

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**National Register of Historic Places Registration Form**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

**1. Name of Property**Historic name: Samuel D. Outlaw Blacksmith ShopOther names/site number: 273-0014

Name of related multiple property listing:

Historic Resources Associated with African American Watermen of the Virginia Chesapeake Bay

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

**2. Location**Street & number: 5 Boundary AvenueCity or town: Onancock State: VA County: AccomackNot For Publication:  Vicinity: **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:) \_\_\_\_\_

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Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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#### 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>1</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>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE/TRADE/specialty shop/blacksmith shop

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**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RECREATION AND CULTURE/museum

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## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

NO STYLE

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

Principal exterior materials of the property: WOOD/weatherboard; METAL;  
GLASS

### 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.)

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#### Summary Paragraph

The Samuel D. Outlaw Blacksmith Shop is a one-story, rectangular, wood-frame, vernacular building located on a 0.10-acre suburban lot on the edge of the Town of Onancock in Accomack County, Virginia. The boundary of the historic property generally follows the property's current parcel lines which immediately surround the building in a trapezoidal shape, varying only slightly on the south and west to include the entirety of the blacksmith shop. The blacksmith shop is constructed with a minimal setback from Boundary Avenue on the southeast, and is immediately surrounded by a grass-covered yard with minimal vegetation. A modern housing complex is located to the west, single-family residential properties are located to the north and south, and the area to the east across Boundary Avenue is wooded and undeveloped. The ca.1927 blacksmith shop is the only resource on the property, and represents a successful African-American-owned business that operated for over 60 years in service to local watermen, farmers, and community members. It retains a high degree of integrity of location, setting, design, workmanship, materials, feeling, and association.

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## **Narrative Description**

The Samuel D. Outlaw Blacksmith Shop is located on a small suburban property in the Town of Onancock, Virginia. The resource boundary generally follows the current parcel boundary on the north and east, and extends slightly to the west and south to encompass the perimeter of the blacksmith shop. The boundary is situated on the west side of Boundary Avenue and forms a trapezoidal shape around the blacksmith shop. The resource is surrounded by a modern housing complex and single-family housing on the north, west, and south, and undeveloped wooded land is located to the east across Boundary Avenue. The blacksmith shop is minimally setback from the west side of Boundary Avenue, and there are no other resources on the property. Immediately surrounding the building is a grass-covered yard with minimal vegetation.

### **Samuel D. Outlaw Blacksmith Shop (ca.1927) - Contributing** Exterior

The Samuel D. Outlaw Blacksmith Shop is a one-story, rectangular, wood framed vernacular building with a side-gable roof with exposed rafters covered with 5-v metal. It rests on a concrete pier foundation, and the exterior walls are surfaced with painted flat weatherboard siding. The main entrance is located on the south elevation and includes a wooden double door entry that is accessed by three wooden steps. The south elevation also includes one six-over-six double hung wood window covered with metal wire grating, an anvil shaped sign reading "Samuel D. Outlaw Blacksmith Shop Memorial," and a rectangular plaque with Outlaw's biography. A large, wood double barn door entry is located on each end of the east elevation, and two six-over-six double hung wood windows with metal wire grating are located between the doors. These double barn door entries served as loading doors that allowed Outlaw to easily bring large equipment and horses into the blacksmith shop. The north elevation has two symmetrical double-hung wood windows covered with metal wire grating, and the west elevation has three symmetrical windows of the same. Windows and doors have been reglazed and repaired as needed. The building has an interior brick chimney on the west elevation that is connected to the internal brick forge. During the late-twentieth century, after Outlaw's passing, repairs were undertaken to the roof and foundation to ensure the building's continued survival. A minimal number of weatherboards have been replaced in kind as needed due to deterioration and termite damage.

### Interior

The Samuel D. Outlaw Blacksmith shop has an open, one-room plan. The walls remain unfinished exposing the wood framing, and wood boards are laid across the top of the ceiling joists to enclose the attic. The building has wood flooring throughout; the rear bay has a second layer of wider wood floor boards that provided additional strength and support for shoeing horses. A reconstructed running bond brick forge with a chimney is located along the western wall between the southern and central window. By the late twentieth century, the forge and chimney were in poor condition and out of plumb, and required reconstruction, which was completed to replicate their design and preserve their location. The brick forge was a critical

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component of blacksmithing, as it provided the space to heat metals so they could be reworked into various shapes and thicknesses. A low, wooden partition wall extends from the western wall just north of the brick forge. Although blacksmithing focused largely on metal working, Outlaw also constructed and repaired the wooden components of many tools, such as handles for oyster tongs. This wooden partition wall divided the woodworking area of Outlaw's shop on the north end from the metal working area on the southern end.<sup>1</sup> In the early 21<sup>st</sup> century, modern florescent lights were installed for the building's transition to a museum.

