

Virginia Department of Historic Resources PIF Resource Information Sheet

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

General Property Information	For Staff Use Only DHR ID #: 041-0089
Property Name(s): <u>Riverside</u>	
Property Date(s): <u>Possibly late 18th century; early 19th century</u> X Circa <input type="checkbox"/> Pre <input type="checkbox"/> Post Open to Public? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Limited X No	
Property Address: <u>11161 River Road</u> City: <u>Sutherlin</u> Zip: <u>24594</u>	
County or Ind. City: <u>Halifax County</u> USGS Quad(s): <u>Oak Level, VA</u>	

Physical Character of General Surroundings	
Acreage: <u>1 to 2</u> <u>acres</u>	Setting (choose one): <input type="checkbox"/> Urban <input type="checkbox"/> Town <input type="checkbox"/> Village <input type="checkbox"/> Suburban X Rural <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation Corridor
Site Description Notes/Notable Landscape Features: <u>The house and smokehouse stand in a fenced yard surrounded by woods and farmland. To the north of the house is a large farm building complex with what are believed to be a few pre-1968 buildings interspersed among more recent buildings.</u>	
Secondary Resource Description (Briefly describe any other structures (or archaeological sites) that may contribute to the significance of the property: <u>described under Architectural Description below</u>	
Ownership Category: X Private <input type="checkbox"/> Public-Local <input type="checkbox"/> Public-State <input type="checkbox"/> Public-Federal	

Individual Resource Information	
What was the historical use of this resource? Examples include: Dwelling, Grist Mill, Bridge, Store, Tobacco Barn, etc... <u>Dwelling</u>	
What is the current use? (if other than the historical use) <u>Dwelling</u>	
Architectural style or elements of styles: <u>Federal, Greek Revival</u>	
Architect, builder, or original owner: <u>Ragsdale, Nathaniel and Ann Coleman Boswell (early 19th century owners)</u>	
# of stories <u>2</u> Condition: <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent X Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated <input type="checkbox"/> Poor <input type="checkbox"/> Ruins <input type="checkbox"/> Rebuilt <input type="checkbox"/> Renovated	
Are there any known threats to this property? <u>None known</u>	

Resource Component Information

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

Foundation: Describe the foundation that supports the structure. Examples include piers, continuous brick, poured concrete. Continuous stone.

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

Walls: Describe the exterior wall covering such as beaded weatherboard or asbestos shingles. Plain and beaded weatherboard siding.

Windows: Describe the number, material, and form of the primary windows. This includes the number of panes per sash, what the sashes are made of, and how the sashes operate (are they hinged or do they slide vertically) Have the windows been replaced? 9/9, 6/9, 4/4, etc. wood sash windows

Porch: Briefly describe the primary (front) porch. List the primary material, shape of the porch roof, and other defining details. One-story hip-roofed front entry porch

Roof: Describe the roof, listing the shape and the covering material. Metal-sheathed gable and shed roofs

Chimney(s): List the number of chimneys and the materials used. Include the brick bond pattern if possible. Three brick chimneys laid in Flemish and American bond

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

Riverside, located at 11161 River Road near the Dan River in southeast Halifax County, Virginia, is a rambling one and two-story frame house with multiple phases of construction. The story-with-garret core section is believed to date to the eighteenth century and features beaded weatherboard siding and a brick chimney on the west end. The core section and the rest of the house now face north, toward the road and away from the river, but the core may originally have faced south toward the river. A two-story addition with a brick chimney was made to the east end of the core in the early nineteenth century, possibly in 1813, and a one-story shed wing was added to the west end at an undetermined date or period. Finally, perhaps about 1840, a two-story section with a brick chimney was added to the rear, connected to the rest of the house by a one-story hyphen. The final arrangement resembles the front house/back house form, although in this instance the front section is earlier. Other exterior features include a front porch on turned and classical posts and pilasters, and windows in a variety of pane patterns, including nine-over-nine.

