

**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.

## 1. Name of Property

Historic name: Clayton, David L., House

Other names/site number: Merryhearth Manor; VDHR ID# 034-1092

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

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

## 2. Location

Street & number: 724 Old Baltimore Road

City or town: Winchester State: VA County: Frederick

Not For Publication:  N/A Vicinity:  X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 X 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 X 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            X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

X A               B            X C               D

<p>_____  <b>Signature of certifying official/Title:</b>  <u>Virginia Department of Historic Resources</u>  <b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b></p>	<p>_____  <b>Date</b></p>
--	-------------------------------

<p>In my opinion, the property <u>  </u> meets <u>  </u> does not meet the National Register criteria.</p>	
<p>_____  <b>Signature of commenting official:</b></p>	<p>_____  <b>Date</b></p>
<p><b>Title :</b></p>	<p><b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b></p>

David L. Clayton House  
Name of Property

Frederick County, VA  
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

David L. Clayton House  
Name of Property

Frederick County, VA  
County and State

**Number of Resources within Property** (Do not include previously listed resources)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>2</u>	<u>0</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  
EDUCATION/School  
DOMESTIC/Secondary Structure

**Current Functions** (Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/Single Dwelling  
DOMESTIC/Secondary Structure

David L. Clayton House  
Name of Property

Frederick County, VA  
County and State

---

## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

MID-19TH CENTURY/Greek Revival

**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: BRICK

### 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 Architectural Description

The David L. Clayton House, located along Old Baltimore Road approximately ten miles northwest of Winchester, Virginia, sits amidst rolling farmland much as it did in 1845. The house, having changed very little from the day it was completed, stands as an excellent example of a mid-nineteenth-century Greek Revival manor characteristic of the Lower Shenandoah Valley. Constructed between 1841 and 1845<sup>1</sup> for David Little Clayton and his wife, Jane Cooper Peebles, the manor was built on land which was originally part of the large 1738 grant secured by the English Quaker Arthur Barrett from the Governor and Council of Virginia.<sup>2</sup> The manor's symmetrical façade is five-bay and features a two-story, pedimented portico. Red brick is accentuated by a broad stucco frieze where it meets the shallow-pitched, hipped-roof. The main block of the dwelling is three-stories-over-basement with a central-passage, double-pile plan. A service wing, two-stories-over-basement, is attached at the northeast corner of the main block. Since its construction, the house has undergone few changes, fully preserving its historic integrity. Spanning two generations, the Clayton family worked the land, and the house was the centerpiece of their thriving 300-acre farm.<sup>3</sup> It was also the center of David Clayton's favorite (and profitable) pastime of writing and publishing hymn books, and playing and teaching music. For a period of time during the years following the Civil War, David and Jane's son John Henry Clay Clayton offered the third story of the home, and his teaching services, for the site of one of Frederick County's earliest temporary public schools, known during the Reconstruction era as "public field schools." Today, Merryhearth Manor—as it has come to be known—is very much as it has always been, nestled at the foot of Babbs Mountain with south-facing vistas of rolling

---

<sup>1</sup> Frederick County, Virginia, Deed Book 70, Page 36 (documents the purchase on January 12, 1841, of the specific acreage where the house was constructed - current owner in possession of photocopy).

<sup>2</sup> Quarles, Garland Redd, *Some Old Homes in Frederick County, Virginia*, Winchester-Frederick County Historical Society, Winchester, VA, 1990, Page 69-70.

<sup>3</sup> Green, Linda L., editor, *Virginia 1850 Agricultural Census, Volume 2*, Willow Bend Books, 2006, Page 140.

David L. Clayton House  
Name of Property

Frederick County, VA  
County and State

pastures and farmland. The property now encompasses nearly four acres and features both formal and woodland gardens, as well as a small orchard.

---

## Narrative Description

### Exterior

#### *Orientation and Façade*

The David L. Clayton House is a mid-nineteenth-century (ca. 1845) Greek Revival manor. Located northwest of Winchester, Virginia, it is situated two miles west of Apple Pie Ridge Road, along Old Baltimore Road (the historic Braddock's Road). The home's orientation is south with vistas of the valley that runs between Apple Pie Ridge to the east and Little North Mountain to the west. The dwelling is in excellent condition, and in near original form with very little alteration since its construction. The main block is 50 X 35; five-bay, five-course American-bond red brick (internal support core walls as well as exterior); shallow-pitched, standing-seam-metal, hipped-roof; and three-stories-over-basement, with a central-passage, double-pile floorplan. Attached to the main block at the northeast (rear) corner is the 20 X 20 service wing—five-course American-bond red brick (internal support core walls as well as exterior); standing-seam-metal, gable-roofed; two-stories-over-basement. Within the footprint of the service wing's original workyard stands the 12 X 12 smokehouse—single bay; five-course American-bond red brick; standing-seam-metal, gable-roofed. The manor's interior, virtually unchanged from the original, features a total of twenty-two rooms, including the generous passages which function as rooms in and of themselves. All of the rooms maintain their historical architectural features and character, including the original Greek Revival styled woodwork (simple profiles, painted white), horse-hair-plaster-over-brick walls, heart-pine flooring, pine window sashes with many original panes of glass, internal double-panel pine doors with iron rim locks and brass doorknobs, and twelve fireplaces connected to five interior brick chimney stacks.

The manor's entrance is half-a-story up a flight of brick stairs (replaced original wood stairway ca. 1960) through the portico to a two-panel central front door with a four-light transom window. The door casing features bulls-eye corner blocks, and the front door's original hardware is in place. The portico is single-bay, two-stories, pedimented gable-roofed, and supported by four sets of coupled, non-fluted, Tuscan-order columns (replaced with replicas ca. 2010). In addition to the portico, the façade features six-over-six double-hung sash windows with lintels featuring bulls-eye corner blocks, basement six-light casement windows, also featuring lintels with bulls-eye corner blocks, and below the shallow-pitched hipped-roof, a broad, unadorned stucco frieze spanning approximately thirty-six inches from the roof to the top edge of the brick where a trimmed fascia board delineates the stucco frieze from the red brick. Within the frieze are six-light, tilt-in awning windows. Spanning the full length of the east side of the house is a veranda, likely added ca. 1880. The service wing is attached at the northeast corner of the main block. Approximately 150 feet beyond the house to the north starts the rise of Babbs Mountain, peaking behind the house at a prominence height of 364 feet. Farmland stretches to the east and south,

David L. Clayton House  
Name of Property

Frederick County, VA  
County and State

and large residential lots span the area to the west and north. The gently cascading four acres surrounding the manor are comprised of a series of parterre gardens, an English garden, the pool terrace, woodland gardens, and an orchard.