### Integrity Analysis

The Samuel D. Outlaw Blacksmith Shop retains a high level of integrity. It retains its historic **location** and **setting** on the edge of the Town of Onancock, and also retains integrity of **feeling** and **association** as a vernacular blacksmith shop that served Onancock from the early-twentieth century through the late-twentieth century. The blacksmith shop also retains integrity of **design** through the retention of its form, fenestration pattern, door openings, and one-room plan. Although some materials have been replaced due to deterioration, their replacements have been minor and in kind, and the building retains historic materials including wood siding, doors, windows, and floors, thus retaining integrity of **materials** and **workmanship**.

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<sup>1</sup> Gibson Worsham, "Samuel D. Outlaw," Report courtesy of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, 3.

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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.)

INDUSTRY

ETHNIC HERITAGE/Black

ARCHITECTURE

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

**Period of Significance**

1927-1972

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

**Significant Dates**

N/A

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

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

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

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

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

**Architect/Builder**

Unknown

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



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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 Samuel D. Outlaw Blacksmith Shop is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places in association with the Multiple Property Document *Historic Resources Associated with African American Watermen of the Virginia Chesapeake Bay* under Criterion A at the local level of significance as a Related Community Resource. The property is locally significant under Criterion A in the areas of Industry and Ethnic Heritage: Black for Samuel D. Outlaw's success as a local African American blacksmith whose business represented the changes in blacksmithing from the early-to-late twentieth century and provided services to local watermen, farmers, and neighbors throughout the Onancock community for over 60 years. Samuel D. Outlaw was a prominent member of the Onancock community and one of the most successful and long-lasting blacksmiths on the Eastern Shore of Virginia. Under Criterion C, the building is locally significant as a representative example of a specialized resource type, a traditional blacksmith shop where Outlaw performed the traditional craft using a forge, cast iron vessels, vises, and planers to fabricate specialized metal tools with wood handles for watermen as well as wheels, axles, plows, and other implements. The building is, therefore, representative of a distinct period and type that is illustrative of an increasingly rare, specialized shop type. The Samuel D. Outlaw Blacksmith Shop has a period of significance beginning in 1927 when the shop was constructed, and lasting until 1972 when Outlaw's operations were confirmed to have been scaled back. Over the next twenty years until his retirement, Outlaw's work focused on repairing hand tools and lighter tasks fabricating specialized pieces for watermen, farmers, and other workers.

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

Samuel D. Outlaw was born on April 3, 1901, to Samuel David and Margaret Outlaw in Windsor, North Carolina.<sup>2</sup> Outlaw worked on his father's farm in Bertie County until 1921 when he moved to Virginia to attend the Armstrong-Slater Memorial Trade School at the Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute (now Hampton University). The Trade School's curriculum consisted of three areas of focus – academic subjects, trade technical subjects, and trade practice – and offered a four-year blacksmithing program.<sup>3</sup> Outlaw completed the Institute's blacksmithing program in 1925.<sup>4</sup> After graduating, Outlaw moved to the Eastern Shore of Virginia in 1926 to work and continue his training under a local blacksmith. Within the year,

<sup>2</sup> "Samuel D. Outlaw," *U.S., World War II Draft Cards Young Men, 1940-1947*, Ancestry.com. Accessed September 30, 2022; "Samuel D. Outlaw," *1920 United States Federal Census*, Ancestry.com. Accessed September 30, 2022; "Samuel David Outlaw," *North Carolina, U.S., Death Certificates, 1909-1976*, Ancestry.com. Accessed September 30, 2022.

<sup>3</sup> "Fifty-Fourth Annual Catalogue of The Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute, 1921-1922," (Hampton: The Press of The Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute, 1922), 94, 112).

<sup>4</sup> Worsham, "Samuel D. Outlaw," 1.

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however, his employer's shop closed and Outlaw moved on to establish his own business in Onancock.<sup>5</sup>

Local sources state that Outlaw constructed his blacksmith shop and opened his business on Boundary Avenue in 1927.<sup>6</sup> In 1931, Outlaw purchased three lots on the northwest side of Boundary Avenue in an African American neighborhood on the edge of Onancock from Herbert and Ida Sample. One lot included the blacksmith shop, one included a house, and it is unknown if anything was constructed on the third lot. Around this same time, Outlaw married Ida Sample, and the two lived in the house on Boundary Avenue with Ida's two children.<sup>7</sup>