The interior, like the exterior, preserves excellent integrity. The highlight is the parlor in the east side addition, which is decorated with vibrant faux painting. The paneled wainscot is painted with diffuse blue, green, and white marbling with red and blue veining, framed by yellow moldings and grained rails and stiles. The baseboard has the same colors in a slashing pattern, and the reeded chair rail is painted a dusky pink. The parlor mantel, like others in the front rooms of the house, is Federal, with a tripartite form, paired half-colonettes for pilasters, an urn carving in the center frieze tablet, and leaf carvings in the end tablets. The colonette pilasters suggest early Greek Revival influence, as do the room's symmetrically molded door and window surrounds with blank corner blocks. Adjoining the parlor is an entry hall with a two-run corner stair with square newels and scrolled tread brackets. The chamber on the second floor has

a wainscot and a mantel with end tablets but no center tablet in the frieze. A similar Federal mantel, but with reeding on the pilasters, is in the dining room which occupies the main room of the original section of the house. The ca. 1840 wing has simple Greek Revival mantels and six-panel doors with vibrant graining. The wing also has paneled aprons under the windows. The garret in the original section has early green paint on the board-sheathed walls and pitched ceiling and a small segmental-arched brick fireplace with a bracketed mantel shelf.

Riverside stands amid rolling fields and woods with a pond to the east. In the yard behind is a log smokehouse with composition shingle siding, a gable roof, a batten door, and a stone foundation. The interior structure is concealed by paperboard. Also in the yard is a modern well house. The back yard once featured a boxwood garden from which numerous daffodils survive.

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

Draft Statement of Significance Summary

The evolved house known as Riverside preserves some of Halifax County's most vibrant decorative painting and is also notable for its Federal detail. The house grew around a story-with-garret core, possibly eighteenth-century in date, with two-story side and rear wings added during the first half of the nineteenth century. The additions were made during the ownership of Nathaniel and Ann Ragsdale who acquired the property in 1809. The Federal interior detail includes a mantel with urn and leaf carving based on designs in William Pain's *The Practical House Carpenter*. Riverside is potentially eligible for the National Register under Criterion C in the architecture area of significance for its complex accretive form, extensive and well-preserved decorative painting, and pattern book-inspired Federal detail. The house is potentially eligible at the local level of significance.

Historic Context

Riverside's proximity to the Dan River's fertile bottomland suggests the potential for early settlement. Moses Echols owned land at the location or nearby in 1766 when he sold 274 acres and a dwelling to Samuel Hopson. In 1809 Charles Barker sold the property to Nathaniel and Ann Coleman Boswell Ragsdale who lived there until their respective deaths, he in 1859 and she in 1870. The property passed to the Ragsdales' daughter Martha Frances who married Dr. Ethelbert A. Coleman and later passed to their son, Nathaniel Ragsdale Coleman. Riverside has been restored by the current owner, artist Jane E. Edmunds. It is today virtually unchanged from its appearance in a series of photographs taken by WPA researcher Lizzie Ragland in the late 1930s as part of the Virginia Historical Inventory project. The Ragland photo also shows what appears to be a one-story detached kitchen off the west end of the house.

The names of the various craftsmen who worked on the house are not known at present, but the source used by the artisan who carved the urn and leaf motifs on the parlor mantel can be fairly confidently identified as *The Practical House Carpenter* by the British architect William Pain, a pattern book published in several editions beginning in the 1780s.¹ The 1792 edition contains relatively close matches for Riverside's urn (plates 68, 113, and especially 117) and leaves (plate 65). Pain's urns and leaves are portrayed realistically, whereas in Riverside and another Halifax County house with an urn and leaf mantel, Collins Ferry (ca. 1810), the motifs are more stylized. Slender double colonettes like those on the

¹ Mantels are also pictured in *Pain's British Palladio* (1788) but *The Practical House Carpenter* appears to be the most likely source.

Riverside parlor mantel are not commonly shown in Pain's pattern books, if at all, but are present on a Federal mantel in a house not far from Riverside, Elm Hill, dated ca. 1810. Similar paired colonette pilasters are documented for transitional Federal/Greek Revival Virginia houses of the 1830s.

