

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 PropertyHistoric name: Gregg-Nichols HouseOther names/site number: William Miner House; DHR ID# 053-0595

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

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

2. LocationStreet & number: 19219 Otley RoadCity or town: Purcellville State: VA County: Loudoun

Not For Publication:

N/A

Vicinity:

N/A**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

Signature of certifying official/Title:

Date

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

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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

☐

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Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

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

DOMESTIC/Secondary Structure

AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE/Processing

AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE/Agricultural Outbuilding

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/Single Dwelling

DOMESTIC/Secondary Structure

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COLONIAL

EARLY REPUBLIC: Federal

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property:

Foundation: STONE, CONCRETE

Walls: WOOD: Log, Weatherboard

Roof: ASPHALT, WOOD: Shingle

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

The Gregg-Nichols House and property dates to 1742 and is located in Silcott Spring, Virginia, in Loudoun County. The property features a Quaker Vernacular Patent House and various outbuildings dating from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The residence is an L-shaped, two-story house that originated as a log cabin and has two fieldstone additions. The log cabin portion is relatively plain, starting as a single-story Patent House. Two Quaker families, the Greggs and the Nichols, owned and farmed the property throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The period of significance ranges from circa 1745 to 1880, during which Quaker families actively farmed the property and built the log cabin, a second floor, and two fieldstone additions. Both levels of the log cabin are made with hand-hewn rectangular logs joined via half dovetail notches. The second floor of the log cabin features distinct axe marks, made with closer, choppy strokes, and the wood is darker than that used on the first floor. The weathering of the logs lends to the aged and historic appearance of the house. Both fieldstone additions are constructed with local fieldstone, which varies in shape, color, and texture. The fieldstone additions create a striking visual contrast to the log cabin. Each addition is preserved, with no addition covering the previous one, giving a historic look at the architectural expansion of a Quaker house and its outbuildings. 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. The first floor, however, retains its original floor plan, except for the 1970s move of the staircase and the installation of one bathroom and one kitchen on the right side of

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the log cabin portion. The roof was replaced in the 1970s, followed by a more recent asphalt replacement over the fieldstone additions, including skylights. The property also includes three outbuildings: A smokehouse, a springhouse, and a wagon house/corn crib built after the Burning Raid. The smokehouse is a small, square, notched log cabin with corner posts. Before William Miner's purchase in the 1970s, the southern side was replaced with vertical wood paneling. There is now a tin roof, and the building is leaning. The springhouse was constructed around the same time as the fieldstone additions in the 1820s and uses the same fieldstone material. The overall shape and sight of the springhouse complement the house. Finally, the 1870s wagon house/corn crib is constructed of grayish-brown vertical plank timber, featuring an exterior that is an open faced, gable shaped building. There is an overhang extending the northern roof of the wagon house that was used to cover wagons. The property maintains its integrity and historic character, which exemplifies a Quaker property of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Narrative Description

Physical Description

The Gregg-Nichols property is a former Quaker homestead located on 14.3 acres in the former village of Silcott Spring 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 and Washington, D.C.'s urban sprawl. The property is located off Otley Road, down a dirt lane shared by two other residential homes.

The Gregg-Nichols house and accompanying buildings sit at the southern end of the pentagon-shaped plat. The homestead includes the main house built circa 1745, towards the top of a hill.¹ To the southwest of the house is a former vertical wood-paneled carriage barn of unknown age, now used as a shed. Behind the home to the north is a smokehouse, the exact age of which is unknown. Further north of the property, at the bottom of a gentle slope, is the springhouse, built at the beginning of the nineteenth century. The property sits in a clear-cut field, with the surrounding landscape comprised of new-growth hardwood forests. The original barn, now situated on a separate parcel, was remodeled into a house and sold in 1985.² A power line cuts west of the structures, running north to south. A pool that sat west of the house has now been removed.

¹ Gregg Thomas, "Land Grant 21 March 1742." (Northern Neck Land Office., and the Library of Virginia, 1742), https://lva.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01LVA_INST/altrmk/alma990008539130205756.

² "19223 Otley Rd," Redfin, 2024, <https://www.redfin.com/VA/Purcellville/19223-Otley-Rd-20132/home/12027432>.

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House

The residential house is a two-story hall and parlor style log house built circa 1745. Hall and parlor floor plans were common in Quaker houses in the eighteenth century.³ Two two-story fieldstone additions were added in the first half of the nineteenth century, creating an L-shaped structure.⁴⁵ The log house features half-dovetail notching and was made with horizontal rough hand-hewn wood and daubing that is original to the structure. The eastern side of the log house includes a cellar/basement and an attic. The western front-facing side is a fieldstone addition built sometime in the first half of the nineteenth century. A second fieldstone addition was added behind the first fieldstone addition, creating an L-shaped structure. The foundation is a concrete slab put in during the 1970s.⁶ 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 were installed over the back/second addition side in the 1990s.⁷ The eaves are plain corniced boxed with a flat board on all sides of the house. 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. A concrete pad is outside the back door on the second back addition. A path from the concrete pad leads to a wooden deck built in the last twenty years behind the log house portion of the residence, which is also accessible through the back door on rear elevation. .

There are two main doors on the front façade: one on the eastern log portion and another on the western fieldstone addition. On the western front side is the first addition built sometime in the early 19th century. This addition and the second addition were constructed with locally sourced fieldstone. The first floor features a modern door with a flat fixed nine-panel window, and to the left of the door is a flat double-hung six-over-six window. The two second-story windows are two-over-two fixed windows placed directly over the first-floor window and door.

The façade of the log section features a modern wood door. Four flat double-hung windows are on the southern front-facing side of the log house. Flanking the door to the left and right are two double-hung six-over-six windows. The two second-story windows directly above the two first-floor windows are three-over-six fixed, double-hung windows. Like the front of the log section, the eastern side also features half-dovetailed notching with hand-hewn horizontal logs. There is a six-over-six flat double hung window in the center of the first story. The eave under the gable is wooden horizontal plank paneling, with one flat screened window to the attic. Fieldstone steps lead down to the cellar/basement entrance on the first floor.

³ Sue Bowman, "This Old House," Lancaster Farming, August 9, 2019, https://www.lancasterfarming.com/country-life/antiques-and-history/this-old-house/article_d05e982e-babe-11e9-8695-cbad6f0fe487.html.

⁴ Gregg Thomas, "Land Grant 21 March 1742." (Northern Neck Land Office., and the Library of Virginia, 1742), https://lva.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01LVA_INST/altrmk/alma990008539130205756.

⁵ "Loudoun County Property Address Search - Parcel ID: 559172226000," Loudoun Real Property Assessment Database (Loudoun County Government), accessed February 3, 2025, <https://reparcelasmt.loudoun.gov/pt/maps/map.aspx?sIndex=0&idx=1&LMparent=20>.

⁶ Matthew and Catherine Berg, Property Owner Interview, interview by Elizabeth Welch, February 1, 2025.

⁷ Berg, 2025.

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The north elevation of the log section mirrors the façade down to the windows. The back door of the home leads to the deck, which was built sometime in the last twenty years. Before the additions, the western side of the house featured a single fieldstone chimney. This chimney is now the center chimney of the home.

Continuing west on the northern back side of the home is the second fieldstone addition that projects outward. It is known that this addition was the second one, as the home's interior still has the original north window on the first floor that would have looked outside; it now faces a sitting room area of the second addition (Figure 1).



Figure 1. Photo taken of preserved window opening of the first addition, now looking into the sitting room of the second addition.⁸

This addition juts out in the back, creating the L-shaped layout of the house. On the eastern side of the second addition, there is one six-over-six double hung window on the first floor and a fixed two-over-two window on the second floor under the eave. On the northern side, there is a double-hung six-over-six window, with a door east of the window on the first floor. The slanted roof continues over the second addition, creating a saltbox appearance.

⁸ Elizabeth Welch, *Field Survey Photos of Gregg/Nichols/Miner House*, February 1, 2025, Samsung Galaxy S22+, February 1, 2025.

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On the western side of the second addition, there are no windows, but there is a single fieldstone chimney. Continuing south on the western side is the first addition. There are no windows, but there is another single fieldstone chimney.

Interior Description

The interiors of the stone additions are mostly unchanged. The second floor's floor beams are exposed in the ceiling in all rooms on the first floor and are original to the house. The mantels have been replaced for both additions' fireplaces, but the stones and metalwork within the fireplaces 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 (Figure 1). There were no attempts 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 log cabin into two rooms instead of a wall. Before the construction of the new stairs, a staircase was immediately to the left of the front door of the log cabin. The former room on the right has been divided into a front kitchen. The back portion is now a bathroom and closet. The entire first floor was refloored in 1977 with wood recycled from another unknown historic building.⁹ 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. The attic has also been remodeled for a guest bedroom and office. Log rafters are exposed in the staircase leading to the attic, and have roman numerals notched into the bark. When William Miner renovated the property, he sought to use historic materials and to keep as much of the original design intact as possible.

When William Miner purchased the house in 1976, the roof had partially caved in, and there were no longer any windows in the home. Under Miner's care, the interior was remodeled. Miner changed the second-floor floor plan by dividing existing rooms and adding a side hallway. He also added a new roof, installed new windows with wood trim, installed a central staircase in the log cabin section, and added plumbing. Miner returned the first floor to its original appearance and floor plan, with the exception of the staircase.¹⁰

⁹ Matthew and Catherine Berg, Property Owner Interview , interview by Elizabeth Welch, February 1, 2025.

¹⁰ Matthew and Catherine Berg, Property Owner Interview.

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Figure 2. A Kodak negative of the back northern portion of the house, taken by William Miner, shows the property's condition at the time of purchase. Note the windows and condition of the roof.¹¹



Figure 3. Images taken by William Miner of remodeling the house's first and second floors and installing the new staircase.¹²

¹¹ William Miner, *Photos of Remodeling Process*, n.d., *Scrapbook Photos Taken by William Miner of Gregg-Nichols House*, n.d., accessed February 1, 2025.

¹² Miner, *Photos of Remodeling Process*.

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Secondary Buildings

Wagon House/Corn Crib (Contributing building)

Southwest of the property is the wagon house/corn crib, which is now used as a shed. The building is made of vertical plank timber, a front-facing open gable and tin roof, and an overhang shelter large enough for two wagons or vehicles. The wagon house was likely built in the 1870s, but the interior features hand-hewn timber supports. In an 1880 advertisement, the building is labeled as a wagon house and corncrib.¹³ The wagon house is divided into two rooms and an outdoor overhang. 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 (Contributing building)

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 building portion of the house, the southern wall was replaced with timber panels. The building date is unknown, but was constructed before 1880.¹⁴

Springhouse (Contributing building)

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. The upper eaves have been replaced with particleboard, and the wood shingle roof sags slightly in the middle. Two rooms are inside, and an active spring still flows through them. The structure may have been built in the early 19th century, around the same time as one of the fieldstone additions to the house, given the similar fieldstone materials.