Outlaw worked in his blacksmith shop six days a week from the time he opened his business until his retirement in 1991. Early in his career he worked for farmers shoeing horses, repairing horse-drawn vehicles (such as "strawberry wagons"), or sharpening plow points and cultivator hoes. He also provided critical services to local watermen by making and repairing crab dredges, clam rakes, oyster tongs, rudders, rudder shafts, and various other tools. Local carpenters also sought out Outlaw's services to make angle irons and braces. Later in his career, as the need for horseshoeing and horse-drawn equipment declined, Outlaw's work shifted to include larger numbers of repairs for homeowners who needed lawnmower blades sharpened, or metal tools or furniture repaired. In his last years of operation, Outlaw limited his work to fitting new tool handles and sharpening blades.<sup>8</sup>

Samuel D. Outlaw was also a prominent member of his community outside of his work as a blacksmith. After moving to Onancock, Outlaw became a lifelong member of the Bethel AME Church, which is located less than a quarter of a mile north of his home on Boundary Avenue. At Bethel AME Church, Outlaw served as a clerk for 46 years and as Sunday School Superintendent for 58 years.<sup>9</sup> Additionally, Outlaw was a founder, treasurer, and long-standing member of the Eastern Shore Building and Loan Association, and a member of Onancock's Masonic Lodge #192.<sup>10</sup>

#### Criterion A: Industry and Ethnic Heritage: Black

The Samuel D. Outlaw Blacksmith Shop is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places in association with the Multiple Property Document *Historic Resources Associated with African American Watermen of the Virginia Chesapeake Bay* under **Criterion A, Industry and Ethnic**

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<sup>5</sup> Sources do not report details about Outlaw's first employer, and reports on the cause of his shop's closure vary. The earliest available source, a 1972 newspaper interview with Outlaw, reports that the employer "burned out shortly" after Outlaw began, while later sources report that the blacksmith shop itself burned. Curtis Badger, "Onancock Village Blacksmith Last of Vanishing Breed ... Sam Outlaw," *The Eastern Shore News* (September 14, 1972); Worsham, "Samuel D. Outlaw," 1.

<sup>6</sup> Historian Gibson Worsham notes that these sources may have heard the date from Outlaw himself. Worsham, "Samuel D. Outlaw," 1.

<sup>7</sup> Worsham, "Samuel D. Outlaw," 1.

<sup>8</sup> Worsham, "Samuel D. Outlaw," 1.

<sup>9</sup> "Samuel D. Outlaw," interpretive sign, Samuel D. Outlaw Blacksmith Shop Memorial Museum.

<sup>10</sup> "Samuel D. Outlaw," interpretive sign; Worsham, "Samuel D. Outlaw," 1.

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**Heritage: Black** as a Related Community Resource. Although seemingly tangential to watermen activities, the services provided by blacksmiths such as Samuel D. Outlaw were critical to the watermen communities along Virginia's Chesapeake Bay. Many important tools used by watermen and boat builders were made and/or repaired by local blacksmiths, and the development of revolutionary tools such as the first patent deepwater oyster tongs are credited to blacksmiths from the Chesapeake Bay.<sup>11</sup> While many of Samuel D. Outlaw's clients were farmers or community members, a significant component of his clientele were also watermen. Outlaw made and repaired various important tools such as crab dredges, clam rakes, oyster tongs, rutters, and rudder shafts for local watermen.



*Figure 1: Metal components of oyster rakes (left) and a clam rake (right) that remain in the Samuel D. Outlaw Blacksmith Shop, September 2022. Courtesy of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources.*

Unlike many blacksmiths who learned their trade as apprentices and journeymen, Outlaw attended the four-year blacksmithing program at the Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute's Armstrong-Slater Memorial Trade School. The education and trade skills taught at the Hampton Institute were well known throughout Virginia, Maryland, and North Carolina, and the blacksmithing program specifically had a positive reputation for producing high quality

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<sup>11</sup> *Historic Resources Associated with African American Watermen of the Virginia Chesapeake Bay*, Multiple Property Document

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graduates.<sup>12</sup> Additionally, where traditional apprentices and journeymen spent years, if not decades, learning their trade, Outlaw's choice to learn the blacksmithing trade through the reputable Hampton Institute provided a more streamlined, hands-on experience that also included the well-rounded backing of an established academic education.