## Interior Description

### *First Story*

Upon entering the house at the front door, a wide central passage spans the length of the house from the south to the north end where another external door leads to what was a covered porch and is now a sunroom (ca. 2012). The central-passage open-newel stairway leads continuously from the first to the third story. The stair treads are heart pine like the flooring, and the newel post and handrail are walnut. Handrail easements and ramps create a continuously looping handrail spanning three stories, and drop ornaments are present at the base of all hanging newels. The first and second story feature nine-foot ceilings throughout. The central passages on each floor of the main block provide access to the equally sized and located rooms on the first to the third floors. The ceilings on the third floor are sloped and vary in height from nine to five feet at the outer edge of the rooms.

From the central passage on the first floor, the southwest-corner room is the formal withdrawing room, evidenced by its singularly distinct and more ornate Greek Revival styled woodwork; fluted mantelpiece trim, fluted door and window casings with bulls-eye corner blocks, more intricately detailed baseboards and molding, wood panel dados flanked by fluted pilasters at each of the windows, and narrow-cut heart-pine floorboards. This room features two south-facing, double-hung, six-over-six sash windows. Adjoining it is the northwest room—what was likely the owner's office and bed chamber (now a library)—with two north-facing, double-hung, six-over-six sash windows and its own door leading to the central passage. Like the withdrawing room, but with less ornamentation, this room features a fireplace with brick hearth and mantelpiece, window casings, door casings, and baseboards with molding, heart pine flooring, many original glass windowpanes, horse-hair plaster, double-panel doors, and brass doorknobs and iron rim locks. Neither of these west side rooms has windows with a westerly exposure which keeps them cool in the warm months and warm in the cool months. As of ca. 1985, the library features built-in bookcases on the east and west side interior walls.

A very uncommon architectural element of the house is found where the withdrawing room adjoins the library: A three-part folding-partition wall is located where pocket doors would ordinarily be found between the two rooms. The partition wall panels swing vertically open and closed on hinges. When the panels are open and bolted into the floor and casing, they create a wall between the rooms. The center panel of the partition wall is a fully functioning, full-sized, double-panel door with brass knob and iron rim lock (identical to those on other internal doors). The two rooms may be entered and exited from this door in the middle of the partition wall or through their central-passage doors. When the three-part folding-partition wall is unbolted, it folds in on itself with two sections lying along one wall and one section lying along the opposite wall, allowing the two rooms to become one large room with minimal separation between them.

David L. Clayton House  
Name of Property

Frederick County, VA  
County and State

The same style partition wall is present between the two rooms on the east side of the central passage. This unusual architectural element, in lieu of traditional pocket doors, was likely a well-designed and deliberate feature that facilitated the owner's pastime and sideline of work: David L. Clayton was the co-author of a hugely successful book of shape-note hymns, "The Virginia Harmony," printed by Samuel H. Davis, Winchester, in 1831 (1<sup>st</sup> edition) and 1836 (2<sup>nd</sup> edition).<sup>4</sup> The popularity of the hymnbook, and resulting profit from sales and teaching shape-note music, likely provided the Claytons with the seed money needed to purchase the 300-plus acre farm and build the manor house. Historical records document that David L. Clayton continued to teach shape-note music from the house after the publication of his books.<sup>5</sup> The teaching and singing of shape-note music requires the participants to sit in a particular voice-type formation (tenor, alto, soprano, bass) within a square or rectangle. This formation is key to how shape-note music is performed.<sup>6</sup> Had the rooms been adjoined with traditional pocket doors, the width of the open space would have been insufficient to form the required singing formation. Shape-note music is largely a lost and bygone art today, but in the mid-nineteenth century its popularity was greatly enjoyed by those with little formal musical education.<sup>7</sup> It was a simplified method of reading music for the enjoyment of singing, and hymnals that used shape-note music over traditional music provided a means for anyone to partake in a favorite pastime of the era.

From the central passage on the first floor, the southeast corner constitutes the less formal parlor, or ladies' parlor (now the morning room). It is the only room in the house that features a closet, located in the alcove to the right side of the fireplace. This is the only main-block first-story room with three double-hung, six-over-six sash windows—two facing south and one facing east—making it a bright and sunshine-filled space, especially through the morning hours. The woodwork is less ornate than that in the withdrawing room and library, and the heart-pine floorboards are quite wide—some more than ten inches. This room adjoins the dining room on the northeast corner of the main block through a three-part folding-partition wall, identical to that found on the west side of the house. The dining room now features chair rail and a built-in corner dish cabinet which were added ca. 1985. The dining room has two double-hung, six-over-six sash windows facing east, and its own door leading to the central passage. In addition, it has a door leading to the kitchen located within the service wing. Both of these easterly orientation rooms have fireplaces with brick hearths and less ornate mantelpieces. Their window casing, door casing, baseboards and molding, heart pine flooring, many original glass windowpanes,

---

<sup>4</sup> Eskew, Harry Lee, *Shape-Note Hymnody in the Shenandoah Valley, 1816-1860*, 1966, Page 105-111.

<sup>5</sup> Norris, J. E., editor, *History of the Lower Shenandoah Valley Counties of Frederick, Berkeley, Jefferson, and Clarke*, A. Warner and Co., Publishers, 1890, Page 781.

