



**PRELIMINARY INFORMATION FORM (PIF) for INDIVIDUAL PROPERTIES**

*Note: PIFs are prepared by applicants and evaluated by DHR staff and the State Review Board based on information known at the time of preparation. Recommendations concerning PIFs are subject to change if new information becomes available.*

**DHR No. (to be completed by DHR staff)** 053-0595

**1. General Property Information**

Property name: Gregg-Nichols House

Property address: 19219 Otley Road

City or Town: Purcellville, Virginia

Zip code: 20132

Name of the Independent City or County where the property is located: Loudoun

Category of Property (choose only one of the following):

Building X                      Site                             Structure                             Object       

**2. Physical Aspects**

Acreage: 14.3

Setting (choose only one of the following):

Urban        Suburban        Town        Village        Hamlet        Rural X

Briefly describe the property's overall location and setting, including any notable landscape features:

The Gregg-Nichols property is a former Quaker homestead located on 14.3 acres in the former village of Silcott Springs in central Loudoun County, Virginia. The property sits approximately five miles southwest of Purcellville, Virginia, at the base of Black Oak Ridge, a large hill. A branch of the creek, Butchers Branch, begins in the center of the property plat. The surrounding area is predominantly rural, with farms and single-family homes in the gently rolling hills. However, the area is facing encroaching development from Purcellville's urban sprawl. The property is located off Otley Road, down a dirt lane shared by two other residential homes.

### 3. Architectural Description

Architectural Style(s): Quaker Vernacular Patent House: Log Cabin with Fieldstone Additions  
If the property was designed by an architect, landscape architect, engineer, or other professional, please list here: \_\_\_\_\_

If the builder is known, please list here: Thomas Gregg "The Elder"

Date of construction (can be approximate): 1745

#### **Narrative Description (Please do not exceed one page in describing the property):**

Briefly describe the property's general characteristics, such as its current use (and historic use if different), as well as the primary building or structure on the property (such as a house, store, mill, factory, depot, bridge, etc.). Include the materials and method(s) of construction, physical appearance and condition (exterior and interior), and any additions or other major alterations.

The Gregg-Nichols house and property today is owned by Matt and Catherine Berg and used as a residence. The historic use of the property was a farm owned by Quakers near the village of Lincoln. The homestead includes the main house, the primary building, built circa 1745, towards the top of a hill at the southern edge of the property.

The residential house is a two-story hall and parlor-style log cabin built circa 1745 with two fieldstone additions added in the first half of the nineteenth century, creating an L-shaped structure. The exterior of the log cabin features half-dovetail notching and was made with horizontal rough hand-hewn wood that is original to the structure. The eastern log cabin side includes a cellar/basement and attic. The western front-facing side is a field stone addition built sometime in the first half of the nineteenth century. A second field stone addition was added behind the first field stone addition, creating an L-shaped structure. The house features a medium-pitched open-side gable roof made of asphalt shingles. The second addition continues the roof's slope, taking on a saltbox appearance on the back northern side. Two skylights are on the southern front-facing fieldstone side of the house, and two more skylights were installed over the back/second addition side in the 1990s. During the 1970s renovation, a split air AC system, plumbing, and electricity were installed. These systems are placed on the eastern side of the log cabin, next to the basement entrance. At the same time, the roof was replaced with asphalt shingles, the daubing and chinking replaced, and a concrete foundation was installed.

The interior of the stone additions is much unchanged. The second floor's floor beams are exposed in the ceiling in all rooms, and the beams are original to the house. The mantels have been replaced for both additions' fireplaces, but the stones and metalwork within the fireplace are all original. The walls of the stone addition are two feet thick, helping insulate the home in cold and warm weather. One character defining interior feature is a large window opening in the first addition that once faced outside to the north but now looks into the second addition. There has never been an attempt to fill in this defunct window, but it no longer has casing or glass panes. The first floor log cabin retains much of its original hall and parlor floor plan, except for moving the staircase in the 1970s. The stairs now divide the room into the two rooms of the log cabin. Before the construction of the new stairs, a staircase was immediately to the left of the front door of the log cabin. The room on the right has been divided into a front kitchen. The back portion is now a bathroom and closet. The entire first floor had its flooring replaced with wood from another historic building in 1977. The interior of the home has been modernized on the second floor, allowing for plumbing, and features a bathroom, laundry room, hallway, and additional bedrooms. but retains the original wooden floors. The main bedroom has the original log rafters exposed near the ceiling of the room. The attic has also been remodeled for a guest bedroom and office. When William Miner renovated the property, he attempted to use older historic materials, and keep as much of the original design intact.

In a bullet list, include any outbuildings or secondary resources or major landscape features (such as barns, sheds, dam and mill pond, storage tanks, scales, railroad spurs, etc.), including their condition and their estimated construction dates.