Integrity Statement

The Gregg-Nichols property retains a high degree of integrity in regard to location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, and feeling. The house is original to the patent land grant purchased by Thomas Gregg “The Elder” in 1742. Today, the house and outbuildings are in the unincorporated community of Silcott Spring, Virginia. The property is situated at the base of Black Oak Ridge, along a branch of Butcher’s Branch Creek, and remains in a rural setting. The house showcases Quaker design as a patent log cabin, with three additions over time as the family living in it grew. The original hall-and-parlor floor plan of the first floor is preserved. Modifications have been made to the second floor to adapt the house for modern residential use,

¹³ Edward Nichols, Nichols vs. Nichols (Loudoun County 1908).

¹⁴ Edward Nichols, Nichols vs. Nichols (Loudoun County 1908).

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including changes to the electrical system, air conditioning, plumbing, and floor plan. The house's materials and outbuildings, including the logs and fieldstone, are original to the time of construction, except for the addition of a new asphalt roof with skylights and newer flooring. Each of the outbuildings retains the same materials originally used at the time of their construction, except for the smokehouse, which had its northern wall replaced by vertical timber paneling, and the springhouse, which may have had its roof replaced in the past two hundred years. The workmanship is evident in all buildings on the property, as the log cabin portion, wagon house/corn crib, and smokehouse still bear the hand-hewn marks upon the wood and original nails, and the construction choice of half-dovetail notches for joining the logs of the cabin. The stone portions of the house and springhouse are made with local fieldstone, reflecting the resourcefulness of the Quakers and their ingenuity in using the stone to enhance insulation. Overall, the character of the property feels like stepping back into the past as changes to the house and outbuildings have been minimal. Except for the smokehouse, all buildings on the property are in great condition and retain their integrity.

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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

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Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ARCHITECTURE

EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT

Period of Significance

Ca. 1745-1880

Significant Dates

ca1745 (First floor of log cabin constructed)

1799 (Second floor of log cabin constructed)

1820 (First fieldstone addition constructed)

1830 (Second fieldstone addition constructed)

1854 (Thomas vs. Nichols court case and documented on Yardley Taylor Map)

1857 (Samuel H. Nichols purchases property)

1864 (General Merritt's Burning Raid impacts property)

1879 (Samuel H. Nichol dies, Nichols vs. Nichols courtcase ensues)

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

NA

Cultural Affiliation

Quaker

Architect/Builder

Thomas Gregg "The Elder"

Thomas Gregg "The Potter"

Josiah Gregg

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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 Gregg-Nichols property is individually eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places at the local level of significance and under Criteria A and C, in the areas of exploration and settlement and architecture, with a period of significance spanning from 1745, the date of construction of the first floor of the log house to 1880, (why 1880?) In 1742, Thomas Gregg "the Elder" purchased 640 acres of land in Prince William County, now Loudoun County, Virginia. As required by the patent system, a 16 x 20 structure was to be built within three years. This would mean that by 1745, the first floor of the log cabin was built. The property remained in the Gregg family until 1857, when Gibson Gregg sold the land and buildings to Samuel H. Nichols, a Quaker farmer. Nichols owned the farm until his death from paralysis in 1879. The following year, his property was divided and sold into lots, with the remaining house and outbuildings on 14 acres. The property changed hands multiple times, passing through several owners, until the 1970s, when William Miner purchased it and restored it to its nineteenth century condition. Because the property then changed hands several times and was not owned by Quakers, it did not operate as a farm as intended, and fell into disrepair, the period of significance ends in 1880.

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

The Gregg-Nichols property is eligible at the local level under **Criterion A, for Exploration and Settlement**. The house represents patterns of Quaker settlement into the frontier of Virginia. Beginning in the eighteenth century, Quakers from Pennsylvania and Delaware purchased 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. Virginia law required grantees to "seat and plant" their grants by building a house with dimensions of 16' x 20', and to plant and farm an acre of land within three years of purchase. Quakers soon followed the Janney family 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 an evolved Patent Quaker House whose construction may date to ca.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 was not a member of the Goose Creek Meeting, though the additions he built 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 integrated economically in 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 the time of his death in 1879. This was in spite of the fact that he suffered financial losses after General Merritt's Army marched through during the Burning Raid of 1864.

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In 1745 and 1880, the farmstead was associated with multiple members of the Gregg family and Samuel H. Nichols. While the Greggs were active Quakers in the early Goose Creek community, no individual took a leading role in meeting or politics at the local, state, or national levels that may rise to significance. The same can be said for Samuel H. Nichols, and neither the Greggs nor Nichols were associated with any fame or notoriety. Nichols left behind only a chancery case over misuse of his wife's inheritance, a letter to the Southern Claims Commission, testifying on behalf of his neighbor as a Quaker and Unionist, and a contested will and estate upon his death. There is the possibility that General Merritt may have been at the farm as part of the "Burning Raid" in late 1864; however, no documentation confirms Merritt was at the property or that the property held any significance for Merritt.

Criterion C: Architecture

The Gregg-Nichols house is eligible under **Criterion C, Architecture** 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 as an adult, his fieldstone additions match how Quakers used fieldstone in their construction projects in Loudoun County.

Similarly, Quaker homes such as 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.

Historic Context

Construction and Alterations History

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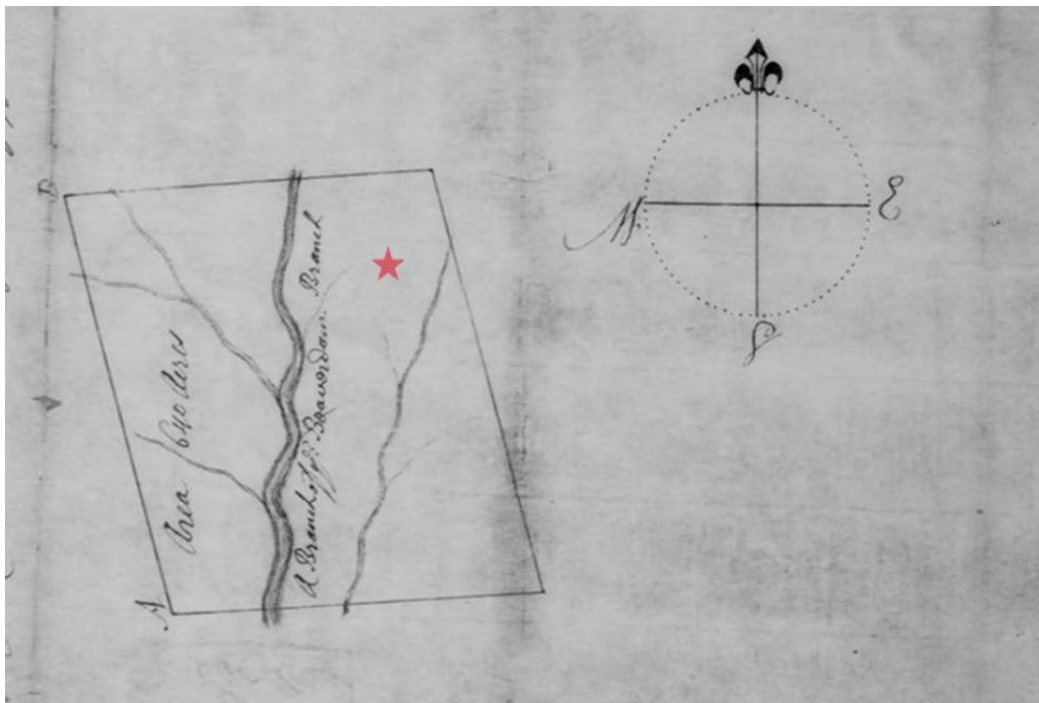


Figure 4. 1742 Survey of the 640-acre Gregg Plat.¹⁵

The Gregg-Nichols home is a Quaker Vernacular Patent House built on a 640-acre plat of land purchased in 1742 by Thomas Gregg, the “Elder”, from Kennett Square, Pennsylvania.^{16,17} The current homeowners, Matthew and Catherine Berg, were told that the house was built in 1747, a detail passed to them by previous owners, and the “Seating and Planting” law of Virginia in the eighteenth century supports that the first floor of the log cabin was constructed around 1745.¹⁸ Loudoun County property assessors dated the home to circa 1750, which helps corroborate the story, but documentation for the specific year 1747 is lacking.¹⁹ Initially, the cabin was likely one story, with a second story added around 1799, as evident by the value of the land increasing from \$109.00 to \$160.20.²⁰ This is supported by a visual difference in the appearance of the logs, making up the log cabin portion of the house. The logs, chinking, and daubing on the second floor are a different color and have a different appearance than those on the first floor, and axe-

¹⁵ Gregg Thomas, “Land Grant 21 March 1742,” Exlibrisgroup.com (Library of Virginia, 1742), https://lva.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01LVA_INST/altrmk/alma990008539130205756.

¹⁶ Gregg Thomas, 1742.

¹⁷ Tavenner Charles Blair, “The Tavenner Genealogical Collection” (Leesburg, Va : Charles Blair Tavenner Collection, 1709-1980 (M 090), Thomas Balch Library, 1980).

¹⁸ Donald A. Wise, “Early Land Grants in Arlington County, Virginia,” The Arlington Historical Magazine, October 1973, The Arlington Historical Society of Arlington County, Virginia., <https://freepages.rootsweb.com/~kell/genealogy/dad/hooe/Early%20Land%20Grants%20in%20Arlington%20County,%20Virginia1.htm>.

¹⁹ “PARID: 559172226000,” Real Estate Assessment & Parcel Database (Loudoun Real Estate Assessment, May 23, 2023),

<https://reparcelasmt.loudoun.gov/pt/datalets/datalet.aspx?mode=profileall&sIndex=0&idx=1&LMparent=20>.

²⁰ “Loudoun County Land Taxes 1782-1850, Part I (1782-1799) R-99” (Library of Virginia, n.d.), accessed February 18, 2025.