<sup>6</sup> The Library of Congress Celebrates the Songs of America: Shape Note Singing, "Congregations divided up the soprano, alto, tenor, and bass singers in groups forming a square with the conductor at the center. This is called the "hollow square." This was another means of assisting the singers, so that they could stay on pitch by singing with the people in their quarter of the square." <https://www.loc.gov/collections/songs-of-america/articles-and-essays/musical-styles/ritual-and-worship/shape-note-singing/>

<sup>7</sup> Chorus America: What is Shape-Note Singing, "Developed by itinerant singing teachers in the early 19th century, the four-note system was designed to assist those who had not learned conventional sightreading. It was considered easier to recognize a few basic shapes than to decipher where each particular note was positioned on a staff." <https://chorusamerica.org/singers/what-shape-note-singing>

David L. Clayton House  
Name of Property

Frederick County, VA  
County and State

horse-hair plaster, double-panel doors, brass doorknobs and iron rim locks are identical to those throughout the first and second story of the main block (except for the withdrawing room).

### *Second Story*

The second story features four bed chambers in the main block, one over each of the rooms below. The bed chambers on the west side of the house are internally connected by a pair of pocket doors and have windows in the same location as the floor below. The bed chambers on the east side are not internally connected, and they also have windows in the same locations as the rooms below. All four chambers feature the same architectural elements as the rooms below—Greek Revival styled woodwork including door and window casings, baseboards and molding, narrow-board heart-pine flooring, many original glass windowpanes, horse-hair plaster, double-panel doors, brass doorknobs and iron locks, and brick hearths and mantelpieces. The passage on the second floor terminates on the south end with French doors, each featuring a single-sash five-light window, which lead to the façade portico balcony. The service wing is accessible from the second story through the dining room bed chamber where a door leads to a fifth bed chamber located over the kitchen.

### *Third Story*

All rooms on the third story are accessed from the central stairway which leads to a generous passage. On the west side of the passage is a gallery—one large, uninterrupted room running from the south to north end of the main block of the house. This room features five single-sash, six-light, tilt-in, awning windows, with iron hooks that hold them against the ceiling when opened. Two doors lead into this room from the passage, and adjacent to each door is a trimmed board accentuated with approximately 15 carved walnut pegs for hanging items. On the east side of the passage are two bed chambers of the same dimensions as those on the floor below. Each of these includes three single-sash, six-light, tilt-in, awning windows, and matching peg wall strips. Unlike the floor below, the third story passage features a small room on the south end. This room features one of the six-light, tilt-in, awning-style windows and the same style peg wall strip. Heart-pine flooring is present throughout the third story, with narrow floorboards present throughout the gallery, and much wider floorboards in the bed chambers. Some of the woodwork—window casings, and baseboards and molding—is of a simple design, less ornate than the floors below. The double-panel doors and door casing are the same as those found throughout the main block of the house, however, the door locking mechanisms are less formal: They are wrought iron handles with thumb latches, versus iron rim locks with brass doorknobs. There are no fireplaces on the third story, although the internal chimney stacks form bump-outs under finished walls, and the ceilings are sloped from nine feet to five feet within the hipped roofline.

Based on observation of the woodwork and architectural embellishments throughout the house, the third story was always intended for more informal usage—overflow bed chambers, storage, and perhaps for spinning and weaving capacity. It was the third story that later, ca. 1880, was commandeered for public field-school classrooms. Visible on the walls today is pencil writing

David L. Clayton House  
Name of Property

Frederick County, VA  
County and State

depicting math equations, handwriting samples, and student commentaries. The third story layout of the rooms, and the pre-existing presence of the peg wall strips, leant very well to the manor's temporary conversion to schoolhouse.

### **The Service Wing**

The 20' x 20', two-stories-over-basement, service wing includes the basement summer kitchen, the main kitchen on the first floor, and a bed chamber on the second floor. The service wing was constructed shortly after the main block and likely replaced a smaller detached kitchen building. Indications of this include the three-brick-thick wall where the service wing attaches to the main block; only external walls of the house are three bricks thick. In addition, the service wing's foundational footers are brick laid upon earth rather than brick laid upon granite, as in the main block. There are also shadow markings of previously existing external doors where the main block rooms join the service wing rooms. The service wing, while attached to the main block on all three levels, is fully self-contained with each of its three floors accessible via the service wing's own set of internal stairways.

The kitchen adjoins the main block via a door into the dining room. It features two of three original windows (double-hung, six-over-six sash windows with many original glass panes) and two external doors. The external door on the east side of the kitchen matches the main block front entryway door (double panel, four-light transom window, and door casing featuring external bulls-eye corner blocks—the kitchen door's original iron rim lock and brass doorknob are present); this door leads to the veranda. The external door on the west side of the kitchen is board-and-batten and features its original iron hardware including thumb-latch handle and iron slide bolt; it opens into the sunroom (which had been a covered porch) toward the kitchen workyard (now a parterre Italianate garden). Two additional doors (double panel with original hardware) open to the stairway leading to the basement and the stairway leading to the bed chamber. The kitchen fireplace is a very large cooking fireplace with brick hearth and substantial mantelpiece. Its original swinging, iron pot crane is in place. The room has a nine-foot ceiling and was originally plastered; now the underlying brick walls are exposed. This is the only room whose original heart-pine flooring is missing (ca. 1960) and features tile flooring.

Above the kitchen is a bed chamber that featured a peg wall strip of the same style as those on the third story (removed ca. 1985 to allow placement of a bathroom). This bed chamber has a door that leads into the main block via the dining bed chamber. It features an internal fireplace with mantelpiece and brick hearth, three six-over-six double-hung sash windows, two facing east and one facing west, heart-pine floors with very wide boards, some exceeding twelve inches, and some elements of woodwork (baseboards and molding, and service stairway handrail and balusters ) that is less ornate and which matches the woodwork found across the third story and throughout the basement. The room also has a nine-foot ceiling and horse-hair plaster walls.

