



PRELIMINARY INFORMATION FORM (PIF) for INDIVIDUAL PROPERTIES

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

DHR No. (to be completed by DHR staff) 057-5089

1. General Property Information

Property name: Brighton; Brighton-Mobjack Farm; Hollerith Farm

Property address: 852-898 Brighton Lane

City or Town: Port Haywood

Zip code: 23138

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

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

Building X Site _____ Structure _____ Object _____

2. Physical Aspects

Acreage: 28.36

Setting (choose only one of the following):

Urban _____ Suburban _____ Town _____ Village _____ Hamlet _____ Rural X

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

North-South peninsula at the mouth of the junction of Weston Creek and Tabbs Creek as they enter the East River. Marshy with deep water wharfs adjacent to the site; rural farmland surrounding the site. B1 of DATA Investigations’ delineation; archaeological report cited below. Tax map attached.

3. Architectural Description

Architectural Style(s): Colonial Revival

If the property was designed by an architect, landscape architect, engineer, or other professional, please list here: Frederick B. Pyle (Winter House); unknown (Summer House)

If the builder is known, please list here: F. Callis

Date of construction (can be approximate): c. 1911; 1916-1917

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

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

Summer House and Winter House:

The c. 1911 Winter House is a symmetrical five-bay frame house sitting atop a raised basement. A full-length screened porch extends across the façade. A half-length screened porch runs along the rear elevation. There is an interior-end chimney on both east and west ends. Porches all lay on brick piers while the main house has a full enclosed basements with 6/6 windows. the Winter House has a detached single-story building ("maid's house") in the back (to the North) that is accessed by an original porch. All windows, window hardware, shutters, shutter hardware and siding appear to be original. The central stairhall is flanked by two rooms on either side on first and second floors, each room with a fireplace or heat source from the interior walls.

The main house, the c. 1916-1917 "Summer House," reflects Colonial Revival aesthetic of the Winter House but is double the size. As at the Winter House, the exterior is symmetrical with identical bays on either side of the central core. An open front porch extends the length of the façade. The Summer House has more of a Craftsman influence than the Winter House with its emphasis on horizontality, blend of window types and forms, and shed dormers. Each end of the Summer House has engaged end chimneys flush with the siding and a single shoulder occurs between the two floors of the house. There is also a central chimney on the north wall of the Summer House, and there is a chimney on the kitchen wing.

The main Summer House has a single-story kitchen wing. The porches all lay on brick piers while the buildings sit atop a full, enclosed basement with 6/6 windows. All windows, window hardware, shutters, shutter hardware and siding appear to be original.

Foundation: Enclosed brick with 2/2 windows under the main houses; porches lie on open piers.

Structure: Each structure is balloon frame with lapped siding (all of which appears to be original except for vinyl siding on the modern or newly- built garden shed).

Walls: Lapped siding, original (may include much poplar as many poplar trees existed on site prior to the building of the houses)

Windows: Most of the windows are 6/6 double hung sash, original hardware, sash and shutters. In the end walls of the attics of each house, there are tilting split lunettes that function to ventilate the attic spaces.

Porch: There are full-length screened porches with shed roofs on both elevations of the Summer House and the south elevation of the Winter House. The rear of the Winter house has a half porch; one elevation of the detached maid's house has a partial porch.

Roof: The roofs are shallow pitch (about 4:12); all have clipped gables with asphalt shingles.

Chimney(s): There are three chimneys on the Summer House,; two are engaged end chimneys and the larger central chimney aligns with the rear/north wall of the house. The kitchen wing on the Summer House has a chimney as well. The American bond pattern on the end chimney of the Summer House varies from 7-8 courses to 20 courses of stretcher bricks to a course of headers. There are two interior end chimneys on the Winter House.

The Summer and Winter houses -- to which Herman Hollerith retreated from Washington, DC -- remain virtually intact from the day he completed each of the houses, barns, and outbuildings. They reflect the balloon frame, wood sided cottages with full length porches, sited to take advantage of the generous breezes from three sides. Not only do the square columns, evenly spaced windows, clipped gables, simple hardware, and historical plumbing fixtures enhance the designs, but they also document the taste and technology of the period in which they were built. The houses have been expertly maintained over their lifetime, so they retain much original materials and design as well as the inventor's technology which developed over the family's ownership of the property. The houses were finally electrified in 1936.

Numerous museum-quality collections that reflect Hollerith's inventions and practical ingenuity remain. Hollerith's daughters developed the farms lands and, known for their botanical interests, they kept the gardens which consisted of formal garden, fruit trees and cutting and vegetable gardens.

Supporting outbuildings range from the pump house to barns with stalls for horses and ample room for carriages. The windmill and water tower were destroyed within the last 5 years when a tree fell on them – they were removed down to the foundations. The accompanying water-gathering system and the underground drainage system might remain intact.

Barns (also called Stables):

Two identical north-south oriented stables/barns (connected by an open shed with enclosed rooms on the ends) lie to the east of the Winter House. Each has five small 2/2 stable windows on their outside, five 6/6 windows on the inside. Each stable or barn building has a central cupola.