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hewn marks are more prominent and frequent on the second story.²¹ This addition was built after Thomas Gregg deeded the land, now 180 acres, and the house to his son Josiah Gregg, with the remaining land deeded to Josiah's brothers.²²

The value of the land massively increased in 1820, suggesting that it was at that time that the first fieldstone addition was added to the cabin, along with the construction of the fieldstone spring house north of the house and the smokehouse directly behind the house.²³ During this time, the United States was in President Monroe's "Era of Good Feelings," and Loudoun County, being the location of the President of the time, James Monroe's home, Oak Hill, benefited from the American System, a plan to improve the United States' economy and infrastructure. The American System was a program authored by Senator Henry Clay that proposed funding infrastructure and construction projects, such as canals, roads, and bridges, to boost the agrarian economy. A rise in tariffs financed the plan.²⁴ Nearby the Gregg-Nichols house, the Snickersville Turnpike underwent construction as a toll road and was nearly complete by 1820.²⁵ These road improvements and thoroughfares, such as the Snickersville Turnpike, increased commerce throughout Loudoun by connecting Western Loudoun to Route 50.²⁶ This allowed farmers to send their goods down to the port of Alexandria, Virginia. The Gregg-Nichols property is also located off Route 690, today Silcott Springs Road. Though the origin of the road is unknown, it was linked to Snickersville Turnpike, connecting the property to commerce east.²⁷ This increase in commerce may have allowed Josiah to build the second fieldstone addition. In 1830, Loudoun Tax records documented a 300-dollar increase in the property value due to additional buildings on the property.²⁸ This could be the second addition, along with various other outbuildings such as the springhouse and smokehouse, as well as a "tenant" house (Figure 6).

²¹ C. Bickenheuser and K. Snodgrass, "Dovetails and Broadaxes: Hands-on Log Cabin Preservation," U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Missoula Technology and Development Center 1523-2802P-MTDC, 2015, 77-82, https://www.fs.usda.gov/t-d/pubs/pdfpubs/pdf15232802/1523-2802_Dovetails+Broadaxes_Sec508_08-09-17_WEB_150dpi.pdf.

²² "Thomas Gregg to Josiah Gregg" (Leesburg, VA: Deed Book R (1788-1789), Clerk of the Circuit Court, Historic Records & Deed Research, August 14, 1788).

²³ "Loudoun County Land Taxes 1782-1850, Part III (1816-1823) R-99" (Library of Virginia, n.d.), accessed February 18, 2025.

²⁴ United States Senate, "U.S. Senate: Classic Senate Speeches," Senate.gov (The United States Senate, 2017), https://www.senate.gov/artandhistory/history/common/generic/Speeches_ClayAmericanSystem.htm.

²⁵ "Annual Report of the Snickers Gap Turnpike Company to the Board of Public Works 1820-1895" (Richmond, Virginia: Library of Virginia, 1820).

²⁶ Eugene Scheel, "Snickersville Turnpike | History of Loudoun County, Virginia," Loudounhistory.org, 2018, <https://www.loudounhistory.org/history/snickersville-turnpike/>.

²⁷ Yardley Taylor, and Publishers Thomas Reynolds, and Robert Pearsall Smith, Map of Loudoun County, Virginia (Philadelphia: Thomas Reynolds & Robert Pearsall Smith, 1854).

²⁸ "Loudoun County Land Taxes 1782-1850, Part IV (1824-1831) R-99" (Library of Virginia, n.d.), accessed February 18, 2025.

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Figure 5. A close-up of the 1854 Yardley Taylor "Map of Loudoun County". The blue star marks the location of Samuel H. Nichols' home.²⁹

The property remained unchanged as Josiah Gregg's son, Gibson Gregg, sold the 180 acres of land and buildings to Samuel H. Nichols in 1857.³⁰ Three years earlier, the Gregg-Nichols house appeared on the 1854 Yardley Taylor Map, and Samuel H. Nichols was listed as the owner (Figure 15). In the chancery case, *Thomas v. Nichols*, Nichols states he purchased the property in 1852, but the sale did not occur until 1857.³¹ In any case, Nichols was living at the property by 1854. Gibson owned enslaved people, so there would have been housing on the property for those individuals.³² In 1880, a property survey was completed for the chancery case *Nichols vs. Nichols*, which documents a tenant house east of the property.³³ Neither Josiah, his son Gibson Gregg, nor Samuel H. Nichols were listed as having tenants; it is possible that this building housed the enslaved. This building no longer exists today (Figures 6 and 8).

²⁹ Yardley Taylor, and Publishers Thomas Reynolds, and Robert Pearsall Smith, *Map of Loudoun County, Virginia* (Philadelphia: Thomas Reynolds & Robert Pearsall Smith, 1854).

³⁰ "Gibson Gregg and Mary His Wife to Samuel H. Nichols" (Leesburg, VA: Deed Book 5E, Clerk of the Circuit Court, Historic Records & Deed Research, June 5, 1857).

³¹ *Maria J. Thomas etc. vs. Samuel Nichols etc.* (Loudoun County 1854).

³² "1850 U.S. Federal Census - Slave Schedules," Ancestry.com (The National Archives, 2021), <https://www.ancestry.com/sharing/33997037?mark=7b22746f6b656e223a225854462b7456694839637954727935796753775267546f744d357064436f44384b6978496248564a5871633d222c22746f6b656e5f76657273696f6e223a225632227d>.

³³ *Edward Nichols, Nichols vs. Nichols* (1908).

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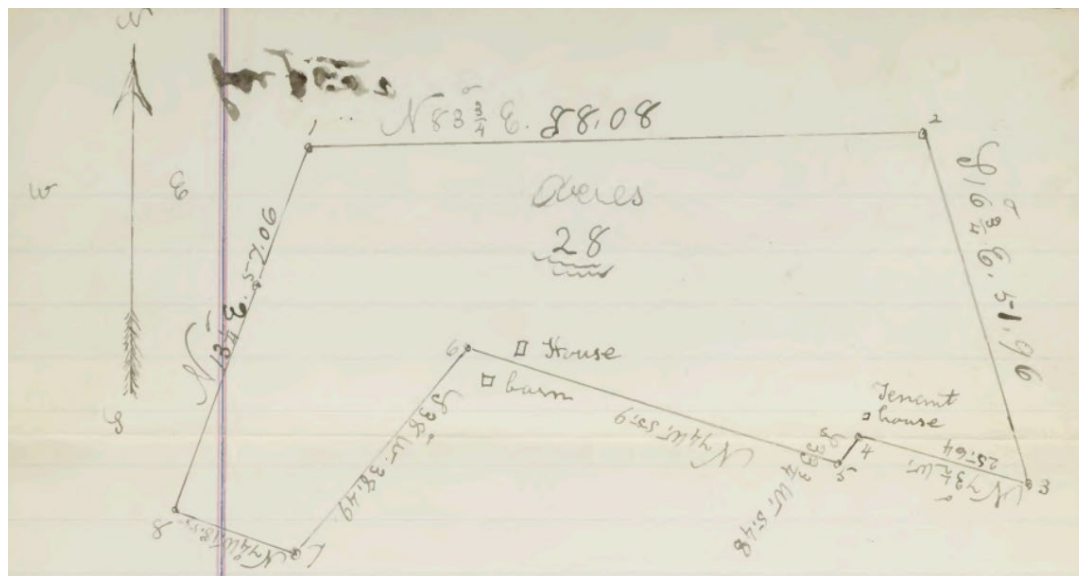


Figure 6. Survey by James Heaton, April 20, 1880. The survey details the location of the house, barn, and tenant house on the eastern side of the property. Note that the barn was built outside the property line.³⁴



Figure 7. 1863 Barrows and Smith "Map of Fauquier and Loudoun Counties, Virginia". This map was made to assist the Union army in navigating the counties of Fauquier and Loudoun. The map details the locations of property owners. The star marks Samuel H. Nichols' property.³⁵

³⁴ Edward Nichols, Nichols vs. Nichols (1908).

³⁵ A.S. Barrows and Wm. P. Smith, Map of Fauquier and Loudoun Counties, Virginia, 1863, 1863, <https://www.loc.gov/item/2002627439/>.

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The Civil War undoubtedly impacted the property, as Loudoun was key to both the Union and the Confederacy. The house appears on several Civil War military reconnaissance maps (Figure 7). In 1865, Union General Sheridan began the Burning Raids in Loudoun County and the Shenandoah Valley. He ordered Major General Merritt to burn every barn they came across to starve out the Mosby Raiders.³⁶ While no records directly document what happened when Union troops arrived at the farm, Nichols lost his barn and later filed a claim with the Southern Claims Commission.³⁷



Figure 8. A clipping from an 1880 advertisement in *The Washingtonian* found in the chancery case file *Nichols vs. Nichols*.³⁸ The advertisement details buildings on the property, including the tenant house and a new stone barn.

³⁶ Eugene Scheel, "Loudoun County Burning Raid and John S. Mosby | History of Loudoun County, Virginia," Loudounhistory.org, 2018, <https://www.loudounhistory.org/history/loudoun-cw-mosby-burning-raid/>.

³⁷ Congress United States, Holloway John B., and French Walter H., *Consolidated Index of Claims Reported by the Commissioners of Claims to the House of Representatives from 1871 to 1880* (1892; repr., Harvard University, Cambridge, MA: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2008), https://www.google.com/books/edition/_/yUsUAAAAYAAJ?hl=en&gbpv=0.

³⁸ Edward Nichols, *Nichols vs. Nichols* (1908).

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Samuel H. Nichols died in 1879.³⁹ In 1880, an advertisement for the property in *The Washingtonian* detailed a new barn that is no longer part of the property. In the chancery case *Nichols vs. Nichols*, the following outbuildings are detailed: a stone barn, a wagon barn/corncrib, a smokehouse, a stone springhouse, and a tenant house. The smoke house, spring house, and wagon barn remain on the property today.⁴⁰

Charles F. Otley, a neighbor, purchased the property and allowed Samuel H. Nichols' wife, Harriet, to live in the house until her death in 1894. After Otley died in 1911, the property passed through several owners and fell into disrepair. William Miner purchased the property in 1976.⁴¹ The roof had caved in at the time of purchase, and the cellar under the log cabin was flooded. Miner spent the next two years carefully restoring the property. He added a central staircase to the log cabin side of the house (Figure 3). Before Miner's remodel, the second story was only accessible by a ladder to the second floor.⁴² Miner replaced the roof, and installed plumbing. On the second floor, he changed the floor plan from four rooms, subdividing to add more rooms, such as a hallway, a laundry room, and a bathroom. Without this restoration, the Gregg-Nichols House most likely would not have survived to the present day.

³⁹ Virginia. Superior Court of Law (Loudoun County), "Will Books, 1810-1888; Index to Wills, 1816-1904," Ancestry.com (Virginia, U.S., Wills and Probate Records, 1652-1900 [database on-line]. Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2021., 2021), https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/62347/records/934621?tid=&pid=&queryId=e33df4b1-9089-4d17-bf49-6e3f2fdee01c&_phsrc=PXo335&_phstart=successSource.