The summer kitchen is located under the first-floor main kitchen, in the basement, and features another large cooking fireplace. It retains the iron brackets (top and bottom) that once held the pot crane swinging arm (now missing). There is no evidence that a mantelpiece was ever present,

David L. Clayton House  
Name of Property

Frederick County, VA  
County and State

however the brick hearth is much larger than those located anywhere else within the house. The walls and floor are exposed bricks and there is a set of board and batten external doors (ca. 2010) that replaced an original single board and batten door (repurposed for the crawl space entrance). The stairway leading from the summer kitchen was rebuilt (ca. 2010) to the same dimensions and style—and uses the original support recesses in the brick wall—as the original. The summer kitchen adjoins the main block via a doorway under the dining room.

## The Basement

The basement was, by nineteenth-century standards, fully finished living space. The area under the main block contains rooms on the east side that are halfway above ground with windows, a fireplace, and a door leading to the east lawn from the summer kitchen. The area under the main block on the west side is crawl-space only. The east side basement rooms are of the same dimensions as the rooms above—the morning room and dining room respectively. The area under the central passage of the main block is a full room in the basement. There is no internal stairway from the basement to the main block above. Prior to the construction of the service wing, access to the basement was likely gained by exiting the house and entering the basement from the lawn; a remnant of door trim indicates where a north-facing external door may have been. Once the service wing was added, access to the basement became viable through the kitchen. The basement walls were finished with horse-hair plaster—remnants of which are still in place over the now exposed brick walls—as well as remnants of the less formal woodwork, identical to that featured throughout the service wing and third story. The original six-light casement windows (six of them) are present and feature many original panes of glass. There is a fireplace in the room (likely a bed chamber and now the keeping room) under the morning room, although there is no structural evidence that a mantelpiece was ever present for this fireplace. Furthermore, there was never a fireplace in the room under the dining room which was likely a larder or food storage room (now the laundry and sewing room). The basement flooring throughout was bricks-over-dirt. At one time, the present owner was informed that the rooms throughout the basement were used to house enslaved workers. This is not accurate as the Claytons never owned enslaved persons, as may be confirmed by the inventory of David L. Clayton's will in 1854;<sup>8</sup> the Frederick County Agricultural Census of 1850;<sup>9</sup> the U. S. Population Censuses for 1840, 1850, and 1860; and the "List of Slave Owners in 1860 in Frederick County and Winchester".<sup>10</sup>

Over time, persistent water infiltration and water pooling led to excessive moisture and caused extreme damage to the refinements originally enjoyed throughout the basement—horsehair-plaster walls and ceilings, woodwork, and brick flooring. The present owner in 2009 to 2010 undertook careful measures to address the water infiltration problem. Unfortunately, pre-existing damage could not be undone, however, original elements were stabilized in place where possible.

<sup>8</sup> Frederick County Will Book 24, The Will and Inventory and Appraisalment of the Personal Estate of David L. Clayton, Page 144 (current owner in possession of photocopy).

<sup>9</sup> Green, Linda L., editor, *Virginia 1850 Agricultural Census, Volume 2*, Willow Bend Books, 2006, Page 140.

<sup>10</sup> Huton, James V., Jr., *The Federal Census of 1850 for Frederick County, Virginia*, Iberian Publishing Company, 1987, Page 359 (dedicated section documenting owners of enslaved persons in Frederick County).

David L. Clayton House  
Name of Property

Frederick County, VA  
County and State

The basement today is dry and stable and has had the foundation wall masonry, and both fireplaces, fully restored to their original specifications using existing bricks which were repaired, replaced as needed with historic bricks (clunkers) found buried around the manor's foundation, and repointed with new lime-based and sand mortar of the composition used in the original construction. The plasterwork was not replaced, and the walls are now exposed bricks, and the ceilings are exposed joists. The basement floor required substantial engineering to address groundwater infiltration: It is now covered with moisture resistant hardwood over concrete which encapsulates a perpetual groundwater drainage catch-and-removal system. This level of the home is once again a fully utilized and enjoyed space encompassing the cozy keeping room with its fireplace (formerly a bedchamber), a laundry and sewing room (formerly a larder), an exercise room (formerly storage), and the wine and mead cellar with its large cooking fireplace (formerly the summer kitchen).

### **The Workyard and Smokehouse**

The kitchen workyard, tucked behind the northwest corner of the main block and adjacent to the service wing, once featured a closed-in covered porch for storing cut wood off the west side of the kitchen, a partially underground spring and icehouse constructed of sandstone, a fresh-water, hand-dug well, and a smokehouse. At some point ca. 1950 a wood-frame, two-story garage was built over the site of the kitchen workyard, and a lean-to shed was added to the back of the main block, fully covering the north-facing library windows. Other than the smokehouse, the original components of the kitchen workyard were lost at this time, as evidenced by available photographs from the past.<sup>11</sup> Extensive rehabilitation was undertaken in 2010 to fully remove the garage, take down the lean-to shed addition, exposing the library windows once again, and convert the ruins of the closed-in, covered porch to a sunroom (finished ca. 2012). In 2020, during excavation and rehabilitation of the kitchen workyard area, the icehouse's sandstone foundation-wall ruins were discovered approximately four feet underground. The sandstone was unearthed and repurposed to construct the parterre garden wall that now surrounds the footprint of the former workyard.

The only original element of the kitchen workyard still in existence, the smokehouse (ca. 1850), is in near original condition. It is 12 X 12, single bay, five-course American-bond red brick (internal support core walls as well as exterior); standing-seam-metal, gable-roofed; open rafters with iron hooks, a single board and batten door on the south side (that features a four-light window, forged-iron strap hinges, original thumb latch handle, and a wood rim lock), two four-light sliding vent windows along the east side, and the remnants of a curious floor-level hatch on the north side. In 2016 the smokehouse bricks were repointed with new lime-based and sand mortar of the composition used in the original construction. At some point in the past, ca. 1950, a concrete floor was added, and this has been left in place. The bevel wood siding on the north and south gable ends has been replaced as needed with like materials. The entrance to the smokehouse demarcates the north edge of what was a bustling and highly functional kitchen workyard, well-used by the household throughout the nineteenth century. Today the workyard is

---

<sup>11</sup> Historical photos procured from Nancy and James Dye, grandchildren of Grace Dye, who resided at the house from 1936 to 1984—photos in the possession of the current owner.