- Wagon House/Corn Crib: 1870s. Southwest of the property is the wagon house/corn crib, which is now used as a shed. The building is constructed of vertical plank timber, a front-facing open gable and tin roof, and an overhang shelter large enough for two wagons. The carriage barn was likely built in the 1870s, and the interior features hand-hewn timber supports. Two screened fixed windows look out under the overhang. The wagon house is adjacent to the original barn, which was remodeled as a house and is now a separate property
- Smokehouse: 18<sup>th</sup> or early 19<sup>th</sup> Century. The Smokehouse structure is directly northwest of the second addition of the house. The structure is in disrepair. It is a small single-room square structure with a side gable tin roof. Initially constructed in the same manner as the log cabin portion of the house, the southern wall was replaced with timber panels. The building date is unknown, but it was constructed before 1880, and could possibly date to the building of the log cabin.
- Spring House: 1820-30. The Springhouse is on the northeastern end of the field at the bottom of the sloped clearing. Based on observation, it is a single-story rectangular fieldstone building featuring a wooden door on the western side and a boarded window on the eastern side. Two rooms are inside, and an active spring is still flowing through. The structure may have been built in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, at the same time as one of the fieldstone additions to the house. The shingle roof is in poor condition, covered with moss and other biological growth.

#### 4. Property's History and Significance (Please do not exceed one page)

Briefly explain the property's historic importance, such as significant events, persons, and/or families associated with the property.

If the property is important for its architecture, engineering, landscape architecture, or other aspects of design, please include a brief explanation of this aspect.

The Gregg-Nichols property is eligible under Criterion A for the theme with broad patterns of Quaker settlement into the frontier of Virginia. Beginning in the eighteenth century, Quakers from Pennsylvania and Delaware started purchasing land grants, pushing into what was then the frontier. In 1733, the Janney family was the first to buy land in what is now Loudoun County, which was then part of Prince William County. Quakers soon followed the Janneys into Loudoun, including the Gregg family, led by Thomas "The Elder". Thomas Gregg built what is now known as the Gregg-Nichols House, an excellent example of a Patent Quaker House dating to around 1745, which showcases the style and pattern of Quaker settlement and patent houses of Northern Virginia during the eighteenth century. In the nineteenth century, Thomas "The Potter" Gregg's son Josiah and his son Gregg were not members of the Goose Creek Meeting, though the additions matched the moral sensibilities of plain architecture of the Quakers. By 1854, the property was again under Quaker ownership by Samuel H. Nichols. As seen in the Thomas vs. Nichols chancery case, Nichols was economically integrated into the community with his Quaker neighbors. While nothing shows that Nichols was directly involved with any spas or springs in Silcott Spring, he had amassed a small fortune by his death in 1879. This was in spite of the fact that he suffered financial losses after Merritt's Army marched through during the Burning Raid of 1864 during the Civil War.

The Gregg-Nichols house is eligible under Criterion C as an example of a Quaker Vernacular Patent House with field stone additions that are distinctive to the period and style of construction. The house was constructed around 1745 as a single-story, half-dovetailed, notched log cabin with a hall and parlor floor plan. Hall and parlor floor plans were commonly used by Quaker settlers when constructing their homes. Around 1799, the second story of the log cabin was added. The second story shows distinctive differences in the axe-hewn marks on the wood. Continuing into the nineteenth century, the homestead grew as Josiah Gregg, the son of Thomas "The Potter" added two fieldstone additions, one in 1820 and the last in 1830. Despite Josiah never belonging to a Quaker meeting in adulthood, his fieldstone additions match how Quakers utilized fieldstone in their construction projects in Loudoun County. The Home Farm, the Jacob and Hannah Janney Patent House, and Oakland Green all use fieldstone as building material for additions. Additions were common with Quaker Patent houses as more space was needed with growing families. What is unique about the Gregg-Nichols house is that each addition was left in its original state. No new facades or exteriors were added to cover the log cabin or fieldstone additions. Thus, the Gregg-Nichols house preserves the distinct architectural styles of the Quaker Patent Houses and their additions.



Please list all sources of information used to research the history of the property, such as deeds, census and tax records, and/or published articles and books. (It is not necessary to attach lengthy articles or family genealogies to this form.)

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Department of Historic Resources

Preliminary Information Form

10/27/2025

Rev. September 2022

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**5. Property Ownership** (Check as many categories as apply):

Private: X Public\Local \_\_\_\_\_ Public\State \_\_\_\_\_ Public\Federal \_\_\_\_\_

**Current Legal Owner(s) of the Property** (If the property has more than one owner, please list each below or on an additional sheet.)

name/title: Matthew and Catherine Berg

organization: \_\_\_\_\_

street & number: 19219 Otley Road

city or town: Purcellville state: VA zip code: 20132

e-mail: [mnberg81@gmail.com](mailto:mnberg81@gmail.com) or [cajfromdctova@gmail.com](mailto:cajfromdctova@gmail.com)

telephone: (540) 454-5781

Legal Owner's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: 8/15/2025

**• • 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)

name/title: Elizabeth Layne Welch

organization: \_\_\_\_\_

street & number: 525 North Street NE

city or town: Leesburg state: VA zip code: 20176

e-mail: [laynewe@gmail.com](mailto:laynewe@gmail.com) telephone: (803) 640-6812


Date: 8/15/2025

PLEASE DO NOT ATTACH CONTINUATION SHEETS TO THIS FORM. THANK YOU!



# PIF BOUNDARY MAP

Gregg-Nichols Farm  
Loudoun County, VA  
DHR ID# 053-0595

 Proposed Boundary


0 200  
 Feet





# PIF AERIAL-VICINITY MAP

Gregg-Nichols Farm  
Loudoun County, VA  
DHR ID# 053-0595

 Proposed Boundary

0 800  
 Feet



































































































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