⁴⁰ Edward Nichols, 1908.

⁴¹ "James H. Monroe and Elizabeth M. Monroe to William F. Miner and Donna S. Miners & Parties of Second Part Alyce G. Reilley" (Leesburg, VA: Deed Book 447 pg 203, Clerk of the Circuit Court, Historic Records & Deed Research, August 16, 1976).

⁴² Matthew and Catherine Berg, Property Owner Interview, interview by Elizabeth Welch, February 1, 2025.

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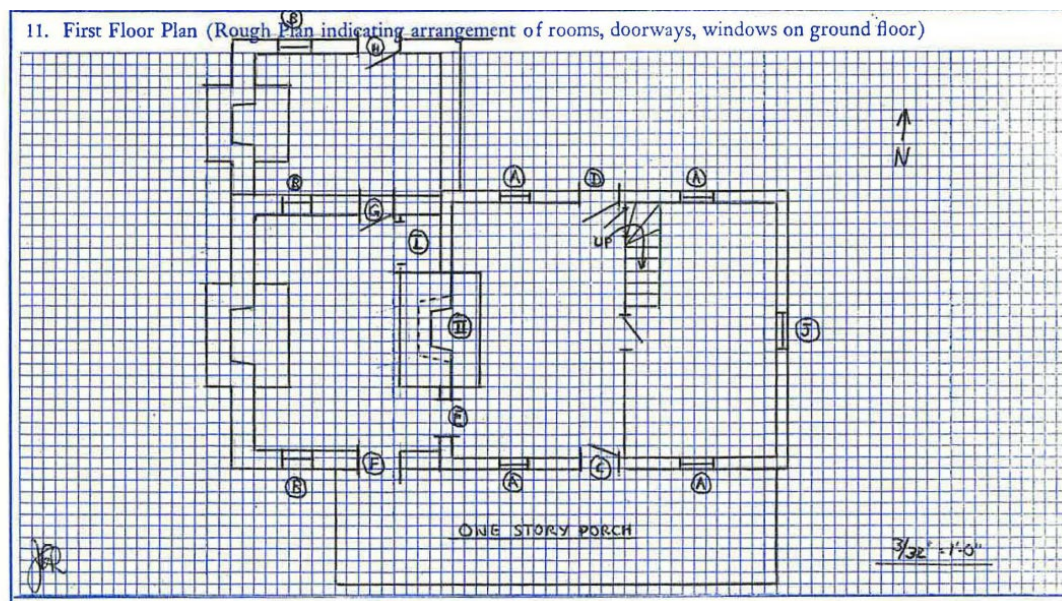


Figure 9. First Floor Plan drawn by John G. Lewis in October of 1977. The porch was temporary for remodeling. The only alteration to the first floor was moving the stairway from left of the front door to the back of the room.⁴³

Community Development

The Gregg-Nichols house is located in the former village of Silcott Spring, Virginia, approximately four miles southwest of the historic Quaker village of Lincoln and three miles south of Purcellville, Virginia. The property and house predate the village of Silcott Spring, and the first owners, the Greggs, and later Samuel H. Nichols, attended Quaker meetings at Goose Creek Meeting in Lincoln, Virginia.

Goose Creek/Lincoln

The Religious Society of Friends, colloquially called the Quakers, began settling the land that became Loudoun County, Virginia, in 1733.⁴⁴ Amos Janney, a Quaker surveyor for Thomas 6th Lord Fairfax, purchased 5,578 acres in what was then Prince William County, with John Hough purchasing 5,451 adjoining acres in 1734. Soon after, Janney and other Quaker families from Bucks County, Pennsylvania, settled on Janney and Hough's land grants.⁴⁵ Eventually, this settlement would be called Waterford, Virginia. Enough Quakers had settled in the area, and in

⁴³ John G. Lewis, "The William Miner House Survey" (Richmond, VA: Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission, October 1977).

⁴⁴ Jay Worrall, *The Friendly Virginians* (1994; repr., Berwyn Heights, Maryland: Heritage Books, Inc., 2013), 132.

⁴⁵ Eugene Scheel, "Waterford's Beginning – Quakers Helped Shape a Town | History of Waterford Virginia," *Waterfordhistory.org*, 2018, <https://www.waterfordhistory.org/history/waterford-origins/>.

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1741, the settlers constructed a log meeting house. They called their meeting Fairfax Meeting, named after the newly formed Fairfax County, where they resided.⁴⁶ Loudoun County would be split from Fairfax County in 1757, but the meeting would continue to use the name Fairfax.

Some of the earliest settlers of what would eventually be called Goose Creek, Virginia, later renamed Lincoln, were Jacob and Hannah Janney, relatives of Amos Janney from Bucks County, Pennsylvania.⁴⁷ They settled in 1745, and that same year, they received permission from the Fairfax Meeting to create the Goose Creek Meeting. The meeting originated from Hannah's practice of spending time twice a week sitting on a log in the forest in silent prayer, while her husband, Jacob, continued building the house and other structures on their homestead.⁴⁸ By 1750, there were over 50 meeting members, including Thomas Gregg, "The Potter," and his family, who had moved to the area around the same time as Jacob and Hannah Janney.⁴⁹ By 1750, the village surrounding the meeting was called Goose Creek. The settlement continued to grow until Abraham Lincoln's election. The village had strong pro-abolitionist sentiments, and when the Civil War broke out, Goose Creek requested a post office, which was promised to be named after Abraham Lincoln in honor of their loyalty to the Union despite the secession of the State of Virginia. In 1865, they were granted a post office and named it Lincoln.⁵⁰

Silcott Spring

Today, the Gregg-Nichols house is in the unincorporated community of Silcott Spring despite its earlier associations with Lincoln. By the 1850s, a mineral spring near Lincoln began attracting attention. In 1853, Yardley Taylor published *A Memoir of Loudoun County* along with his map, the earliest surviving map of Loudoun County. In the book, he stated that the spring belonged to Bathsheba Silcott and noted that the spring was touted to cure chronic illnesses. Taylor provided a water analysis report of the spring from Dr. David Stewart of Baltimore, which included a description of Bathsheba Silcott's Spring.⁵¹ This was no doubt inspired by the hydropathy craze, which involved using mineral spring water to cure various ailments. In the 1840s, Joel Shew established the first hydropathic treatment facility in the United States, located in New York City.⁵² Soon, towns with natural mineral springs became overnight resorts. There were also enough people and commerce in the area to support a store owned by Samuel M. Nichols, a

⁴⁶ Worrall, 132.

⁴⁷ Elizabeth F. Morgan, "The Friends or Quaker Meeting House" (Bluemont, Virginia: Work Progress Administration of Virginia: Historical Inventory, April 4, 1938).

⁴⁸ Sally P. Causey, "The Goose Creek Meeting 1740-1817: A Community of Friends" (History 610, December 15, 1988).

⁴⁹ William Wade Hinshaw, *Index to Encyclopedia of American Quaker Genealogy*, vol. 6 (1950; repr., Baltimore, MD: Genealogical Pub. Co., Inc, 1993), <https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/48135/>.

⁵⁰ Eugene Scheel, *Loudoun Discovered: Communities, Corners, & Crossroads Volume 4, Quaker Country and the Loudoun Valley*, vol. 4 (The Friends of the Thomas Balch Library, Inc., 2002), 162.

⁵¹ Yardley Taylor, *Memoir of Loudon County, Virginia to Accompany the Map of Loudon County* (1853; repr., Leesburg, Virginia: Thomas Reynolds, 2009), 23, <https://www.loudounhistory.org/media/memoir-of-loudoun-county-with-map-by-yardley-taylor-1853.pdf>.

⁵² Ann Haddad, "Julia Tredwell Takes the 'Water-Cure,'" Merchant's House Museum (Merchant's House Museum, August 25, 2016), <https://merchantshouse.org/tag/water-cure/>.

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cousin of property owner Samuel H. Nichols. After Taylor's book was published, the community near Bathsheba Silcott's Spring was called "Silcott's Springs."

In 1855, a resort touted as "Little Capon," nicknamed after Capon Resort in West Virginia, was established in Silcott's Springs with tourists from Washington, D.C., visiting for healing waters.⁵³ In 1876, the community received its own post office, and the 's' was dropped.⁵⁴ Affluent African Americans visited the boarding houses at Silcott Spring, as it was one of the few vacation spots open to receiving people of color in the Washington, D.C., area.⁵⁵ Silcott Spring continued to grow and attract tourists, so much so that, in 1884, after Purcellville, Virginia, Silcott Spring secured a telephone line and extension.⁵⁶ By the turn of the century, the national hydropathy craze slowed, and after May 1911, the Silcott Spring Post Office was no more.⁵⁷ Silcott Spring today is an unincorporated community outside the town of Purcellville and the village of Lincoln.

The Greggs' and Nichols' Quaker and Agricultural History

Thomas Gregg, "The Elder" a Quaker of Irish descent from Kennett Square, Pennsylvania, purchased a 640-acre plat from Sir Thomas Lord Fairfax in 1742.^{58,59} The plat originally contained the modern-day town of Round Hill, but when Thomas Gregg "The Elder" and his son Thomas Gregg, "The Potter," presumably called "The Potter" for his trade, moved to the plat, the area was mostly wilderness with a few nearby patent homesteads, including Jacob and Hannah Janney's plat.⁶⁰ Thomas Gregg "The Elder" most likely arrived at the plat and built the first floor of the log cabin around 1745, as mandated by the "seating and planting" law that required a 16 x 20 building to be erected within three years of the purchase of a plat.^{61,62}

⁵³ Anonymous Correspondent, "Page 2," Newspapers.com (Alexandria Gazette, September 13, 1855), <https://www.newspapers.com/article/alexandria-gazette-silcotts-springs-lit/167704984/>.

⁵⁴ Eugene Scheel, Loudoun Discovered: Communities, Corners, & Crossroads Volume 4, Quaker Country and the Loudoun Valley, vol. 4 (The Friends of the Thomas Balch Library, Inc., 2002), 185.

⁵⁵ Willard B Gatewood, Aristocrats of Color the Black Elite, 1880–1920 (University Of Arkansas Press, 2000), 207, https://www.google.com/books/edition/Aristocrats_of_Color_the_Black_Elite_188/CyQEzCEV9XkC?hl=en&gbpv=0.

⁵⁶ "Telephone Line at Silcott's Springs," Newspapers.com (Alexandria Gazette, May 28, 1886), <https://www.newspapers.com/article/alexandria-gazette-telephone-line-at-sil/167707097/>.

