

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: <b>VIRGINIA</b>	
COUNTY: <b>NORTHAMPTON</b>	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

<b>1. NAME</b>	
COMMON: <b>NORTHAMPTON COUNTY COURT HOUSE PRESERVATION ZONE</b>	
AND/OR HISTORIC: <b>NORTHAMPTON COUNTY COURT HOUSE PRESERVATION ZONE</b>	

<b>2. LOCATION</b>			
STREET AND NUMBER: <b>(see continuation sheet)</b>			
CITY OR TOWN: <b>Eastville (Thomas N. Downing, Congressman, First District)</b>			
STATE <b>VIRGINIA</b>	CODE <b>51</b>	COUNTY: <b>Northampton</b>	CODE <b>131</b>

<b>3. CLASSIFICATION</b>			
CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) <b>Town</b>

<b>4. OWNER OF PROPERTY</b>			
OWNER'S NAME: <b>County owned except privately owned lawyer's office and storehouse</b>			
STREET AND NUMBER: <b>Northampton County Court House</b>			
CITY OR TOWN: <b>Eastville</b>	STATE: <b>Virginia</b>	CODE <b>51</b>	

<b>5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION</b>			
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC: <b>Northampton County Court House</b>			
STREET AND NUMBER:			
CITY OR TOWN: <b>Eastville</b>	STATE <b>Virginia</b>	CODE <b>51</b>	

<b>6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS</b>			
TITLE OF SURVEY: <b>Historic American Buildings Survey</b>			
DATE OF SURVEY: <b>1960</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Federal <input type="checkbox"/> State <input type="checkbox"/> County <input type="checkbox"/> Local			
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: <b>Library of Congress</b>			
STREET AND NUMBER:			
CITY OR TOWN: <b>Washington</b>	STATE: <b>D.C.</b>	CODE <b>11</b>	

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: <b>VIRGINIA</b>	COUNTY: <b>NORTHAMPTON</b>	ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
FOR NPS USE ONLY			

## 7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The principal historic structure in the Northampton County complex is the 1731 court house, one of the few colonial court houses in Virginia that can be accurately dated. The building was moved in 1913 from its original location where the confederate monument now stands, to its present location on the north edge of the green. The much altered structure preserves three of its original walls; the front wall required rebuilding following the move. The rebuilt as well as original walls are laid in Flemish bond both above and below the water table. Most portions of the original walls have only scattered glazed headers, but a header pattern appears in a section of the east wall, and in the north gable there are glazed headers arranged in paralld rows to form chevron patterns. Most of the windows appear to be altered either in size or location, and two later windows have been installed in the north gable, unfortunately obscuring the chevron patterns. The patterns are further disfigured by a nineteenth century exterior chimney built against the wall. Little, if any, original woodwork remains on the interior. The Federal style fan-light doorway, removed from a house in Norfolk, was installed when the front wall was rebuilt. Despite the many changes, the court house, with its steep gable roof and compact proportions preserves much picturesque charm.

Immediately to the west of the court house is the mid-eighteenth century clerk's office, which, like the court house, has its brick walls laid in Flemish bond both above and below the water table. Unlike the court house there is no decorative treatment of the brickwork but random glazed headers do appear. The front door and single windows on each side of the building are in their original location, and there is an original interior end chimney on the north wall. The interior of the clerk's office has been little changed and preserves such architecturally interesting features as the barrel vaulted ceiling, stone paving, built-in cabinets on both end walls, and a slave measuring rod cut into the woodwork.

A high, partially stuccoed brick wall connects the northwest corner of the clerk's office to the southeast corner of the brick debtors' prison. The prison is a very simple small building laid in American bond and covered by a gable roof. This building, the clerk's office and the court house are all owned by the county but are maintained as museums in the care of the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities.

The focal point for the court house complex is the 1899 Romanesque Revival court house. This present court house is built of brick, is two stories in height, and is covered by a hipped roof. The building has very simple architectural decoration for its period. The front porch appears to be a later addition and recently had its upper level removed. The monument erected in 1913 to the Confederate dead of the Eastern Shore stands in a small circle in the walk leading to the court house.

Bordering the south side of the green are four small buildings of frame that serve as lawyers' offices. On the eastern end of "Lawyers' Row", facing the street is a finely built two-story gable-end-front brick store. Erected in the early nineteenth century, the store is laid in very even Flemish bond with splayed brick arches over the windows. A one-story addition has been built along the south side of the store and a later shop front has been installed across the first floor.

