 37.65340 | Longitude: -78.730320 |
| 4. Latitude: 37.645990 | Longitude: -78.731950 |
| 5. Latitude: 37.639870 | Longitude: -78.737270 |
| 6. Latitude: 37.640650 | Longitude: -78.749070 |

Rock Cliff
Name of Property

Nelson, VA
County and State

7. Latitude: 37.653090 Longitude: -78.751950

Or
UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

- | | | |
|----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 2. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 3. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 4. Zone: | Easting : | Northing: |

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The historic boundary encompasses three tax parcels recorded by Nelson County as parcel numbers 90-A-7 (Book 7, p. 353), 90-A-17 (Book 266, p. 507), and 90-A-6 (Book 391, p. 341). The property is roughly bounded on the south by Norwood Road, on the north by Union Hill Road (SR 626); on the east by James River Road (SR 56), while open farmland is to the west of the property. The true and correct historic boundary is shown on the attached Location Map.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The historic boundaries are drawn to encompass all of the property's contributing resources (including the primary dwelling, outbuildings, and cemetery), the historic setting, and all of the land owned by the family during the period of significance and that was part of the original 18th century Cabell grant.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Andrew and Digna Gantt
organization: N/A
street & number: 12615 Norwood Road
city or town: Wingina state: VA zip code: 24599
e-mail: ganttda@gmail.com
telephone: 434 263-8680
date: June 5, 2015

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Rock Cliff
Name of Property

Nelson, VA
County and State

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

The following information is common to all photographs:

Name of Property: Rock Cliff
State: Virginia
County: Nelson
Photographer: Digna Gantt
Date Photographed: June and October 2014

Description of photographs:

- | | |
|----------------|--|
| Photo 1 of 15: | VA_Nelson County_Rock Cliff_0001
Primary dwelling, south elevation, camera facing north |
| Photo 2 of 15: | VA_Nelson County_Rock Cliff_0002
Primary dwelling, north elevation, camera facing south |
| Photo 3 of 15: | VA_Nelson County_Rock Cliff_0003
Primary dwelling, east gable end wall, camera facing northwest |
| Photo 4 of 15: | VA_Nelson County_Rock Cliff_0004
Primary dwelling, west gable end wall, camera facing northeast |
| Photo 5 of 15: | VA_Nelson County_Rock Cliff_0005
Smokehouse, south and east elevations, camera facing northwest |