Outbuildings and other structures:

There are two sheds ("outbuildings") on the west side of the green between the two houses.

- Shed 1 is restored
- Shed 2 predates the main houses. (SMOKEHOUSE?)

On the east side of the green

- a garden shed
- a pumphouse

Garage with workshop lies between the Winter House and the barn

Detached building ("maid's house") lies to the north of the Winter House.

Boathouse with two slips and 2/2 windows, dock, planters.

Pavilion remains in near-ruinous state at the edge of the site while historic trees and a formal garden site remain on the property. The owner suggests that the pavilion was to shelter animals.

Viewshed and Environment:

In the viewshed, the houses are surrounded by views of the East River to Mobjack Bay and Tabb Creek, and immediately adjacent to the property are remains of the early wharfs that served Hollerith's boats – as large as 85' at one point. The farmlands and surrounding houses and properties have been divided up among other family members and numerous owners, so it is the core significant houses and supporting outbuildings that are being proposed for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

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

Outbuildings and other structures:

- There are two sheds (“outbuildings”) on the west side of the green between the two houses.
 - Shed 1 is restored
 - Shed 2 predates the main houses. (SMOKEHOUSE?)
- On the east side of the green
 - a garden shed
 - a pumphouse
- Garage with workshop lies between the Winter House and the barn
- Detached building (“maid’s house”) lies to the north of the Winter House.
- Boathouse with two slips and 2/2 windows, dock, planters.
- Pavilion remains in near-ruinous state at the edge of the site while historic trees and a formal garden site remain on the property.
- Several archaeological sites in the vicinity as identified by DATA Investigations including 44MT0111-114, 44MT0008, and 44MT-0112.
 - o 44MT-0113 (encompasses the Brighton house site): Pre-historic, Native American: Prehistoric artifacts indicate that Brighton/Hollerith Farm C was the site of temporary camps dating from undetermined prehistoric periods.

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

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

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

Hollerith, a resident of Georgetown, Washington, DC, had discovered that Mathews County was an ideal retreat, so he and his family summered there at neighboring Poplar Grove starting in 1895. But on August 13, 1909, he bought the existing farm, "Brighton" on the East River for \$15,000, according to the Gloucester-Mathews Gazette-Journal. Hollerith enjoyed the cultivation of numerous interests including potatoes, sheep, hogs and Guernsey cows. (An extensive Site History was compiled by Martha W. McCartney for the EVAA Archaeological Report in November 1984. Excerpts included in DATA Investigations' archaeological report on file with DHR.) Hollerith purchased Brighton on the East River and began a new chapter in his life as a gentleman farmer. Hollerith, who retired in 1911 at the age of 51, built several houses at Brighton for guests and rebuilt the main house in 1916 with all the latest modern conveniences. Under Hollerith's supervision Brighton had a thriving dairy farm, fields of vegetables, and offshore oyster beds. For 20 years he oversaw his country estate until his death of a heart attack on November 17, 1929 in Washington, D.C. Hollerith descendants have maintained Brighton nearly exactly as he left it and have opened it several times for public tours.

The family spent its first summer at Brighton in a house that was already on the property. Soon, Hollerith registered his dislike of the orientation of the house toward the west; the noisy rustling of the poplar trees; the rain on the tin roof; and the "perennial plague of cicadas." (page 317, Austrian.) So Hollerith demolished the existing house, and built a new house facing southwest down the East River with a grand view of the Mobjack Bay and taking advantage of the prevailing breezes. The blueprints for the Summer House dated September 2, 1916 have been submitted to DHR for inclusion in the archives file. (No architect nor engineer is indicated on the blueprints.)

The first house he built, the Winter House, dates to c. 1911 as a two-story, heated and insulated, four-bedroom building. (The insulation has been described as a mixture of seaweed and boric acid, solidified in the walls, per the prior owner, Richard Hollerith, Jr.) It makes sense that Hollerith had to have built the winter house after the 1909 purchase date and due to the architectural plans attributed to FB Pyle as "for Herman Hollerith".

Five years later, in 1916, Hollerith razed the original Brighton, and by 1917, the current Summer House was complete. The builder was J. Callis. The second house to be built where the original house had been, was intended to be merely a summer home. Hollerith instructed the architect to double the Winter House. This created a house (today known as the "Summer House") with eight upstairs bedrooms; however, the upstairs bedrooms were not connected by a hallway, so to access the other end of the upstairs, one had to go downstairs and back up the other stairs. (page 319, Ibid.) Thus, there were two suites of four bedrooms, two baths each. Very early, and according to the 1916 plans, a passage was cut through two rooms. Austrian goes on to describe the furnishings that went into the house and many of which remain intact today – furniture from John Wanamaker's and linens from Marshall Field. (These two companies had been loyal users of Hollerith's system.) Additionally, he writes of the huge building program that Hollerith launched, including a dairy house, a shed for the gas lighting system, a machine shop, stables, a windmill, a pumphouse, boathouses, and piers are but a few of the buildings that went up immediately and some remain intact to this day. (page 318, *ibid*)

Overview: It is suggested that Brighton may qualify for the National Register under the following criteria for the following reasons:

- **Criterion B:** Significance of Herman Hollerith, the inventor

- **Criterion C:** Significance of the intact complex of Winter and Summer House and numerous support buildings surrounding them, including the inventor’s collections that have been preserved in the house and his inventions and technological adaptations found in the house still today.
- **Criterion D:** Significance for the archaeological probability ranging from numerous known historical sites to the probability for prehistoric sites as suggested by DATA Investigations, Thane Harpole and David Brown, who have completed work at the site.