Samuel D. Outlaw opened his blacksmith shop in an African-American neighborhood during Virginia's segregation era. Although Outlaw served a largely white clientele by the mid-twentieth century, Outlaw's services were utilized by community members regardless of race. Outlaw was one of a few, if not the only, prominent publicly accessible blacksmiths on the Eastern Shore when most other blacksmith shops were operated on private property and served specific farms. As such, many farmers, watermen, and carpenters throughout Accomack and Northampton Counties relied on Outlaw's services to repair and build equipment critical to their work.<sup>13</sup> Locals who remembered Outlaw in the later years of his business, including Virginia's former governor Ralph Northam, recalled that Outlaw's shop was "the place to go" when something was in need of repair, and described him as a "gracious and welcoming man" who treated everyone equally, regardless of race.<sup>14</sup> Due to a loss of historical records from Outlaw's business, it is unknown the full extent to which the local African American community utilized Outlaw's services. However, as one of the only publicly accessible blacksmiths on the Shore who could provide services such as making and repairing the heads of oyster tongs and clam rakes, African American watermen, whether self-employed or employed by larger businesses, were reportedly amongst those who utilized Outlaw's skills.<sup>15</sup> In other communities, African American business owners sometimes provided flexibility in their transactions with African American community members, allowing items to be purchased on credit or for debts to be cleared through trading and/or work.<sup>16</sup> Although unknown, it is possible that Outlaw's business was largely sustained through his white customer base which allowed him to provide services with more flexibility to the local African American community.

Outlaw's career as a blacksmith on the Eastern Shore and the blacksmith shop that he operated also reflected the changes to the blacksmithing industry through the twentieth century. During the early years of his career when blacksmithing services were in high demand, Outlaw's business thrived and was sustained by shoeing horses, repairing wagons and buggies, and repairing various tools for watermen, farmers, and carpenters. By the 1970s, however, welding shops completed most of the work previously done by blacksmiths and most farmers had fully transitioned to utilizing tractors and engine-powered rather than horse-powered equipment. As a

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<sup>12</sup> The Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute, "The Hampton Institute Trade School: Blacksmithing and Wheelwriting," *The Southern Workman* (Hampton, January 1, 1914), 18-20.

<sup>13</sup> Interview with Gerald Boyd, Samuel D. Outlaw Blacksmith Shop Museum Executive Director, by Kayla Halberg and Ashlen Stump, October 19, 2023.

<sup>14</sup> Carol Vaughn, "Northam records memories of Onancock blacksmith Samuel Outlaw," *The Daily Times* (January 23, 2019). Accessed October 3, 2022.

<sup>15</sup> Interview with Paul Ewell, Eastern Shore Waterman's Museum Executive Director, by Jeryl Phillips, October 12, 2021.

<sup>16</sup> Mary Jones Day, *Bogey Neck Road: "The Roots Are Still Growing"* (Scotts Valley, CA: CreateSpace Publishing, 2014), 12; April Jones Oral History interview for the Seatack Historic District, Virginia Beach, Virginia, Interviewed by Ashlen Stump and Jessica Archer (September 28, 2021).

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result, by the mid-to-late twentieth century Outlaw's business had transitioned to focus primarily on small jobs such as repairing lawn mower parts or household items. As explained by Outlaw, these little jobs were ones that the more standardized "big shops ... wouldn't have time for."<sup>17</sup> The long-lasting success of Samuel D. Outlaw's Blacksmith Shop and his prominence as an African American blacksmith on Virginia's Eastern Shore is demonstrative of the important role blacksmiths played, especially in watermen and farming communities. His career also reflected the formalization of blacksmith training and the changes experience in the industry from the early-to-late-twentieth century.

Master blacksmith Samuel D. Outlaw became a prominent member of the Onancock community and one of the most successful and long-lasting blacksmiths on the Eastern Shore of Virginia. By 1972, he was one of only a few blacksmiths in operation on the Eastern Shore, with Outlaw estimating the number of other blacksmiths to be "maybe two or three" that primarily worked part-time.<sup>18</sup> Throughout his lifetime, Outlaw held prominent positions including as a founding member and treasurer of the Eastern Shore Building and Loan Association. Although little is known about the Eastern Shore Building and Loan Association, organizations such as these were commonly established during the Jim Crow era to provide African Americans with much needed financial resources and capital investment that were not available elsewhere.<sup>19</sup> The successes of African American businessmen such as Samuel D. Outlaw provided them the opportunity to establish organizations and benevolent societies such as the Eastern Shore Building and Loan Association that could in turn provide support to other community members and entrepreneurs. Outlaw was also a lifelong member of the Bethel AME Church where he served as a clerk for 46 years and as Sunday School Superintendent for 58 years, and a member of Onancock's Masonic Lodge #192.<sup>20</sup>

### Criterion C: Architecture

The Samuel D. Outlaw Blacksmith Shop is also eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under **Criterion C** for **Architecture** as one of the last purpose-built, free-standing early twentieth century blacksmith shops in Virginia. This one-story, one-room, wood frame building is one of only two known remaining blacksmith shops of this kind. Like the Samuel D. Outlaw Blacksmith Shop, the Jackson Blacksmith Shop (037-0163; NRHP 1997) in Goochland County, Virginia is a wood-frame building constructed in the early-twentieth century by an African American blacksmithing family. Although representative of early-twentieth century blacksmithing and African American history, the Jackson Blacksmith Shop underwent a restoration in the 1990s that resulted in the replacement of a large portion of the shop's historic materials due to deterioration. Comparatively, the Samuel D. Outlaw Blacksmith Shop retains a

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<sup>17</sup> Badger, "Onancock Village Blacksmith Last of Vanishing Breed."