Rock Cliff
Name of Property

Nelson, VA
County and State

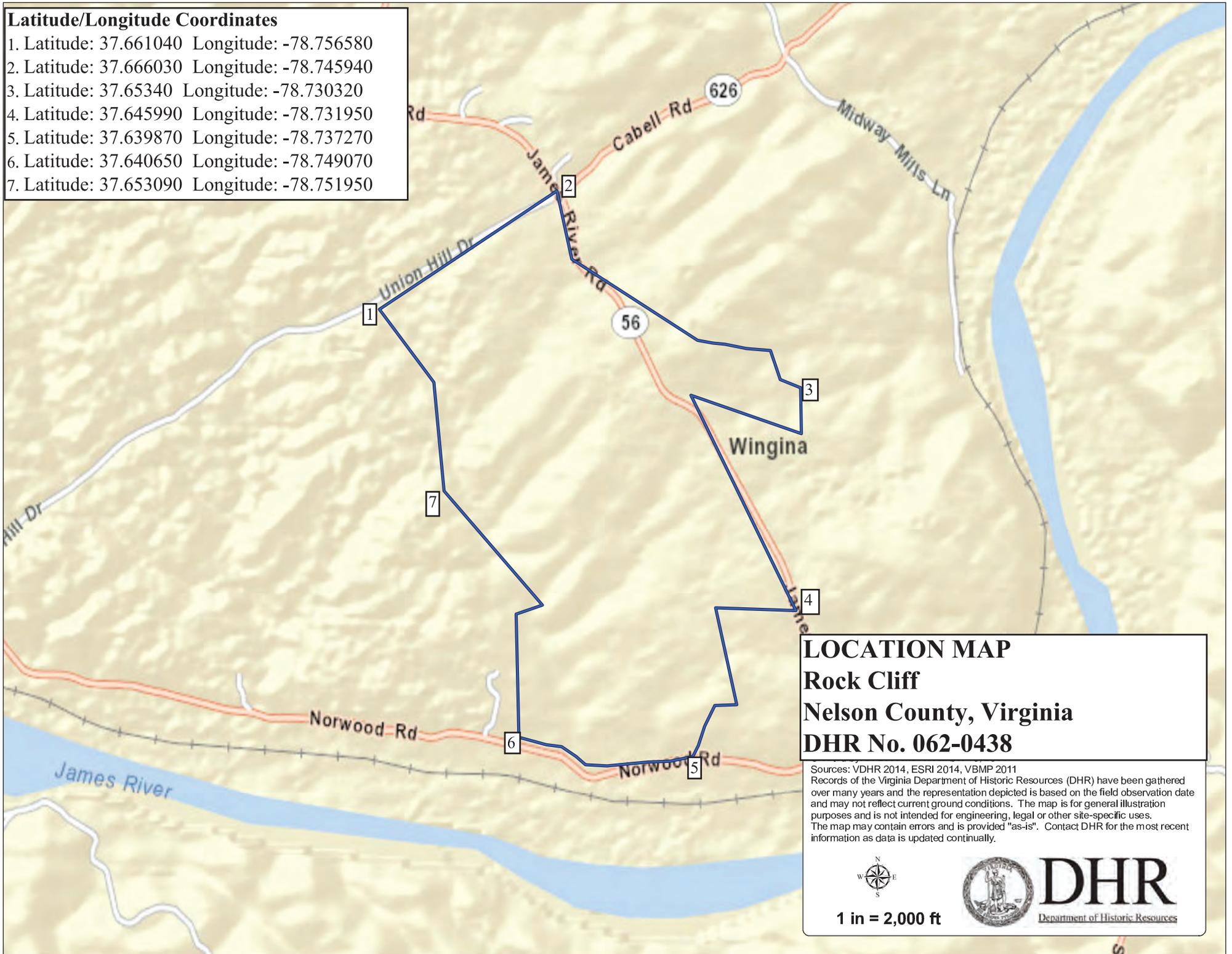
- Photo 6 of 15: VA_Nelson County_Rock Cliff_0006
Office, south elevation, camera facing north
- Photo 7 of 15: VA_Nelson County_Rock Cliff_0007
Kitchen, south and west elevations, camera facing northeast
- Photo 8 of 15: VA_Nelson County_Rock Cliff_0008
Cemetery, camera facing northeast
- Photo 9 of 15: VA_Nelson County_Rock Cliff_0009
Schoolhouse, south elevation, camera facing north
(this building is located just east of Rock Cliff's historic boundary
but is shown here because of its association with Dr. Gantt)
- Photo 10 of 15: VA_Nelson County_Rock Cliff_0010
Garage/Barn, south elevation, camera facing northeast
- Photo 11 of 15: VA_Nelson County_Rock Cliff_0011
Primary dwelling, front hall, camera facing southeast
Date picture was taken: June 30, 2014
- Photo 12 of 15: VA_Nelson County_Rock Cliff_0012
Primary dwelling, living room, camera facing southeast
- Photo 13 of 15: VA_Nelson County_Rock Cliff_0013
Primary dwelling, bedroom, camera facing southwest
- Photo 14 of 15: VA_Nelson County_Rock Cliff_0014
Primary dwelling, bedroom, camera facing southeast
- Photo 15 of 15: VA_Nelson County_Rock Cliff_0015
Primary dwelling, dining room, camera facing southeast

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

1. Latitude: 37.661040 Longitude: -78.756580
2. Latitude: 37.666030 Longitude: -78.745940
3. Latitude: 37.65340 Longitude: -78.730320
4. Latitude: 37.645990 Longitude: -78.731950
5. Latitude: 37.639870 Longitude: -78.737270
6. Latitude: 37.640650 Longitude: -78.749070
7. Latitude: 37.653090 Longitude: -78.751950



LOCATION MAP Rock Cliff Nelson County, Virginia DHR No. 062-0438

Sources: VDHR 2014, ESRI 2014, VBMP 2011
Records of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (DHR) have been gathered over many years and the representation depicted is based on the field observation date and may not reflect current ground conditions. The map is for general illustration purposes and is not intended for engineering, legal or other site-specific uses. The map may contain errors and is provided "as-is". Contact DHR for the most recent information as data is updated continually.