David L. Clayton House  
Name of Property

Frederick County, VA  
County and State

a walled parterre garden of the same dimensions as the original workyard, and a cascading water fountain marks the exact location of the former icehouse.

### **The Grounds**

Of the original 300 acres of farmland that once surrounded the manor, four acres remain. A newly planted orchard (circa 2015) is located where a previous orchard stood on the northwest corner of the property. Three parterre gardens encompass the west side of the property, including the pool terrace (circa 2024). Directly behind the house is the English garden which encompasses a 150-year-old boxwood bush, along with several very old lilac bushes, and a very large and old hydrangea bush. The boxwood is the same variety and age as that which is planted alongside the gravesite of Mary Rebecca Clayton within the Hopewell Friends Meeting cemetery. She was the daughter-in-law of David L. Clayton, and the wife of John Henry Clay Clayton, and she resided at Merryhearth Manor from the date of her marriage on May 20, 1869, until her death on April 21, 1897. The east and south sides of the property run along Old Baltimore Road as they did when the manor was constructed. The lawn surrounding the front of the house is landscaped with a circular parterre garden and evergreens, including a 100-plus-year-old American holly. The rolling farmland vistas surrounding the manor are mostly unchanged, including the presence of several Apple Pie Ridge historic homes that pre-date the David L. Clayton house. Today, dotted at intervals throughout the farmland and scattered across Babbs Mountain are newer homes. With very few changes to the original dwelling and its orientation to the land, it is possible—with a little imagination—to picture the 1845 version of the manor as David L. and Jane Clayton designed it.

David L. Clayton House  
Name of Property

Frederick County, 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

David L. Clayton House  
Name of Property

Frederick County, VA  
County and State

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ARCHITECTURE

EDUCATION

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1845-1895

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

N/A

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

Unknown

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

David L. Clayton House  
Name of Property

Frederick County, 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.)

The David L. Clayton House is being considered for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A, Education and Criterion C, Architecture. The period of significance begins in 1845 and ends in 1895, encompassing the date of construction and the house's use as a school.

---

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

### **Criterion A: Education**

The David L. Clayton house served for a time as one of the earliest public schools in Frederick County, Virginia. From approximately 1880 to 1895, the Claytons held classes on the third story of their home. The house was listed as one of "150 schools of Frederick County which accepted pupils on a public basis (without limit by religion or ancestry)".<sup>12</sup> In 1867, Congress required Virginia and most of the other former Confederate states to hold conventions to write new state constitutions; this was known in Virginia as the Underwood Convention. Virginia's new constitution, ratified in July 1869, included an article for the state's first system of public schools. In the years following the ratification of the new constitution, the Claytons converted the third level of their manor home into multiple classrooms, establishing the house as a public field school that accepted students free of tuition and without limitation based on their "religion or ancestry." The Shenandoah Valley required a significant period of reconstruction as a result of the aftermath of the Civil War. Establishing the public school system was a foundational element of the reconstruction plan, and it was also one of the most controversial and expensive, requiring taxing the local population to pay for the cost at a time when people were struggling economically. Many of the old school buildings previously used for local private schooling were burned or in very poor repair after the years of conflict. The Claytons were well positioned to do their part; they had minimal war damage to the house and property as their farm was relatively far from the sight of many of the local battles.<sup>13</sup> Free public education was a cornerstone for rebuilding and bringing the community together, and the Claytons were committed to supporting their community.

### **Criterion C: Architecture**

---

<sup>12</sup> Lehman, Sam., editor, *The Story of Frederick County*, 1988. Chapter 29.

<sup>13</sup> The nearest significant battle to the Clayton House was the Battle at Rutherford Farm in July 1863—approximately 15 miles from the house via the road network in existence at the time. This spared the property being commandeered for use as a military headquarters or battle-site hospital, and resulted in less war-induced destruction than other similarly sized properties.

David L. Clayton House

Name of Property

Frederick County, VA

County and State

The David L. Clayton house was constructed over the course of three to four years from 1841, when David and Jane Clayton purchased the land, to 1845.<sup>14</sup> Two generations of Claytons lived on and farmed the land; the first being David Little Clayton (b. Jan. 15, 1801, d. Sept. 17, 1854) and his wife Jane Cooper Peebles Clayton (b. 1810, d. Oct. 1871) who raised eight children, three of whom were born in their new home. The second generation—and that which is the subject of this period of significance—was their second son, John Henry Clay Clayton (b. Dec. 14, 1839, d. Sept. 21, 1914), his wife, Mary Rebecca George Clayton (b. Aug. 18, 1845, d. April 21, 1897), and their five children (Albert N., Rebecca J., Georgia E., Georgie, and David L.), all born and raised at the manor home.<sup>15</sup>

John Henry and Mary Rebecca were married on May 20, 1869;<sup>16</sup> he was 29 years old and she was 24. The Civil War had ended four years earlier and families across the Shenandoah Valley were struggling to rebuild their lives after the extreme loss of life and property. Neither John Henry, nor his older brother by five years, Elisha, were soldiers on either side of the battle lines. John Henry in a local biographical sketch is described as having “his religious sympathies with the Society of Friends,” and his wife Mary Rebecca was descended on her maternal line from the Barretts, long- and well-established Quakers for many generations in northern Frederick County.<sup>17</sup> John Henry, Mary Rebecca, and three of their five children are buried within the cemetery of the Hopewell Friends Meeting House. The Quakers were staunch advocates of education and this, with other factors, likely spurred John Henry and Mary Rebecca’s decision to convert their home into a free public field school for the education of near-by local children, alongside their own children.