Riverside's decorative painting is described in the 2008 manuscript that was a basis for *An Architectural History of Halifax County* published by the Halifax County Historical Society in 2016: "The marbling consists of irregular diamond-shaped splotches of blue, green, and white in a latticework of veinous blue and red lines. As was often the case with marbling done by country and itinerant painters during the period, the work bears only a superficial likeness to true marble colors and veining. The bright colors and eye-popping patterns appear to have been more important than realism, although the painter achieved a soft naturalistic effect by blurring the colors, probably by rubbing them with a rag before the paint had completely dried."

Sources

Edmunds, Jane. Personal communication with the author, December 2016 and January 2017.

Halifax County Historical Society Architectural Committee. *An Architectural History of Halifax County, Virginia*. South Boston, Va.: Halifax County Historical Society, 2016.

Pain, William. *Pain's British Palladio: or, The Builder's General Assistant*. London: 1788.

_____. *The Practical House Carpenter, or The Youth's Instructor*. Fourth edition. London: 1792.

Pezzoni, J. Daniel. "An Architectural History of Halifax County, Virginia." Manuscript prepared for the Virginia Department of Historic Resources and the Halifax County Historical Society, 2008.

Phillips, Laura A. W. "Grand Illusions: Decorative Interior Painting in North Carolina." In Thomas Carter and Bernard L. Herman, eds. *Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture, IV*. Columbia, Mo.: University of Missouri Press, 1991.

Ragland, Lizzie B. "Unidentified house, Halifax County, Virginia." Image at Library of Virginia Website ([http://image.lva.virginia.gov/VHIP/13/0269, 0270 and 0275](http://image.lva.virginia.gov/VHIP/13/0269,0270and0275)), accessed January 24, 2017.

Legal Owner(s) of the Property (For more than one owner, please use a separate sheet.)			
Mr. <input type="checkbox"/>	Mrs. <input type="checkbox"/>	Dr. <input type="checkbox"/>	
Miss <input type="checkbox"/>	Ms. <input type="checkbox"/>	Hon. <input type="checkbox"/>	
_____		_____	_____
(Name)		(Firm)	
_____		_____	_____
(Address)		(City)	(State) (Zip Code)
_____		_____	
(Email Address)		(Daytime telephone including area code)	
Owner's Signature: _____		Date: _____	
•• Signature required for processing all applications. ••			
In the event of corporate ownership you must provide the name and title of the appropriate contact person.			
Contact person: _____			
Daytime Telephone: ()			

Applicant Information (Individual completing form if other than legal owner of property)			
Mr. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Mrs. <input type="checkbox"/>	Dr. <input type="checkbox"/>	
Miss <input type="checkbox"/>	Ms. <input type="checkbox"/>	Hon. <input type="checkbox"/>	
J. Daniel Pezzoni		Landmark Preservation Associates	
_____		_____	_____
(Name)		(Firm)	
6 Houston St.		Lexington	VA 24450
(Address)		(City)	(State) (Zip Code)
gilespezzoni@rockbridge.net		(540) 464-5315	
(Email Address)		(Daytime telephone including area code)	
Applicant's Signature: _____		Date: _____	

Notification			
In some circumstances, it may be necessary for DHR to confer with or notify local officials of proposed listings of properties within their jurisdiction. In the following space, please provide the contact information for the local County Administrator or City Manager.			
Mr. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Mrs. <input type="checkbox"/>	Dr. <input type="checkbox"/>	
Miss <input type="checkbox"/>	Ms. <input type="checkbox"/>	Hon. <input type="checkbox"/>	
James M. Halasz		County Administrator	
_____		_____	
(Name)		(Position)	
Halifax County		PO Box 699	
(Locality)		(Address)	
Halifax		VA 24558	(434) 476-3300
(City)		(State) (Zip Code)	(Daytime telephone including area code)

Please use the following space to explain why you are seeking an evaluation of this property.

I wish to enhance awareness that this home is more than a tenant house. It has a rich heritage of occupancy since the beginning of English speaking people in Virginia. It was built near the Dan River when that was the means of travel. Later came the stage coach trail or King's Highway which ran from New Orleans to Philadelphia. This is with the hope that the stewards who succeed me will treat the home with the respect which it deserves.

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

Would you be interested in the easement program? Yes No

Riverside

041-0089

January 2017

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