<sup>18</sup> Badger, "Onancock Village Blacksmith Last of Vanishing Breed."

<sup>19</sup> *Historic Resources Associated with African American Watermen of the Virginia Chesapeake Bay*, Multiple Property Document (2023), 28.

<sup>20</sup> "Samuel D. Outlaw," interpretive sign, Samuel D. Outlaw Blacksmith Shop Memorial Museum; Worsham, "Samuel D. Outlaw," 1.

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high degree of integrity in its historic materials, design, and workmanship. During the late-twentieth century, the roof and foundation were repaired as needed, and select exterior weatherboards have been replaced where necessary due to deterioration and termite damage. A late-twentieth century assessment of the historic brick forge determined that it was out of plumb, and as a result the forge was reconstructed in the same location and design. Other modern improvements included the installation of modern lighting within the shop. Overall, the alterations to the shop have been minor repairs and replacements in kind, and only as necessary.

In addition to retaining a high percentage of its historic framing, siding, and flooring, the Outlaw Blacksmith Shop retains its historic design which reflects its historic function. The reconstructed forge retains the design and location of the original forge and demonstrates the central location of this critical component to blacksmithing. The forge and chimney provided the necessary heat to soften and mold metals into the required shapes and sizes. Although blacksmithing largely focused on metalwork, Outlaw also repaired and constructed the wooden components of tools such as the wooden handles to oyster and clam rakes. The historic wooden partition wall which separated these two functions, woodworking in the northern end of the shop and metalworking in the southern portion, remains in its historic location and demonstrates the variety of skills and services offered by blacksmiths such as Outlaw. Finally, in the rear portion of the building, the floor retains the historic double layer of floorboards that reinforced the area in which horses were historically shod, which was one of the most common services provided by blacksmiths until the mid-twentieth century. Overall, the Shop's design remains as Outlaw constructed it almost a century ago, and is representative of Virginia's early-twentieth century blacksmith shops.

### **Registration Requirements**

The Multiple Property Document *Historic Resources Associated with African American Watermen of the Virginia Chesapeake Bay* includes registration requirements that are specific to twentieth-century blacksmith shops such as the Outlaw Blacksmith Shop. The nominated property meets the requirements because it is directly associated with African American watermen's communities and the MPD's historic contexts through Samuel D. Outlaw's skilled services in fabricating custom tools, parts, and other equipment utilized by watermen in their day-to-day work.

The Outlaw Blacksmith Shop retains integrity of location and setting as it continues to occupy its original site on the edge of a residential neighborhood. Non-historic resources are not on the shop's parcel. The one-story shop's design, materials, and workmanship are in keeping with the characteristics identified in the MPD, such as its rectangular footprint, sill plate foundation, wood siding, and gable roof. Interior finishes are minimal, consisting of wood flooring (reinforced in places) and exposed stud walls and roof framing. The forge and chimney were rebuilt due to extensive deterioration after Outlaw ceased working full time. The rebuilt components are consistent with the materials, design, appearance, and function of the original forge and chimney. In addition to a standard pedestrian door, the shop has oversized swinging wood doors that allowed movement of large objects in and out of the shop. A ramp may once have been present at the door but, if so, has been removed. The six-over-six wood window sash have been reglazed and repaired as needed but otherwise are not altered. The original single-leaf

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door and swinging oversized doors also are original. Lastly, the Outlaw Blacksmith Shop has high integrity of feeling and association as a vernacular blacksmith shop that served Onancock from the early-twentieth century through the late-twentieth century. Its historical associations have been established with documentary evidence as well.

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

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

### Primary Sources

Badger, Curtis. "Onancock Village Blacksmith Last of Vanishing Breed ... Sam Outlaw." *The Eastern Shore News*. September 14, 1972.

The Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute. "Fifty-Fourth Annual Catalogue of The Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute, 1921-1922." Hampton: The Press of The Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute. 1922.

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### Secondary Sources

Day, Mary Jones. *Bogey Neck Road: "The Roots Are Still Growing."* Scotts Valley, CA: CreateSpace Publishing. 2014.

*Historic Resources Associated with African American Watermen of the Virginia Chesapeake Bay*. Multiple Property Document. 2023.