## Historical Context

Frederick County experienced a rough start as the new Virginia constitution required that schools be established in every county of the commonwealth no later than 1876. Facilities, and the cadre of trained teachers needed to instruct the students, had to be established from the ground up. The first two superintendents of schools served for only one term each. Looking back, the fifth superintendent of schools, George W. Ward, stated of the first local school tax, “This was used mostly for putting in order the few old schoolhouses the war had left standing. The trustees did not think it judicious to enter into contract with many teachers, who had to be paid out of the state fund, until the money was in hand.”<sup>18</sup> It was the third superintendent, William H. Gold, serving from 1872 to 1883, who fully established the county’s public school system. In Garland

<sup>14</sup> Frederick County, Virginia, Deed Book 70, Page 36 (documents the purchase on January 12, 1841, of the specific acreage where the house was constructed—current owner in possession of photocopy).

<sup>15</sup> Albert N. Clayton, b: 1870, d: July 23, 1893 - buried at the Hopewell Friends Meeting cemetery; Rebecca J. Clayton Gold, b: June 4, 1874, d: September 21, 1957 - buried at Mount Hebron; Georgia E. Clayton Purcell, b: November 12, 1876, d: December 11, 1905 - buried at Mount Hebron; Georgie Clayton b: 1876 d: At birth or shortly thereafter - buried at the Hopewell Friends Meeting cemetery (Georgia’s twin brother); David L. Clayton, b: July 22, 1881, d: September 21, 1901 - buried at the Hopewell Friends Meeting cemetery.

<sup>16</sup> Virginia, Select Marriages, 1785-1940, <http://www.Ancestry.com>

<sup>17</sup> Norris, J. E., editor, *History of the Lower Shenandoah Valley Counties of Frederick, Berkeley, Jefferson, and Clarke*, A. Warner and Co., Publishers, 1890, Page 781.

<sup>18</sup> Lehman, Sam., editor, *The Story of Frederick County*, 1988. Chapter 29.

David L. Clayton House  
Name of Property

Frederick County, VA  
County and State

R. Quarles book *Some Worthy Lives*, he states the following with respect to William Gold, “Mr. Gold served for seven difficult and eventful sessions—hiring teachers to fill vacancies, devising tests to secure qualified applicants, arranging for all the physical facilities, riding on horseback all over Frederick County, answering criticism, encouraging cooperation.”<sup>19</sup> John Henry Clayton and William Gold were friends and neighbors; their farms were less than two miles apart off of Apple Pie Ridge Road, and they ultimately joined their families when John Henry’s daughter Rebecca married William’s son Philip (May, 1900).<sup>20</sup> This friendship is likely another factor that influenced John Henry and Mary Rebecca’s decision to convert their third story into classrooms during William Gold’s tenure as superintendent.

### The House as Public Field School

The layout of the Clayton House third story lends itself perfectly to teaching students: There are two 17 X 17 rooms on the east side of the main block; a gallery, 17 X 35, runs the length of the west side from the south to the north end; and a small room 10 X 12 is located at the south end of the third-story central passage. The rooms are bright, each having multiple six-light, tilt-in awning style windows. During warm days the windows would have facilitated cross ventilation when opened and latched against the ceiling with their iron hooks. For warmth, each of the four corners of the main block contains internal brick chimney stacks that would have radiated heat from the two, or three, fireplaces below. The pre-existing walnut-peg wall strips inside each room’s doorway would have been ideal for hanging hats, coats, bookbags, and other items. The students would have been uninterrupted on their third-story, dedicated classroom floor, and the family on the floors below would have maintained their privacy, even as students came and went from the central passage stairway that could be closed off from the rooms throughout the house.

The Claytons became very involved personally in supporting the local public school system. John Henry was himself one of the teachers, and is recorded as having taught in the Frederick County public school system;<sup>21</sup> some of that time was spent teaching in other nearby field schools,<sup>22</sup> likely on a rotational basis and possibly on a part-time basis.<sup>23</sup> Lewis George, Mary Rebecca’s brother, and John Henry’s brother-in-law, is thought to have been assisting with the teaching at the house; he lists his occupation as “Teacher” in the 1870 census. John Henry made a bulk purchase of a dozen chairs from his brother-in-law George W. Kurtz, who was a local

---

<sup>19</sup> Quarles, Garland R., *Some Worthy Lives*. Winchester-Frederick County Historical Society, 1988, Page 104.

<sup>20</sup> Library of Virginia; Richmond, VA; Virginia Marriage Registers, 1835-1935.

<sup>21</sup> Norris, J. E., editor, *History of the Lower Shenandoah Valley Counties of Frederick, Berkeley, Jefferson, and Clarke*, A. Warner and Co., Publishers, 1890, Page 781.

<sup>22</sup> Jessica Sullivan, “Carrie Clayton: More Than A Century Of Living,” *Winchester Star*, November 20, 1983. Description: John Henry’s second wife, Carrie Marple, states in an interview published in the *Winchester Star* on November 20, 1983 (she was 103 years of age at the time of the in-person interview) that John Henry was, “an elementary teacher who taught at Little Mountain, Pleasant Valley, and Old Stone Church in Cedar Grove.”

<sup>23</sup> The U. S. Censuses for Frederick County for 1870, 1880, 1900, and 1910 document that John Henry considered his occupation, foremost, to be that of farming his estate. He never listed his occupation as teacher or any other civil service office that he held.

David L. Clayton House  
Name of Property

Frederick County, VA  
County and State

furniture maker in Winchester.<sup>24</sup> And, local lore (which has managed to live through multiple written accounts over the years) tells of the school being given the very uncomplimentary nickname, Mush Town.<sup>25</sup> Apparently, Mary Rebecca's cook supplemented the student's cold box lunches with hot preparations for breakfast and/or lunch, and those were frequently servings of a local southern mainstay—corn mush.<sup>26</sup> The most compelling evidence of the Claytons' personal involvement with the upstairs school is that their own children, and some of their nieces and nephews, attended classes there. Writing on the walls was often centered on, or signed by, the Clayton children, along with other students' wall-writing contributions. Why exactly the students wrote all over their classroom walls is unclear,<sup>27</sup> but the writing provides insight to their studies which included math equations, handwriting samples, poetry, and general commentary such as, "lost lead pencils," and "Fannie Kurtz is a mean girl."<sup>28</sup>