Immediately to the south of the store is a long facade of the Eastville Inn. The two-story, eleven-bay frame building is covered by a

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

## 8. SIGNIFICANCE

### PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- ☐ Pre-Columbian ☐ 16th Century ☒ 18th Century ☐ 20th Century  
☐ 15th Century ☒ 17th Century ☒ 19th Century

### SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

### AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |                                      |   |   |
|--|--------------------------------------|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal              | <input type="checkbox"/> Education   | <input type="checkbox"/> Political      | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric             | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Phi-  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic                | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry    | losophy                                 | <u>Local history</u>                                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture             | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention   | <input type="checkbox"/> Science        | <u>county government.</u>                           |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape   | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture      | _____   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art                     | Architecture                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Human-  | _____   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce                | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature  | itarian                                 | _____   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications          | <input type="checkbox"/> Military    | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater        | _____   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation            | <input type="checkbox"/> Music       | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____   |

### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The assemblage of buildings on and around the court square in Eastville forms one of the most interesting and complete court house complexes in Virginia. The area has been the site of the Northampton's county seat since 1690, and the present Romanesque Revival court house, erected in 1899, is the fifth structure on the green to house the county courts. Prior to 1690, court was held in various locations, but in 1689 Joseph and Mary Goodwin deeded forty acres of land to the justices and offered to build a new court house for the county at their own expense. The court house of 1690 and its replacement built in 1715 were both frame structures. In 1730 the justices found the 1715 "much out of repair and not in a condition for the Justices to do the county business in. . ." In February of the next year, the justices awarded John Marshall, "being the fairest proposer for the undertaking" the contract to build a new brick court house. The brick structure of 1731 was put up approximately where the Confederate monument now stands, and served the county until 1795. In that year a new brick court house was erected, and the 1732 building was ordered to be leased. It served as a storehouse and later as a saloon until 1913 when the county supervisors decided that it should be demolished. A protest spearheaded by local members of the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities was launched and it was thus determined that the old court house be moved to a site where a former jail stood, and that this building, the old clerk's office, and debtors' prison should be turned over to the A.P.V.A. for preservation. The building was moved intact, but the front wall had to be rebuilt. The frame for the elliptical arched doorway was taken from a house that was being torn down on Granby Street in Norfolk.

Northampton County is said to have the oldest continuously kept county records in existence in the thirteen colonies. From the time they began to be kept in 1632 until sometime after 1706 when the first clerk's office was built, the records were housed in various locations, usually in the homes of the clerks. It is not known where the first clerk's office was located, but the old clerk's office behind the 1731 court house is believed to have been built in the second quarter of the eighteenth century. The present clerk's office is located in the 1899 court house. It supercedes a mid-nineteenth century clerk's office that stood beside the earlier clerk's office.

The only one of several early jails that stood at various times around the green is the debtors' prison which is connected by a wall to the old clerk's office. It is believed the debtors' prison was built by William Satchell in 1814.

Nearly every early Virginia court house complex had its tavern

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

# 9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Gaines, William H., Jr., "Courthouses of Virginia's Eastern Shore," Virginia Cavalcade, vl. XLV, no. 1(Summer 1964), pp. 20-27.

Whitelaw, Ralph T., Virginia's Eastern Shore, vol. 1, Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith, 1968.

# 10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees	Minutes Seconds
NW	37 ° 21 ' 14 "	75 ° 56 ' 53 "		° ' "	°	' "
NE	37 ° 21 ' 14 "	75 ° 56 ' 45 "				
SE	37 ° 21 ' 05 "	75 ° 56 ' 45 "				
SW	37 ° 21 ' 05 "	75 ° 56 ' 53 "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: Less than 10 acres.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

# 11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:  
Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Staff; James W. Moody, Jr., Director

ORGANIZATION: Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission DATE: 9th August, 1971

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Room 1116, Ninth Street State Office Building

CITY OR TOWN: Richmond STATE: Virginia CODE: 51

# 12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

# NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National ☐ State ☒ Local ☐

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
James W. Moody, Jr., Director  
Title Va. Historic Landmarks Commission

Date \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST:

Keeper of The National Register

Date \_\_\_\_\_

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE VIRGINIA	
COUNTY NORTHAMPTON	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Number all entries)

2. Bounded on the east by Rt. 13 and extending from Rt. 13 .1 mi. west, and extending from the intersection of Rt. 13 and Rt. 631 .1 mi. north and .1 mi. south.

6.  
Historic American Buildings Survey Inventory  
1958 Federal  
Library of Congress  
Washington, D.C. Code: 11

7.  
gable roof and has a modillion cornice along the entire front. Also across the front is a one-story porch supported on Doric columns. This porch appears to be an early-twentieth century replacement of an older porch. The main part of the inn was built in several stages, the oldest portion being at the southern end. This section stands on its original brick foundation which encloses a full basement. Aside from this foundation and portions of the modillion cornice most of the visible exterior members of the building such as the clapboarding, doors, sash and shutters have been renewed. The rear wings on the inn are mostly late-nineteenth century additions. Little, if any fabric of architectural interest survives on the interior.

8.  
and the Northampton group fortunately preserves its own eighteenth century example.

It was originally called the Taylor House, and in the later part of the nineteenth century was renamed the Eastville Inn, the name by which it is still called even though it is presently unoccupied. A tavern is believed to have been operated on the site of the Eastville Inn from as early as 1724, but the older parts of the present rambling frame structure probably date from 1780 when John Tazewell of Williamsburg sold the site to James Taylor. Until recent decades the Eastville Inn was a favorite social gathering spot for the Eastern Shore.

(To complete the assemblage of a proper court house complex, the Northampton group includes a fine brick storehouse built around 1800, and several small law office buildings facing the green. The whole group, with its picturesque buildings of many eras and styles evokes the sense of continuity and history that forms such an important part of life on Virginia's Eastern Shore.