⁵⁷ Scheel, 185.

⁵⁸ Gregg Thomas, 1742.

⁵⁹ Tavenner Charles Blair, "The Tavenner Genealogical Collection" (Leesburg, Va : Charles Blair Tavenner Collection, 1709-1980 (M 090), Thomas Balch Library, 1980).

⁶⁰ Sarah Huntington, Restoration: Gail and Perry Epes' 1740s Stone House, 2014, Cochran's Stone Masonry, 2014, <https://cochransstonemasonry.com/cochrans-clients-projects>.

⁶¹ William Robertson, "An Account of the Manner of Taking up and Patenting of Land in Her Majesty's Colony and Dominion of Virginia with Reasons Humbly Offered for the Continuance Thereof," *The William and Mary College Quarterly Historical Magazine* 3, no. 2 (1923): 137–42, <https://doi.org/10.2307/1921517>.

⁶² Donald A. Wise, "Early Land Grants in Arlington County, Virginia," *The Arlington Historical Magazine*, October 1973, The Arlington Historical Society of Arlington County, Virginia., <https://freepages.rootsweb.com/~kell/genealogy/dad/hooe/Early%20Land%20Grants%20in%20Arlington%20County,%20Virginia1.htm>.

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Thomas Gregg, “The Elder,” died in 1762.⁶³ There is not much documentation on his son, Thomas Gregg “The Potter”, but he is listed as regularly attending the Goose Creek Meeting. Thomas Gregg, “The Potter,” remained a member of the Goose Creek Meeting until his death in 1792.⁶⁴ Thomas “The Potter”, regularly paid his taxes and was listed as a potter for his presumed occupation.⁶⁵ Throughout the 1780s and 1790s, Gregg sold off parcels of land until only 180 acres remained, which he gave to his son Josiah.⁶⁶ The only addition was the second floor of the cabin, added for space, lending to the simple living typical of Quakers during this time, as Quaker aesthetics often mirrored Quaker morality.⁶⁷ His son, Josiah, was not listed in the Goose Creek records, and he was married by the famous Methodist minister John Littlejohn in 1795, suggesting he had left the Religious Society of Friends.⁶⁸ Interestingly, in the 1830 Census, Josiah has a free “colored” woman living with the family aged 36 to 54.⁶⁹ Unlike his son Gibson, Josiah did not own any enslaved people, and her identity is not known. Her status as free may also suggest Josiah still held the same beliefs about slavery as the Quakers. Josiah Gregg owned the property while the fieldstone additions were constructed. His ability to add two fieldstone additions shows that he was tied to the area's commerce and benefited from the construction of the nearby Snickersville Turnpike.⁷⁰ Josiah Gregg died in 1837.⁷¹ The property then passed to his son Gibson. Gibson is not listed at any point as a Quaker and owned four enslaved people in 1850, which again points to him not being a practicing Quaker.⁷²

⁶³ Tavenner Charles Blair, “The Tavenner Genealogical Collection” (Leesburg, Va : Charles Blair Tavenner Collection, 1709-1980 (M 090), Thomas Balch Library, 1980).

⁶⁴ “Virginia, U.S., Wills and Probate Records, 1652-1900,” Ancestry.com (Virginia. County Court (Loudoun County), 2021),

<https://www.ancestry.com/sharing/33882585?mark=7b22746f6b656e223a225766454f58385a537a2f6b483838576977476c7439666c614b64436a3063764f7175696d7666694d574e413d222c22746f6b656e5f76657273696f6e223a225632227d>.

⁶⁵ “Loudoun County Land Taxes 1782-1850, Part I (1782-1799) R-99” (Library of Virginia, n.d.), accessed February 18, 2025.

⁶⁶ “Thomas Gregg to Josiah Gregg” (Leesburg, VA: Deed Book R (1788-1789), Clerk of the Circuit Court, Historic Records & Deed Research, August 14, 1788).

⁶⁷ Roger Homan, “The Aesthetics of Friends’ Meeting Houses,” Quaker Studies 11 (2007), <https://digitalcommons.georgefox.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1297&context=quakerstudies>.

⁶⁸ “Loudoun County Marriage Records 1767-1850” (Leesburg, Virginia: Loudoun County Historic Records & Deed Research), accessed March 9, 2025,

<https://lfportal.loudoun.gov/LFPortalInternet/0/edoc/326264/Marriage%20Records%20Index%201767-1850%20Groom.pdf>.

⁶⁹ “Josiah Gregg in the 1830 United States Federal Census,” Ancestry.com (National Archives at Washington, DC, 2021),

<https://www.ancestry.com/sharing/36023126?mark=7b22746f6b656e223a223237356b36777a7a5355655961675971624c70536a7a6757636a535441466f65414f44337147676656686b3d222c22746f6b656e5f76657273696f6e223a225632227d>.

⁷⁰ Eugene Scheel, “Snickersville Turnpike | History of Loudoun County, Virginia,” Loudounhistory.org, 2018, <https://www.loudounhistory.org/history/snickersville-turnpike/>.

⁷¹ “Funeral Related Items in Loudoun County Estate Accounts 1757 - 1900” (Loudoun County Clerk’s Office Historic Records Division, April 26, 2019),

<https://lfportal.loudoun.gov/LFPortalInternet/0/edoc/332814/Funeral%20Related%20Items%20in%20Estate%20Accounts%201757-1900.pdf>.

⁷² “1850 U.S. Federal Census - Slave Schedules,” Ancestry.com (The National Archives, 2021),

<https://www.ancestry.com/sharing/33997037?mark=7b22746f6b656e223a225854462b745669483963795472793579>

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Samuel H. Nichols purchased the property from Gibson Gregg, the grandson of Thomas “The Potter” Gregg, in 1857.⁷³ However, Nichols’ name was listed on the property map in 1854, showing he lived at the property before owning it (See Figure 5). That same year, he was sued by a relative of his wife, Harriet, Maria J. Thomas, for improperly using their land, which he purchased with Harriet’s inheritance from her father, David Handley.⁷⁴ In particular, they accused Samuel H. Nichols of overclearing the land and selling the wood to his neighbors and the community. Various neighbors of Samuel H. Nichols were called to testify on his behalf, and Nichols himself claimed to be the landowner. There is a deed in the case files from 1852 where he uses his wife’s trust to purchase land from Gibson Gregg.⁷⁵ However, the county does not confirm a sale until 1857. The chancery case shows that Nichols actively continued to farm and clear the land, continuing its use as a farm, and his involvement in the burgeoning Silcott Spring community. In the Non-Population Schedule 1860 Census, Samuel is documented as farming 390 bushels of wheat, 80 bushels rye, 750 bushels of corn, 40 bushels of potatoes while raising 8 dairy cattle, 16 other cattle, 10 horses, 39 swine, and producing 75 pounds of honey.⁷⁶ He had improved 150 acres of the 180 acres of land plat.

No records indicate that the Greggs, Nichols, or anyone on the property was involved in the hydropathy movement in what became Silcott Spring, Virginia. Still, the Yardley Taylor map shows the proximity of the Gregg-Nichols’ House to Bathsheba Silcott’s Spring and Samuel M. Nichols’ store (See Figure 5). Due to the increase in commerce in Silcott Spring, Samuel H. Nichols may have benefited from the hydropathy economy. At the time of Nichols’ death, his possessions, when appraised, were worth \$2,137.35, adjusted for inflation, roughly \$67,012.00 today.⁷⁷ Among his possessions are a pleasure carriage, various bolts of calico cloth, and a buffalo robe. The value of his possessions and the items themselves show that Nichols had accumulated a great deal of wealth by the end of his life. Edward Nichols, on behalf of Samuel’s widow, Harriet, sold most of the possessions and the land to pay estate taxes and fees, as well as the *Nichols v. Nichols* chancery case. She was permitted to live in the house until her death in 1894.⁷⁸

6753775267546f744d357064436f44384b6978496248564a5871633d222c22746f6b656e5f76657273696f6e223a225632227d.

⁷³ Samuel H. Nichols, Gibson Gregg & Mary his wife to Samuel H. Nichols (Loudoun County June 5, 1857).

⁷⁴ Maria J. Thomas etc. vs. Samuel Nichols etc. (Loudoun County 1854).

⁷⁵ Thomas vs. Nichols, 1854.

⁷⁶ “Samuel H. Nichols in the U.S., Selected Federal Census Non-Population Schedules, 1850-1880,” Ancestry.com (National Archives at Washington, DC, 2007), <https://www.ancestry.com/sharing/36015158?mark=7b22746f6b656e223a2271776d54314842705333477574572f4973636f733778694b6d362b634a42475a37386a773837434b537a633d222c22746f6b656e5f76657273696f6e223a225632227d>.

⁷⁷ “Samuel H. Nichols Estate, Will Books, 1810-1888; Index to Wills, 1816-1904,” Ancestry.com (Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2021), <https://www.ancestry.com/sharing/35848280?mark=7b22746f6b656e223a2249614e34343152573339336348305737556279524976755254444f4667633268375058397033776e4171383d222c22746f6b656e5f76657273696f6e223a225632227d>.

⁷⁸ Edward Nichols, *Nichols vs. Nichols* (1908).

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Nichols is listed in the 1860 Slave Census for Virginia as owning ten individuals ranging from thirty-seven years to eleven months old.⁷⁹ According to the chancery case *Thomas vs. Nichols*, his wife also inherited six enslaved people from his father-in-law's estate.⁸⁰ This would initially suggest that Samuel H. Nichols was not a Quaker, as by 1860, the Goose Creek Meeting forbade members from owning enslaved people.⁸¹ Interestingly enough, Samuel H. Nichols testified in a letter to the Southern Claims Commission after the Civil War on behalf of a neighbor, J. S. Pancoast, that they were both loyal to the Union and members of the Religious Society of Friends.⁸² Samuel H. Nichols is not listed as a member of the Goose Creek Meeting, but records are incomplete.⁸³ When he died, he was allowed to be buried at the Goose Creek Burying Ground. This creates the question of whether Samuel H. Nichols was indeed a Quaker. However, Samuel H. Nichols may not have been entirely lying under oath, as the Religious Society of Friends allowed non-Quakers to attend and quietly observe meeting services.