Interview with Paul Ewell, Eastern Shore Waterman's Museum Executive Director, by Jeryl Phillips. October 12, 2021.

Interview with Gerald Boyd, Samuel D. Outlaw Blacksmith Shop Museum Executive Director, by Kayla Halberg and Ashlen Stump. October 19, 2023.



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Samuel D. Outlaw Blacksmith Shop Memorial Museum. "Samuel D. Outlaw." Interpretive Sign.

Vaughn, Carol. "Northam records memories of Onancock blacksmith Samuel Outlaw." *The Daily Times*. January 23, 2019. Accessed October 3, 2022.

Worsham, Gibson. "Samuel D. Outlaw." 1996. Report courtesy of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources.

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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: Samuel D. Outlaw Blacksmith Shop Museum, Onancock, Virginia; Eastern Shore of Virginia Historical Society, Onancock, Virginia; Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Richmond, Virginia

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** 273-0014

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**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** 0.10 acres

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates**

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_

Samuel D. Outlaw Blacksmith Shop  
Name of Property

Accomack County, VA  
County and State

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 37.7101457      Longitude: -75.734139

**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 boundary for the Samuel D. Outlaw Blacksmith Shop includes 0.10 acres in the Town of Onancock, Virginia. The small, trapezoidal boundary immediately surrounds the Blacksmith Shop, following the current parcel boundary on the north and east sides, and extending out slightly to the west and south to encompass the perimeter of the Blacksmith Shop. The true and correct historic boundaries are shown on the attached scaled Sketch Map.

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

The Samuel D. Outlaw Blacksmith Shop boundary generally follows the historic and current parcel boundary that encompasses the Blacksmith Shop, which is the only remaining historic resource associated with the Samuel D. Outlaw. The boundary has been extended slightly from the current parcel lines to the west and south to encompass the entirety of the Blacksmith Shop, but follows the current parcel lines on the north, and east. The property's historic setting and all known associated historic resources have been included within the historic boundary.

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**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title: Ashlen Stump and Kayla Halberg  
organization: Commonwealth Preservation Group  
street & number: 536 W 35<sup>th</sup> Street  
city or town: Norfolk state: VA zip code: 23508

Samuel D. Outlaw Blacksmith Shop  
Name of Property

Accomack County, VA  
County and State

e-mail: admin@commonwealthpreservationgroup.com  
telephone: 757-923-1900  
date: November 18, 2022

### 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.

### Photo Log

Name of Property: Samuel D. Outlaw Blacksmith Shop

City or Vicinity: Onancock

County: Accomack

State: VA

Photographer: Blake McDonald (BM)

Date Photographed: September 7, 2022.

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

Samuel D. Outlaw Blacksmith Shop  
Name of Property

Accomack County, VA  
County and State

Photo Number of 9	Description	Camera Direction	Date	Photographer
1	Exterior, Northeast oblique.	SW	09/07/22	BM
2	Exterior, South elevation showing main entrance.	N	09/07/22	BM
3	Exterior, West elevation.	N	09/07/22	BM
4	Exterior, Northwest oblique.	SE	09/07/22	BM
5	Exterior, North elevation window detail.	S	09/07/22	BM
6	Interior workbench with blacksmith equipment and tools.	W	09/07/22	BM
7	Interior overview.	NW	09/07/22	BM
8	Interior, Reconstructed forge.	N	09/07/22	BM
9	Interior overview.	S	09/07/22	BM

### Embedded Images Log

Figure Number	Caption
1	Metal components of oyster rakes (left) and a clam rake (right) that remain in the Samuel D. Outlaw Blacksmith Shop, September 2022. Courtesy of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources.