It is difficult to pinpoint the exact date the house stopped being used as a public field school. It probably coincided with the availability of a dedicated school building in the vicinity, and there were several. John Henry's involvement in the public school system continued beyond the years that he and Mary Rebecca offered their home for use as a public school; in his obituary, one of the accomplishments that John Henry wanted recorded was his role serving as a member of the Frederick County Schoolboard.<sup>29</sup> The establishment of public field schools was a crucial first step in instituting quality, free education for the county's children. The David L. Clayton house provided a welcoming, comfortable, and convenient school for local children while money was raised, and community support was achieved, to build and staff permanent, consolidated schools.<sup>30</sup>

---

<sup>24</sup> 985 WFCHS, Stewart Bell, Jr. Archives, Handley Regional Library, Winchester, VA, USA. Account Books From Kurtz Funeral and Furniture Business, 1867 to 1948. John Henry placed an order for a dozen chairs in 1895: They were, "six chairs \$4.50" and "six chairs \$2.75" for a total of \$7.25. These may have been purchased for student classroom seating at the Clayton House or one of the other field schools he supported.

<sup>25</sup> Kalbian, Maral S., *Frederick County, Virginia: History Through Architecture*, Winchester-Frederick County Historical Society Rural Landmarks Publication Committee, 1999, Page 67; Huton, James V., Jr., *In and Around the Loop, An Historical Study of Northern Frederick County, Virginia*, Iberian Publishing Company, 1998, Page 36.

<sup>26</sup> Corn mush, similar to polenta or grits, was a traditional, inexpensive porridge made by boiling cornmeal in water or milk, seasoned with salt. Often served as a breakfast cereal, it was commonly chilled, sliced, and pan-fried until crispy.

<sup>27</sup> See some example photographs: Numbers 0075 – 0083.

<sup>28</sup> Fannie Kurtz, incidentally, was John Henry's niece, a daughter of his sister Mary Frances Clayton Kurtz and George W. Kurtz (who fulfilled the order for a dozen chairs).

<sup>29</sup> "J. H. C. Is Dead After Long Sickness," *Winchester Evening Star*, September 28, 1914. Obituary excerpt: "Although not allied with the dominant political party—the Democrats—the people as a whole had frequently reposed confidence in Mr. Clayton by electing him road commissioner of Stonewall district, a justice of the peace, and as a member of the County School Board."

<sup>30</sup> Huton, James V., Jr., *In and Around the Loop, An Historical Study of Northern Frederick County, Virginia*, Iberian Publishing Company, 1998, Pages 52-53.

David L. Clayton House  
Name of Property

Frederick County, VA  
County and State

---

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

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

Cartmel, T. K., *Shenandoah Valley Pioneers and Their Descendants, Fredrick County, Virginia From Its Formation in 1738 to 1908*, Heritage Books, 1989.

Wayland, John W., ed., *Hopewell Friends History 1734 – 1934, Frederick County, Virginia*, Shenandoah Publishing House, Inc., 1936.

Huton, James V., Jr., ed., *In and Around the Loop, An Historical Study of Northern Frederick County, Virginia*, Iberian Publishing Company, 1998.

Kalbian, Maral S., *Frederick County, Virginia: History Through Architecture*, Winchester-Frederick County Historical Society Rural Landmarks Publication Committee, 1999.

Lehman, Sam., ed., *The Story of Frederick County*, Wisecarver's Print Shop, 1988.

Norris, J. E., *History of the Lower Shenandoah Valley Counties of Frederick, Berkeley, Jefferson, and Clarke*, A. Warner and Co., Publishers, 1890.

Quarles, Garland R., *Some Worthy Lives*, Winchester-Frederick County Historical Society, 1988.

Quarles, Garland R., *Some Old Homes in Fredrick County, Virginia*, Winchester-Frederick County Historical Society, 1990.

Quarles, Garland R., *Winchester, Virginia Streets-Churches-Schools*, Winchester-Frederick County Historical Society, 1996.

---

### 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 # \_\_\_\_\_

David L. Clayton House  
Name of Property

Frederick County, VA  
County and State

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: Virginia Department of Historic Resources

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** DHR ID# 034-1092

---

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** 3.91

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: 39.266589 | Longitude: -78.180676 |
| 2. Latitude:           | Longitude:            |
| 3. Latitude:           | Longitude:            |
| 4. Latitude:           | Longitude:            |

**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: |

David L. Clayton House  
Name of Property

Frederick County, VA  
County and State

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

Property is bordered on the south edge by Old Baltimore Road, bordered on the west by the shared property line with 730 Old Baltimore Road, bordered on the east by the shared property with 127 Hightail Lane, and bordered on the north by the shared property line with 260 Hightail Lane.

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

These boundaries are easily verifiable using the Frederick County, Virginia online tax map.

---

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title: Polly Susan Swogger  
organization: N/A - Owner  
street & number: 724 Old Baltimore Road  
city or town: Winchester state: VA zip code: 22603  
e-mail pollys6400@gmail.com  
telephone: 703-401-6400  
date: \_\_\_\_\_

---

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **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,

David L. Clayton House  
Name of Property

Frederick County, VA  
County and State

photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

### Photo Log

Name of Property:

City or Vicinity:

County:

State:

Photographer:

Date Photographed:

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

1 of \_\_\_\_.

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for nominations 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.). We may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.


**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for each response using this form is estimated to be between the Tier 1 and Tier 4 levels with the estimate of the time for each tier as follows:

- Tier 1 – 60-100 hours
- Tier 2 – 120 hours
- Tier 3 – 230 hours
- Tier 4 – 280 hours

The above estimates include time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and preparing and transmitting nominations. Send comments regarding these estimates or any other aspect of the requirement(s) to the Service Information Collection Clearance Officer, National Park Service, 1201 Oakridge Drive Fort Collins, CO 80525.