Another possibility is that Nichols inherited and purchased the enslaved group to allow them some semblance of freedom. Samuel M. Janney, a prominent Quaker in Lincoln, famously purchased a family in 1856, Jane Robinson and four children, and paid the family unit a dollar a week. He provided lodging and care for Jane, her children, and her husband William, who appeared to be free. A law in Virginia at the time stated that if an enslaved person were manumitted, they had to leave the state within a year. By purchasing them, but not manumitting them, Janney could keep the family together, and they could stay in Virginia. Janney states in a letter to Jane Johnson, a Quaker woman in Pennsylvania, that other Quakers in the community were doing the same.⁸⁴ It is possible that Nichols followed Janney's lead in keeping a family together. This would also explain the tenant building at the far eastern edge of the property, whereas slave cabins tended to be closer to the main house.⁸⁵ Unfortunately, without further documentation, the answer to this question is unknown. After his death, Nichols was buried in the Goose Creek Burial Ground. According to Carolyn Unger, board member and Archivist for

⁷⁹ "1860 U.S. Federal Census - Slave Schedules," Ancestry.com (The National Archives, 2021), <https://www.ancestry.com/sharing/33887900?mark=7b22746f6b656e223a224e4b564b4376705830324141394e59765362554668635136484a6959503664622f7a524e577462586b624d3d222c22746f6b656e5f76657273696f6e223a225632227d>.

⁸⁰ *Thomas vs. Nichols*, 1854.

⁸¹ Lee Lawrence, "Samuel McPherson Janney," Nest of Abolitionists, July 27, 2018, <https://lincolinquakers.com/samuel-mcpherson-janney/>.

⁸² "Barred and Disallowed Case Files of the Southern Claims Commission, 1871-1880," Ancestry.com (The National Archives, Washington, D.C.: Records of the U.S. House of Representatives, 1789 - 2015), accessed February 20, 2025, <https://www.ancestry.com/sharing/32158893?mark=7b22746f6b656e223a226a6e3573632f4930675137583656503059384d75546e7652752b4d423272323634505271593953484c63593d222c22746f6b656e5f76657273696f6e223a225632227d>.

⁸³ Carolyn Unger, "Interview with Carolyn Unger, Board Member of the Lincoln Preservation Foundation," March 15, 2025.

⁸⁴ Lee Lawrence, "Lincoln, Virginia Quakers Bought an Enslaved Family and Set Them Free.," Nest of Abolitionists, July 17, 2019, <https://lincolinquakers.com/2019/07/17/lincoln-virginia-quakers-bought-an-enslaved-family-and-set-them-free/>.

⁸⁵ Dennis J. Pogue and Douglas Sanford, "Slave Housing in Virginia – Encyclopedia Virginia," Encyclopedia Virginia (Virginia Humanities, December 7, 2020), <https://encyclopedia.virginia.org/entries/slave-housing-in-virginia/>.

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Goose Creek Meeting, at that time, one had to be an active member of the Meeting to be buried in the Burial Ground.⁸⁶ This would suggest that by the end of his life, Samuel H. Nichols was a practicing Quaker.

What is known is Nichols lost his barn during Generals Sheridan and Merritt's Burning Raid through Loudoun County and the Shenandoah Valley around December 1-2, 1864. In 1872, Nichols claimed through the Southern Claims Commission that he lost 559 dollars in value due to Union soldiers destroying his property and taking horses, sheep, hogs, and geese. The Southern Claims Commission awarded him 388 dollars.⁸⁷ Ultimately, Samuel H. Nichols remained an active Quaker farmer in the Silcott Spring community, maintaining the property as a Quaker Patent Homestead.

Property Type/Pattern: Quaker Patent Properties

The Gregg-Nichols House may have been built in 1745 due to the "seating and planting" law of Virginia land grants, requiring grantees to build a 16' by 20' structure and clear and plant on a one-acre plot of land within three years of receiving the grant.⁸⁸ The homeowners were told that the house was built in 1747, a tradition passed down by previous owners.⁸⁹ Regardless, the patent house was built by Thomas Gregg, "The Elder," a Quaker from Kennett Square, Pennsylvania.⁹⁰

The Gregg-Nichols house is typical of other Quaker Patent properties located in Loudoun County, Virginia. It features a two-story hall-and-parlor-style log cabin with two early nineteenth century fieldstone additions, creating an L shape. One home with similar origins is the 'Home Farm' outside Leesburg, Virginia.

Home Farm started as a log cabin built sometime in the mid-eighteenth century by Quaker John Hough, who followed Amos Janney to the Loudoun County area. Eventually, the property passed to George Nixon, who added the first fieldstone addition to the log cabin in 1810, creating an L-shaped property. Quakers tended to utilize fieldstone out of thriftiness, a

⁸⁶ Carolyn Unger, 2025.

⁸⁷ Congress United States, Holloway John B., and French Walter H., Consolidated Index of Claims Reported by the Commissioners of Claims to the House of Representatives from 1871 to 1880 (1892; repr., Harvard University, Cambridge, MA: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2008), https://www.google.com/books/edition/_/yUsUAAAAYAAJ?hl=en&gbpv=0.

⁸⁸ Donald A. Wise, "Early Land Grants in Arlington County, Virginia," The Arlington Historical Magazine, October 1973, The Arlington Historical Society of Arlington County, Virginia., <https://freepages.rootsweb.com/~kell/genealogy/dad/hooe/Early%20Land%20Grants%20in%20Arlington%20County,%20Virginia1.htm>.

⁸⁹ Matthew and Catherine Berg, Property Owner Interview, interview by Elizabeth Welch, February 1, 2025.

⁹⁰ "U.S., Quaker Meeting Records, 1681-1935," Ancestry.com (Friends Historical Library, Swarthmore College, Swarthmore, Pennsylvania., 2014), <https://www.ancestry.com/sharing/33823270?mark=7b22746f6b656e223a223361536a732b776d503748787357333232566c7a6c73796b3345643470396f4d64684544486a6c4f35506b3d222c22746f6b656e5f76657273696f6e223a225632227d>.

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common feature of Quaker houses in Loudoun County.⁹¹ However, while additions at the Gregg-Nichols house halted after 1830, Home Farm continued to expand until 1930 due to the farm's prosperity. This includes a frame building built over the original log cabin section.^{92,93}

Another property with a similar construction history to the Gregg-Nichols house is the Jacob and Hannah Janney Patent House in Lincoln, Virginia. It was built sometime in the 1740s and started as a single-story patent log cabin house. In the late eighteenth century, the Janneys rebuilt the home into a one-and-a-half-story field stone house, with one standard room on the first floor and two bedrooms in the half-story loft. This was the same site where Hannah Janney lived when she began worshipping alone in nearby woods. That spot would become the site of the first Quaker meeting at Goose Creek. At some point in the nineteenth century, a two-story clapboard frame was added, and a rectangular addition was built behind the fieldstone building, creating a T shape. At this point, the Janney family used the building to house tenant farmers.⁹⁴ The clapboard frame addition was removed in the 20th century.

One final example of a patent Quaker home with additions is Oakland Green. Just outside Lincoln, Virginia, today, the property was part of a 505-acre tract purchased by Richard Brown. The two-story log hall-and-parlor cabin portion was built sometime in the 1730s. It is estimated that in the 1740s, Brown built a fieldstone two-story addition to the east of the log cabin separated by a dog trot. In the twentieth century, this dog trot was enclosed. Finally, in the 1790s, a Georgian-style brick addition was adjoined to the east of the stone section, creating a long rectangular shape. In the nineteenth century, a frame lean-to addition was added behind the stone and brick additions. It is the only example of a Three-Part Virginia House in Lincoln, Virginia, showing the three distinct building materials of the eighteenth century in Virginia.⁹⁵

Though each of these properties differs in location and construction from the Gregg-Nichols House, they share several similarities. All three are patent houses located in Loudoun County, originally constructed as log cabins to meet the conditions of the land grant patent system in Virginia.⁹⁶ Quakers built all three properties and patent houses. Finally, all three houses share the common feature of fieldstone additions to or replacing the log cabin.

⁹¹ Kathryn A. Miller, "Home Farm," National Register of Historic Places Nomination: Home Farm (Leesburg, VA: Historic and Architectural Resources, March 7, 2007), https://www.dhr.virginia.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/053-5388_Home-Farm_2007_NRfinal.pdf.

⁹² "Loudoun County Land Taxes 1782-1850, Part IV (1824-1831) R-99" (Library of Virginia, n.d.), accessed February 18, 2025.

⁹³ Miller, 16.

⁹⁴ John G. Lewis, "53-202 Jacob Janney Patent House" (Richmond, Virginia: Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission, January 30, 1973).

⁹⁵ John G. Lewis, "53-92 Oakland Green" (Richmond, Virginia: Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission, September 17, 1975).

⁹⁶ Donald A. Wise, "Early Land Grants in Arlington County, Virginia," The Arlington Historical Magazine, October 1973, The Arlington Historical Society of Arlington County, Virginia., <https://freepages.rootsweb.com/~kell/genealogy/dad/hooe/Early%20Land%20Grants%20in%20Arlington%20County,%20Virginia1.htm>.

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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: Virginia Department of Historic Resources

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): 053-0595

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 14.3

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Gregg-Nichols House

Name of Property

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Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- | | |
|----------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Latitude: 39.0881 | Longitude: -77.7609 |
| 2. Latitude: 39.0885 | Longitude: -77.7583 |
| 3. Latitude: 39.0876 | Longitude: -77.7568 |
| 4. Latitude: 39.0867 | Longitude: -77.7566 |
| 5. Latitude: 39.0869 | Longitude: -77.7574 |
| 6. Latitude: 39.0869 | Longitude: -77.7587 |
| 7. Latitude: 39.0868 | Longitude: -77.7587 |
| 8. Latitude: 39.0868 | Longitude: -77.7595 |
| 9. Latitude: 39.0867 | Longitude: -77.7614 |

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 nominated property includes the house and associated outbuildings located at 19219 Otley Road, Purcellville, VA 20132, recorded as Loudoun County Parcel ID number 559172226000. The parcel is bound by the driveway to the south and Otley Road to the east.