**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:

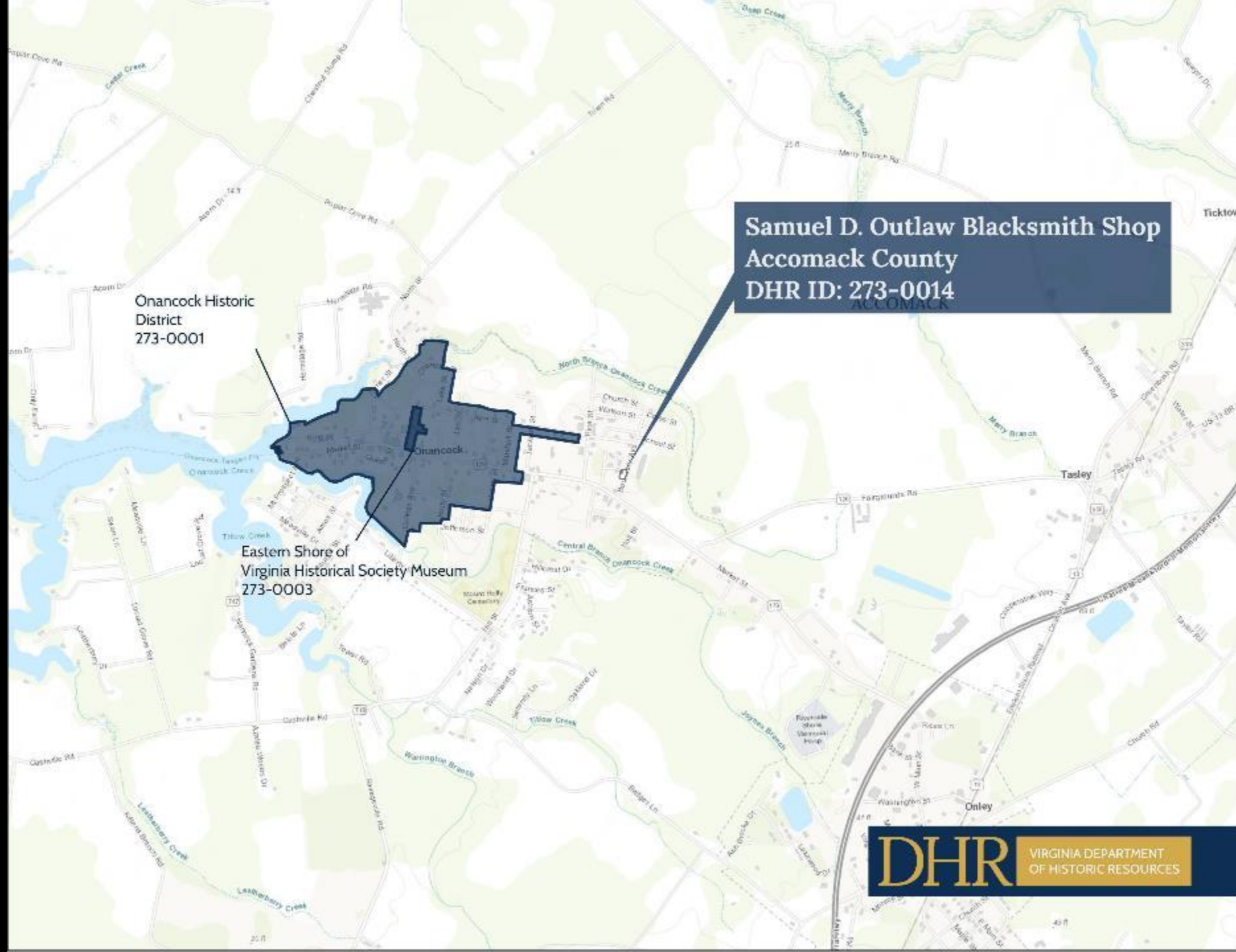
Tier 1 – 60-100 hours  
Tier 2 – 120 hours  
Tier 3 – 230 hours  
Tier 4 – 280 hours

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.