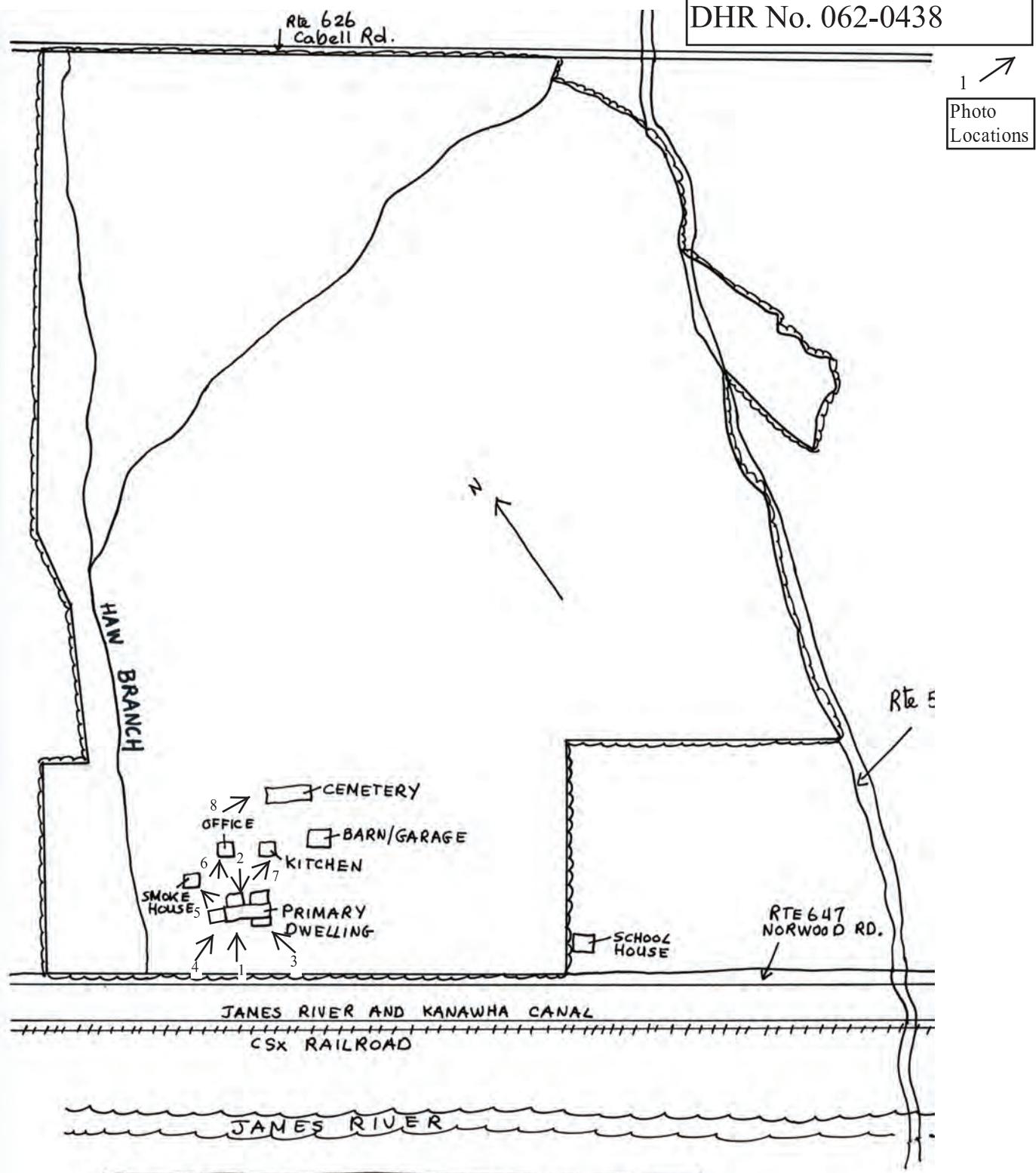


1 in = 2,000 ft



DHR
Department of Historic Resources

Sketch Map/ Photo Key
Rock Cliff
Nelson County, VA
DHR No. 062-0438



VA_NELSON COUNTY_ROCK CLIFF