Criterion B: Herman Hollerith, the inventor:

Herman Hollerith, Sr. revolutionized the tabulation of the United States Census with the invention of his electrical punch card tabulating machine system in 1890. Through the punch card system, many units of information could be processed, rearranged, and extracted, and it became known as “The Hollerith Card.” By the turn of the twentieth century, his machines were used for censuses in England, Italy, Germany, Russia, Austria, Canada, France, Norway, Puerto Rico, Cuba, and the Philippines, and resulted in the founding of the Tabulating Machine Company to manage and service the many machines and contracts. His company merged with other companies and they were renamed International Business Machines or IBM. Hollerith also invented electrical railway car brakes. His highly creative and curious mind continued to work until his death in 1929, leaving his mark on the development of electricity, and finally at his “retirement” retreat in Mathews County, Virginia, where he finally raised Guernsey cows and water management systems that remain to this day on the site. Hollerith is a member of the Inventors Hall of Fame and was called “the Adam of modern data processing machines.” (page 57, Austrian) He achieved many accolades that are delineated in his biography by Geoffrey D. Austrian, Herman Hollerith: Forgotten Giant of Information Processing, and is widely regarded as the father of modern automatic information processing.

Criterion D: Archaeology:

The following statement is taken directly from “An Archaeological Assessment of Hollerith Farm (Sites 44MT0008 and 44MT0111 to 114), Mathews County, Virginia, August 2009,” by DATA Investigations, LLC. Hollerith/Brighton Farm holds within its bounds a near-complete cross section of Mathews County history, from the earliest prehistoric occupants of the Archaic cultural period through the first settlers of the mid-seventeenth century and into the modern period. It was for this reason that the Mathews County Historical Society (MCHS) employed Dr. Frank Farmer and his company, Eastern Virginia Archaeological Associates (EVAA), to conduct an archaeological survey of the property in 1984. Dr. Farmer died in 2007 without completing the final report on the survey and the MCHS contracted DATA Investigations LLC to curate the artifact assemblage and complete the report. The extensive survey undertaken by the EVAA and numerous volunteers resulted in the identification of five large, multi-component archaeological sites (44MT0008, and 44MT0111 to 44MT0114) that confirm the initial theory of the MCHS: Hollerith/Brighton Farm and its archaeological sites represent nearly every period of human occupation in Mathews County. The report discusses the purpose, methodology, and results of the 1984 survey, including the initial analysis of Dr. Farmer and subsequent analysis by DATA Investigations. Finally, recommendations are included at the conclusion of the report, including [their] determination that **the archaeological sites identified during the survey are potentially eligible for listing on the Virginia Historic Landmarks Register and National Register of Historic Places under Criterion D.**

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

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

- Austrian, Geoffrey D. Herman Hollerith: Forgotten Giant of Information Processing. Columbia University Press, NY. 1982
- Becky Barnhart, conversation. September 9, 2013.
- Brown, David, conversation. September 13, 2013.
- DATA Investigations LLC. "An Archaeological Assessment of Hollerith Farm (Sites 44MT0008 and 44MT0111 to 114). Mathews County, Virginia. August, 2009.
- Hollerith, Richard and Rosemary. September 9, 2013.
- Lewis, Sara. "Brighton Lane in Mathews: Remembering Brighton Days." July 12, 2007.
- McCartney, Martha W. Historical Report for EVAA. November, 1984.
- McCartney, Martha W. conversation, September 13, 2013.

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

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

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

name/title: Robert Williams and Elizabeth Rountree

organization: _____

street & number: 898 Brighton Lane

city or town: Port Haywood state: VA zip code: 23138

e-mail: rw@lostboulder.com telephone: 828-817-5200

Legal Owner's Signature: (SIGNATURE PAGE ON FILE – 10/10/24)

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)

name/title: Robert Williams and Elizabeth Rountree

organization: _____

street & number: 898 Brighton Lane

city or town: Port Haywood state: VA zip code: 23138

e-mail: rw@lostboulder.com telephone: 828-817-5200


Date: 11/7/2024

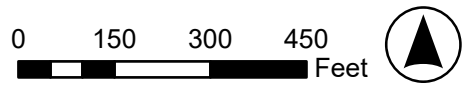
PLEASE DO NOT ATTACH CONTINUATION SHEETS TO THIS FORM. THANK YOU!



LOCATION MAP

Brighton
Mathews County, VA
DHR ID# 057-5089

 Proposed Boundary







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HURRICANE OF '33

"UP TO BILLY THE WELSH PONY'S
STOMACH AT GARDEN GATE AND
FOURTH STEP OF SUMMER HOUSE"







TRI 104

