Gregg-Nichols House

Name of Property

Loudoun County, VA

County and State

The parcel is at the base of Black Oak Ridge, and north of Butcher's Branch, a tributary of Beaverdam Creek.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

Historically, the parcel was part of a 640-acre land grant to Thomas Gregg. Over time, plots were sold, leaving only fourteen acres of the original homestead remaining. The fourteen-acre parcel still contains the original Quaker Patent House and its associated outbuildings, which maintain historical integrity. The adjoining parcel, including the barn, has been excluded as it has been developed, and the other parcel has been sold. The entire parcel retains its original agricultural and rural settings.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Elizabeth Layne Welch

organization: N/A

street & number: 525 North Street NE

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

e-mail: laynewe@gmail.com

telephone: 803) 640-6812

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

Gregg-Nichols House

Name of Property

Loudoun County, VA

County and State

Photo Log

Name of Property: Gregg-Nichols House

City or Vicinity: Purcellville vicinity (Silcott Springs)

County: Loudoun

State: Virginia

Photographer: Elizabeth Welch

Date Photographed: July 10, 2025, January 4, 2026

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

Property Exterior Photos

Photo 1 of 27 Gregg-Nichols House, Southern/Front Facade

Photo 2 of 27 Gregg-Nichols House, first fieldstone addition, south elevation

Photo 3 of 27 Gregg-Nichols House, log section, south elevation

Photo 4 of 27 Gregg-Nichols House, log section, close-up view

Photo 5 of 27 Gregg-Nichols House, log section, east elevation, basement entrance

Photo 6 of 27 Gregg-Nichols House, north elevation

Photo 7 of 27 Gregg-Nichols House, fieldstone additions, west elevation

Photo 8 of 27 Smokehouse, front elevation

Photo 9 of 27 Smokehouse, north elevation

Photo 10 of 27 Smokehouse, west/rear elevation

Photo 11 of 27 Smokehouse, south elevation

Photo 12 of 27 Wagon house, front elevation

Photo 13 of 27 Wagon house, front elevation, winter

Gregg-Nichols House

Name of Property

Loudoun County, VA

County and State

- Photo 14 of 27 Wagon house, overhang
- Photo 24 of 27 Springhouse, front elevation
- Photo 25 of 27 Springhouse, east elevation
- Photo 26 of 27 Springhouse, rear elevation
- Photo 27 of 27 Springhouse, west elevation

House Interior Photos

- Photo 15 of 27 View from front door inside first fieldstone addition
- Photo 16 of 27 View from first fieldstone addition, looking back to front door
- Photo 17 of 27 Original window looking into second fieldstone addition
- Photo 18 of 27 Interior, second addition, view from first addition
- Photo 19 of 27 View of second addition from back door
- Photo 20 of 27 Interior, log cabin, view from first addition
- Photo 21 of 27 Western room, view from front door of log cabin
- Photo 22 of 27 Rear-eastern section of log cabin, view of bathroom and basement entrance
- Photo 23 of 27 Front-eastern room, log cabin kitchen

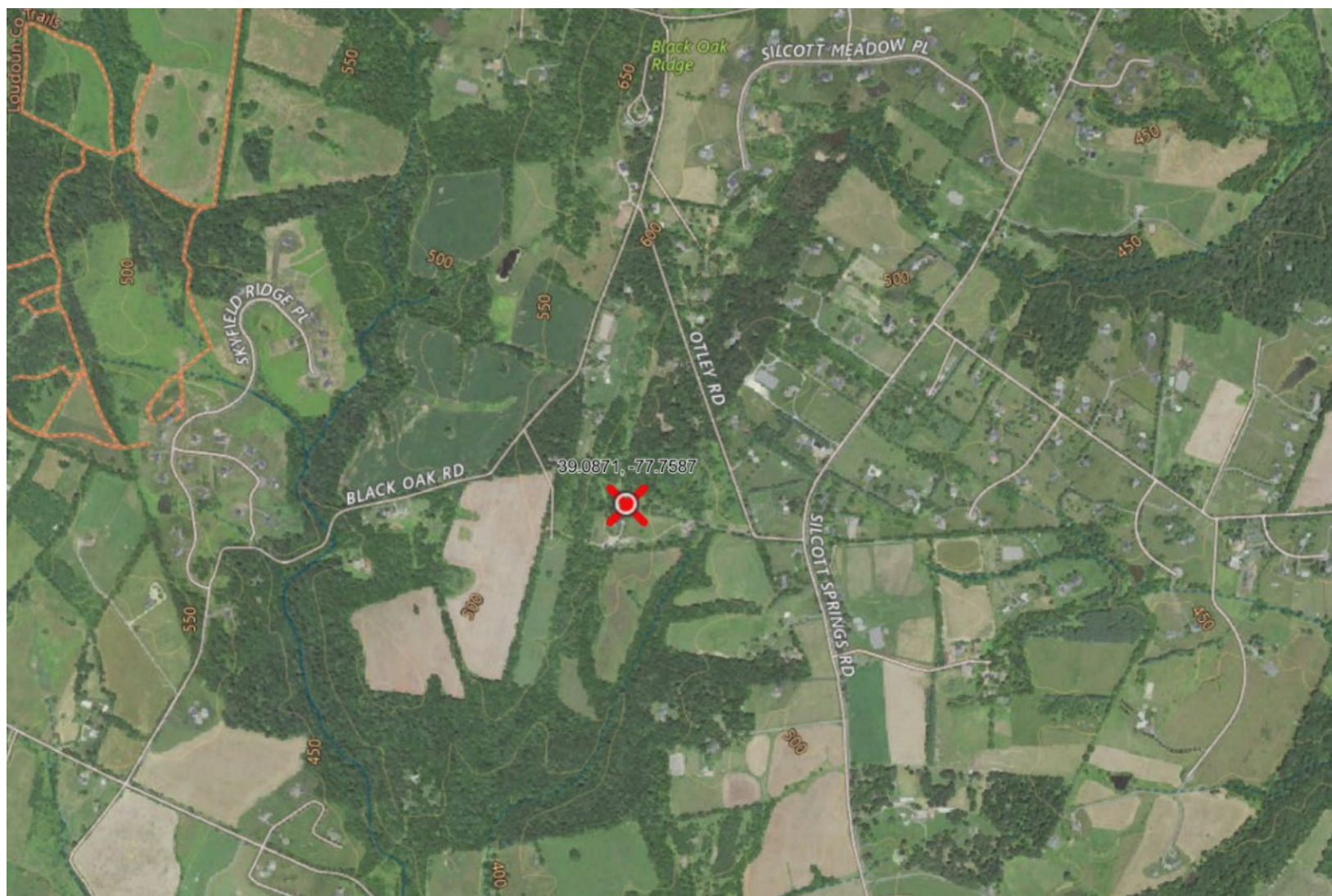
Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for nominations to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain 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:

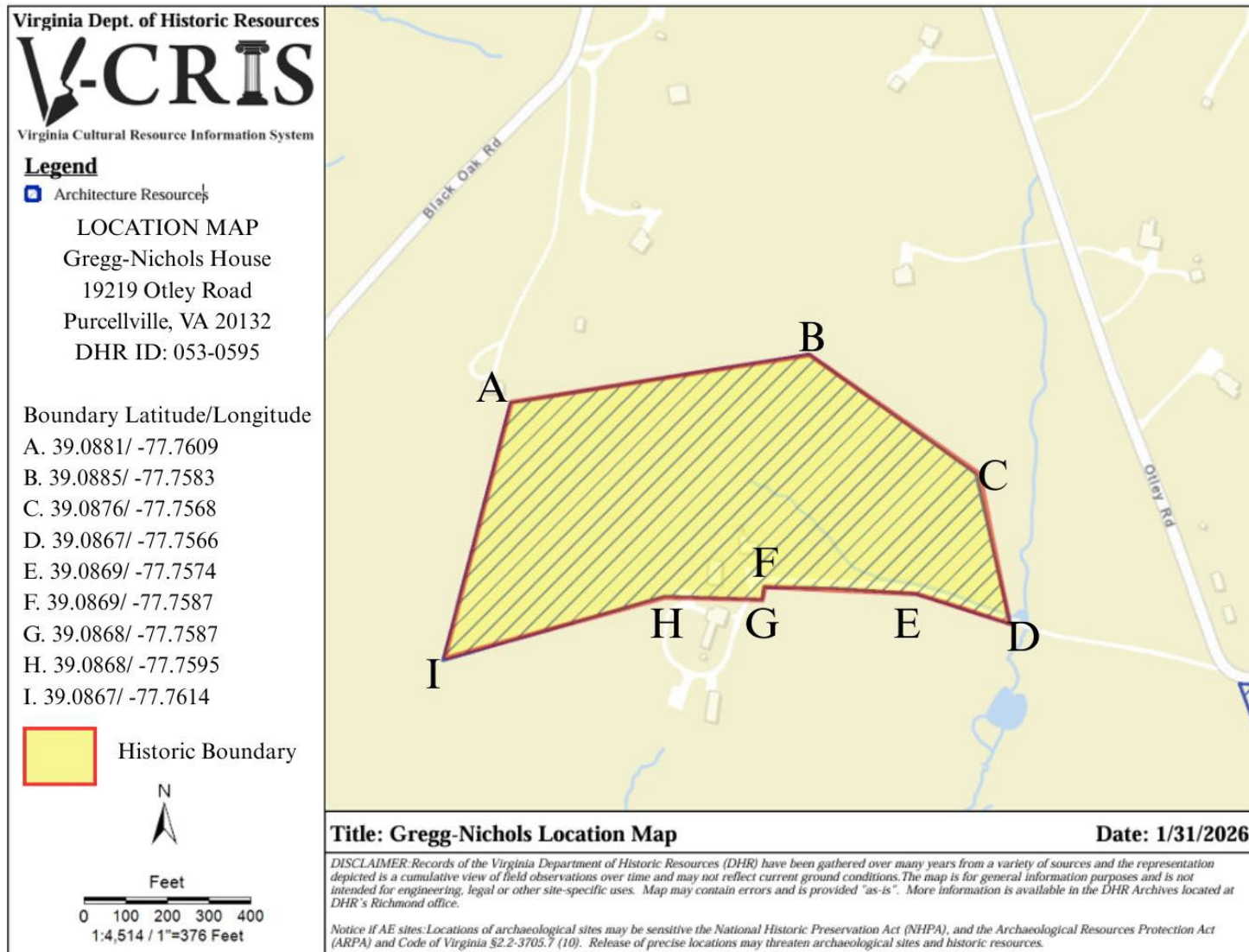
- Tier 1 – 60-100 hours
- Tier 2 – 120 hours
- Tier 3 – 230 hours
- Tier 4 – 280 hours

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.