**BOUNDARY MAP**

David L. Clayton House  
Frederick County, VA  
DHR ID# 034-1092


 Nominated Boundary

0  500 Feet

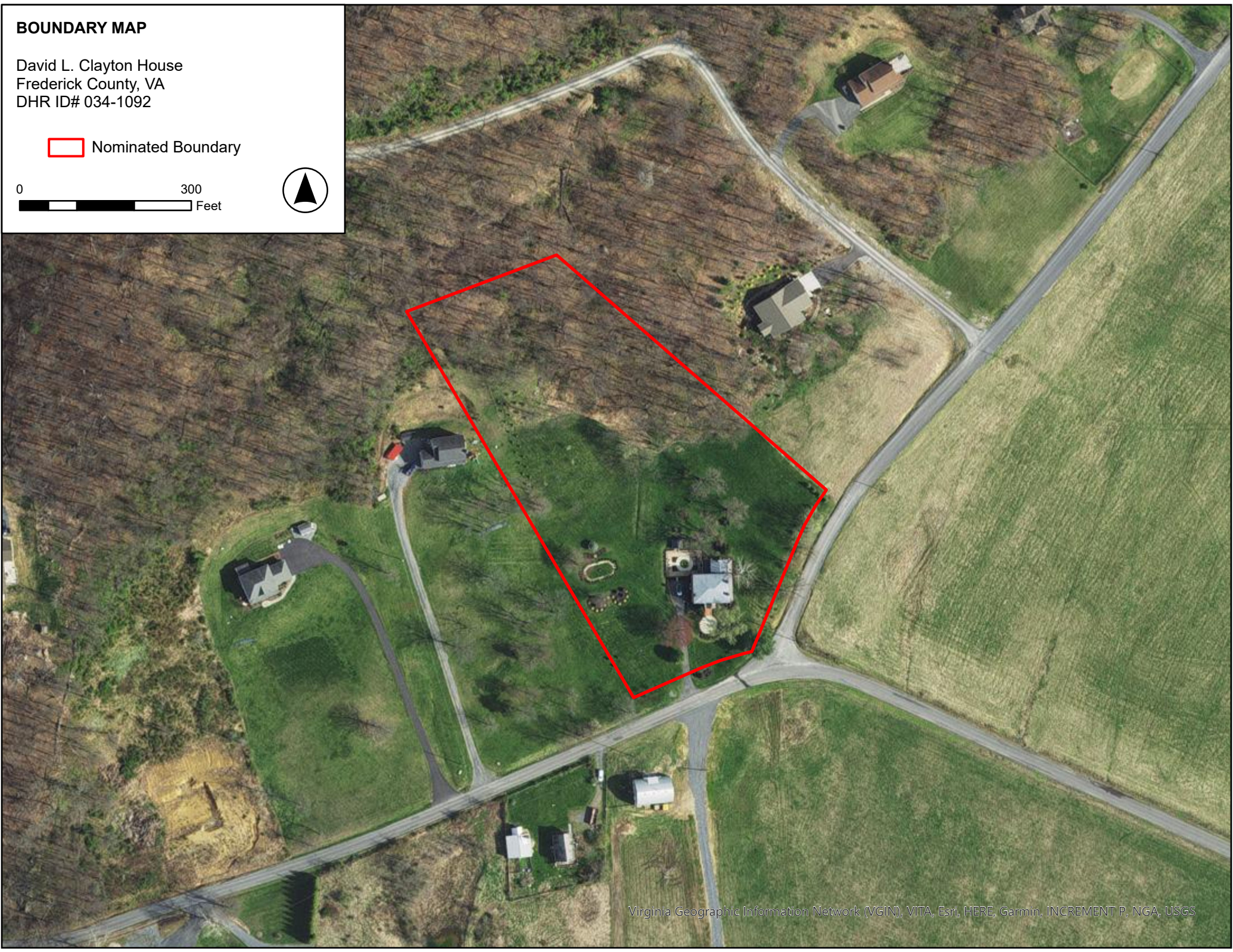


# BOUNDARY MAP

David L. Clayton House  
Frederick County, VA  
DHR ID# 034-1092

 Nominated Boundary

0  300 Feet



















































































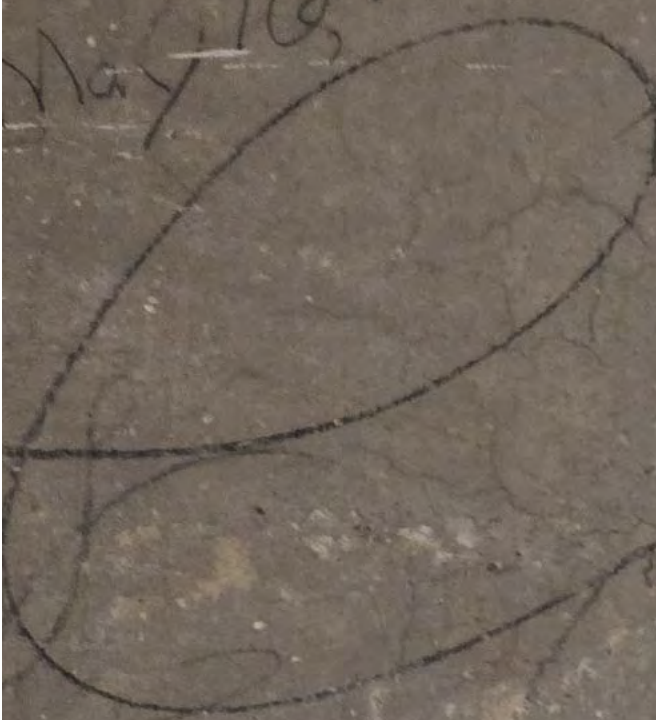






May 109

180



10  
 11 1/2  
 10 1/2  
 11 1/2  
 11 1/2  
 9  
 9 1/2  
 10

12 1/2  
 25  
 42

Bell  
 March 24th 16  
 57 years 1 month 7 days

15 1/2  
 15 1/2





















D. L. G.  
May 6, 1901





















wood

27

20 1/2

21

20

19

14

19 1/2

18

13 1/2

---

194

14

---

180

14 Bags

1 Bag full of 1 feet





best lead pencils



26

25

---

51







Anna King is a mean girl.

