**Samuel D. Outlaw Blacksmith Shop**  
**Accomack County**  
**DHR ID: 273-0014**







Onancock Historic  
District  
273-0001

Eastern Shore of  
Virginia Historical Society Museum  
273-0003

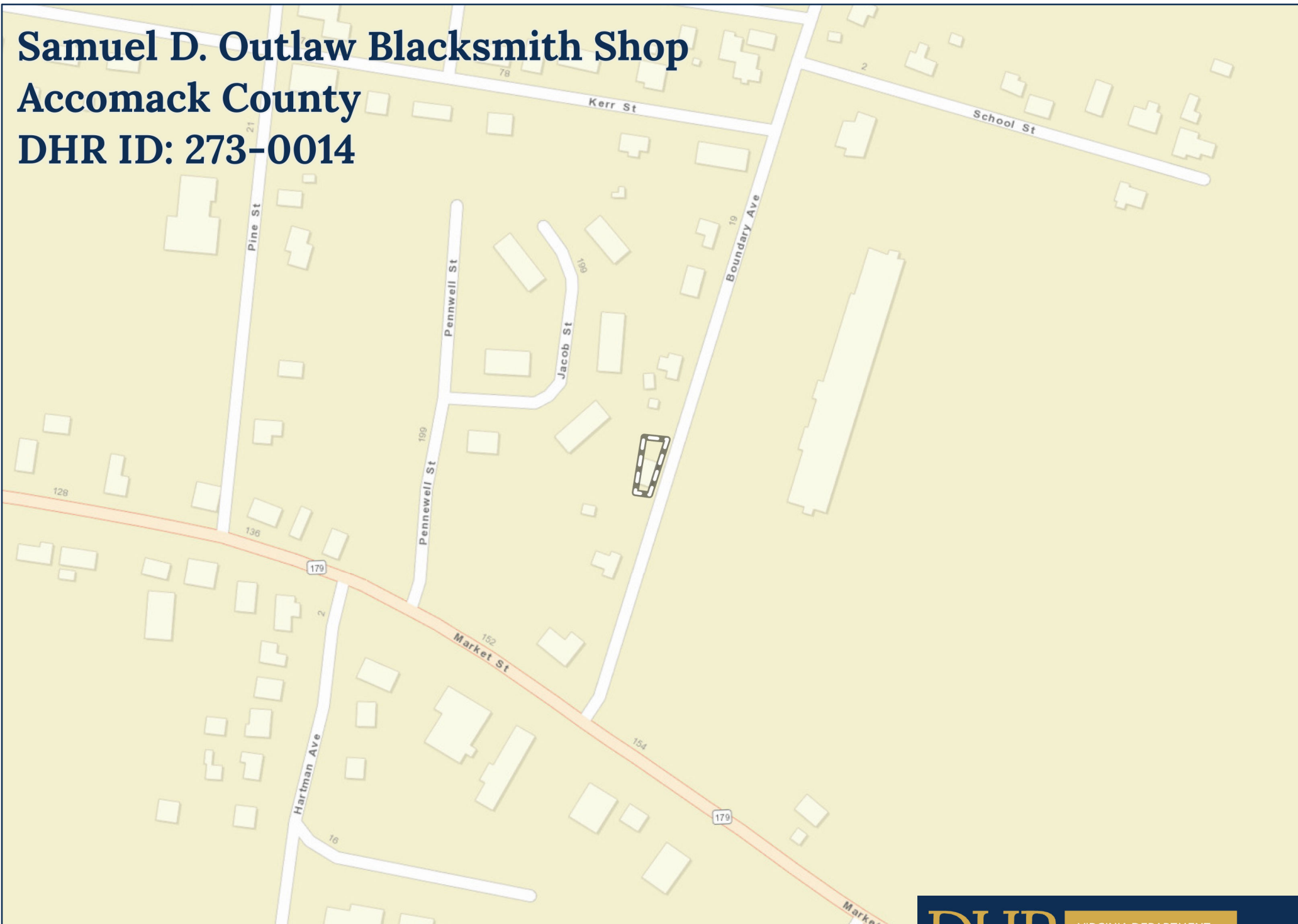
Samuel D. Outlaw Blacksmith Shop  
Accomack County  
DHR ID: 273-0014

**DHR** VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT  
OF HISTORIC RESOURCES

# Samuel D. Outlaw Blacksmith Shop

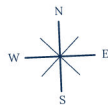
## Accomack County

### DHR ID: 273-0014



Sources: VDHR 2023, VGIN 2023, ESRI 2023

Records of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (DHR) have been gathered over many years and the representation depicted is based on the field observation date and may not reflect current ground conditions. The map is for general illustration purposes and is not intended for engineering, legal or other site-specific uses.



0 160 320 480 640 Feet

# DHR

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT  
OF HISTORIC RESOURCES





Samuel D. Orlew  
Blacksmith  
Shop  
Memorial





Samuel D. Oulson  
Blacksmith  
Shop  
Memorial

Samuel D. Oulson  
was born in 1850 in  
the town of Oulson,  
Michigan. He was a  
blacksmith by trade and  
was known for his  
skill in repairing  
wheeled vehicles.  
He lived in this shop  
for many years and  
it was here that he  
worked on many of  
the early automobiles  
of the area. The shop  
is now a museum and  
is open to the public  
for tours.

















#### WORKING THE FLAME

In 1977, Samuel D. Outlaw moved to Oronoke and purchased a house on Boundary Avenue. Soon after he built this 20' X 30' shop to house his industrial blacksmith business.

A blacksmith was essential in Oronoke and on the Eastern Shore. Mr. Outlaw's customers were watermen, farmers, neighbors, and friends.

He was as likely to repair a bicycle as he was a crab scupper, oyster dredge, plow, truck, or car.

All around you are the tools Samuel Outlaw relied on to forge metal into his creations and repairs.









## WORKING THE FLAME

In 1927, Samuel D. Outlaw moved to Onancock and purchased a home on Boundary Avenue. Soon after he built this 20' X 50' shop to house his industrial blacksmith business.

A blacksmith was essential in Onancock and on the Eastern Shore. Mr. Outlaw's customers were watermen, farmers, neighbors, and friends.

He was as likely to repair a bicycle as he was a crab scrape, oyster dredge, plow, truck, or car.

All around you are the tools Samuel Outlaw relied on to forge metal into his creations and repairs.