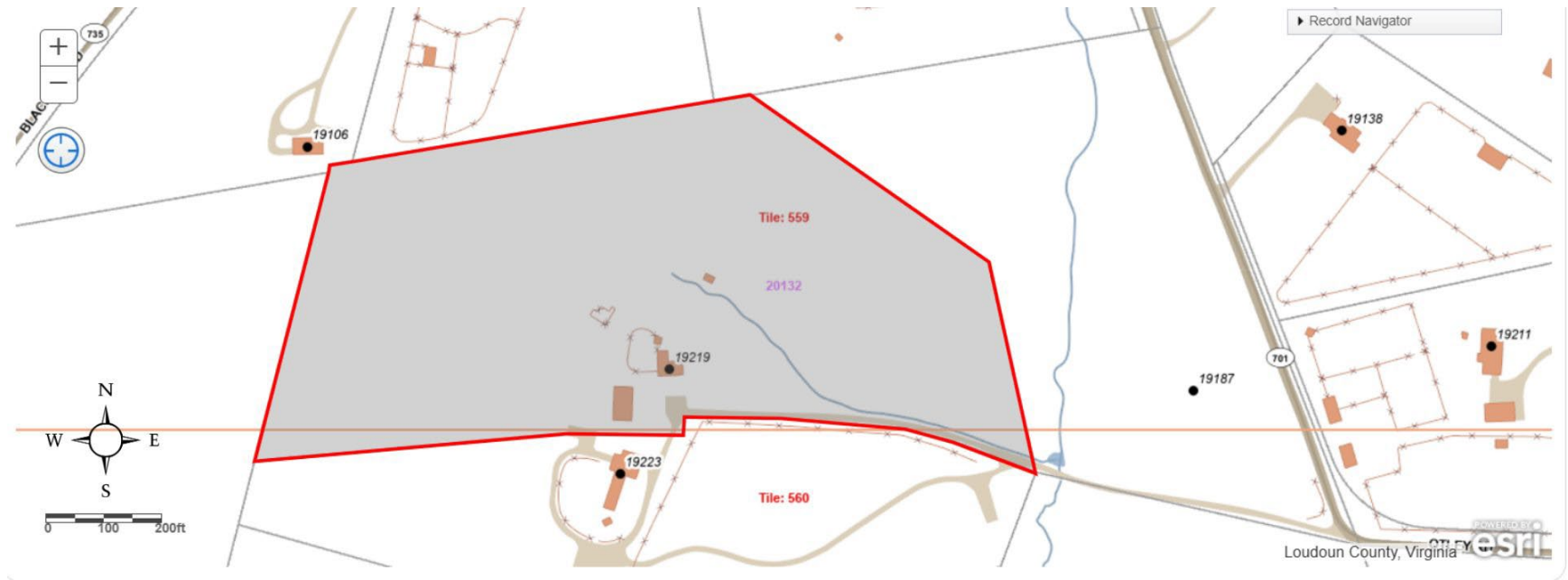
Gregg-Nichols USGS Topographical/Imagery Map: The Red X marks the location of the property.



Gregg-Nichols Location Map



Gregg- Nichols Tax Parcel Map



Gregg-Nichols House DHR ID: 053-0595

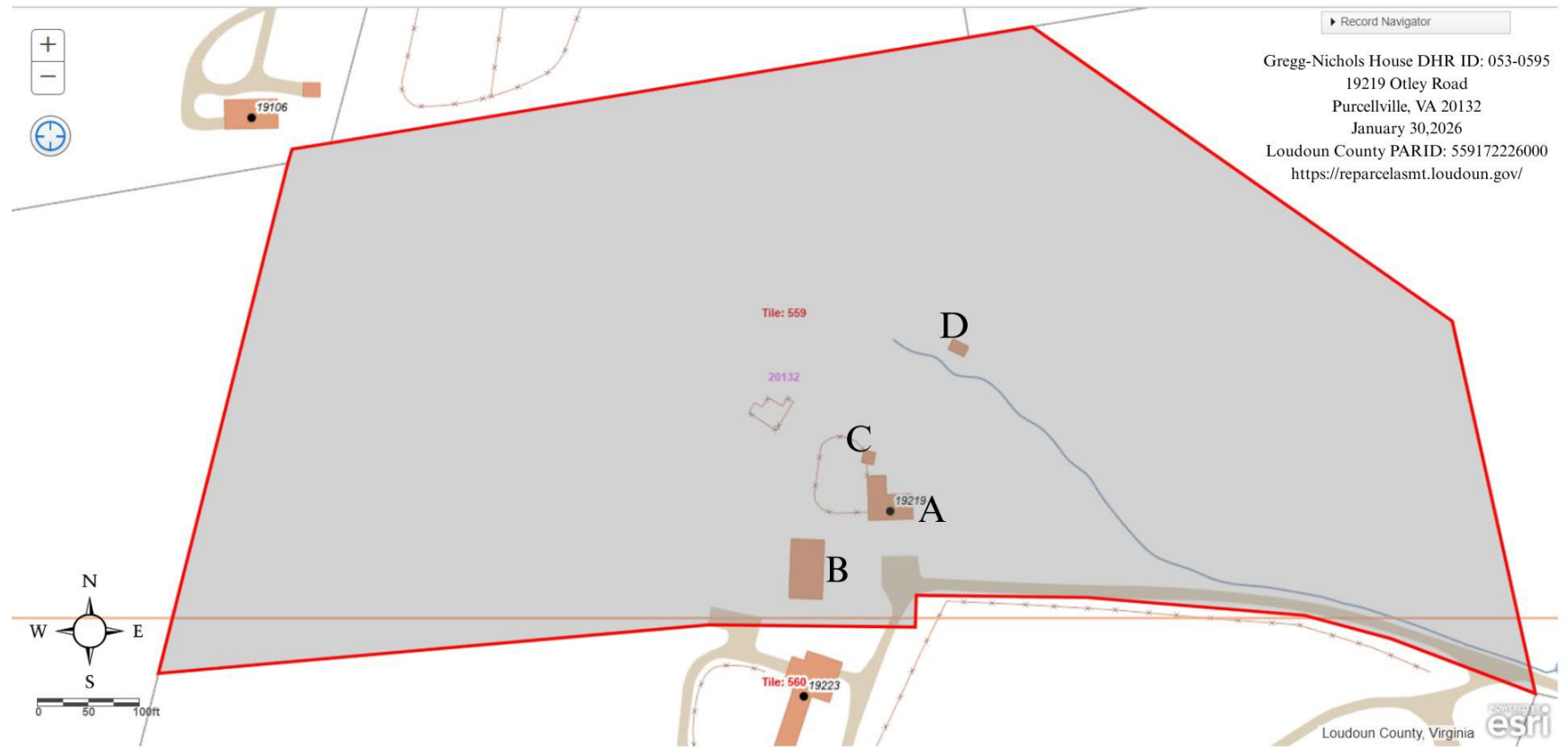
19219 Otley Road
Purcellville, VA 20132
January 30, 2026

Loudoun County PARID: 559172226000
<https://reparcelasmt.loudoun.gov/>



Nominated Boundary

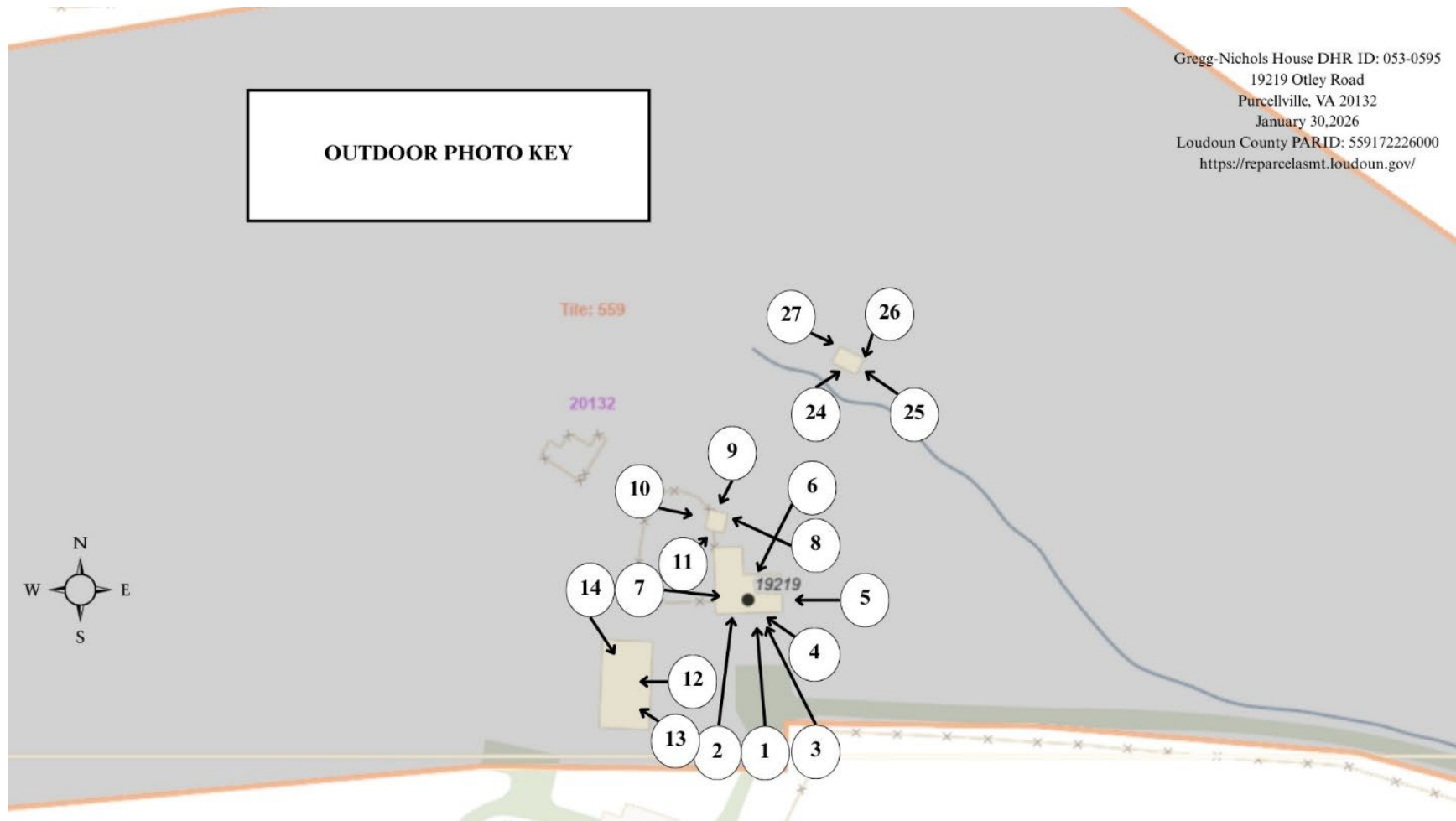
Gregg-Nichols Sketch Map



Legend A. Gregg-Nichols House C. Smokehouse
B. Wagonhouse/Corn Crib D. Springhouse

 Nominated Boundary

Gregg-Nichols Outdoor Photo Key Map



Gregg-Nichols House Interior First-Floor Photo Key

