

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

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

1. Name of PropertyHistoric name: Cherry GroveOther names/site number: VDHR #050-5115

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

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

2. LocationStreet & number: 4381 Manfield RoadCity or town: Aylett State: VA County: King WilliamNot For Publication: ☐ N/A Vicinity: ☒ X**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

		<u>7/10/2023</u>
Signature of certifying official/Title:		Date
<u>Virginia Department of Historic Resources</u>		
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government		
In my opinion, the property <u> </u> meets <u> </u> does not meet the National Register criteria.		
Signature of commenting official:		Date
Title :		State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- ☐ entered in the National Register
☐ determined eligible for the National Register
☐ determined not eligible for the National Register
☐ removed from the National Register
☐ other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private: ☒
- Public – Local ☐
- Public – State ☐
- Public – Federal ☐

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s) ☒
- District ☐
- Site ☐
- Structure ☐
- Object ☐

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Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	buildings
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/Single Dwelling

FUNERARY: Cemetery

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/Single Dwelling

FUNERARY: Cemetery

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

MID-19TH CENTURY: Greek Revival

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: WOOD; BRICK

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

Cherry Grove, a frame house built in two stages, is located on a 1.25-acre parcel well off Manfield Road in the Enfield area of King William County, Virginia, near the border with Hanover County. The house stands in a cleared area with woods on all sides. Both sections of the house sit on a Flemish-bond basement with Flemish-bond exterior-end chimneys. The original house was built ca. 1792 and is a two-bay, single-pile, one-and-a-half-story, frame dwelling with a two-story, two-bay, single-pile, frame addition that was built onto the western end of the original house ca. 1834 –1835. No historic outbuildings survive, although there is a cemetery with one extant gravestone southwest of the house (contributing site) and a nineteenth-century well (contributing structure). A notable feature of the house is the distinctive interior decorative painting in the two-story section that was signed by the painter, Daniel T. Rea. Cherry Grove contains the only currently known example of Rea's decorative painting in Virginia.¹ Historic decorative painting signed by the painter is a rare and remarkable survivor. The house has been

¹ Research to find other examples of Rea's decorative painting is hampered by the lack comprehensive surveys of building interiors in King William and surrounding counties and the lack of comprehensive research on decorative painting in Virginia. There may be other examples of Rea's painting, but they have yet to be identified or the buildings may no longer survive.

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restored, preserving its significant architectural features and integrity of location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. The property has two noncontributing outbuildings, a garage and shed, both built ca. 1985 and featuring simple designs that do not detract from the property's integrity of setting and feeling.

Narrative Description

Setting

Located in a rural area of southwestern King William County, the approach to Cherry Grove is by a mile-long unpaved lane through a wooded area until a clearing is reached with grassy fields on either side and the house standing at the end of the lane. The house faces northwest in an open area with woods to the rear and west. The entrance lane continues to the southwest from the house and was originally a road to Dabney's Mill Pond. Another drive encircles the house to reach the modern outbuildings behind the house. Hanover town, a colonial-era port, is located approximately three miles as the crow flies to the southwest, and Judy Swamp is nearby, to the south and east. A modern rail fence delineates the parking area in front of the house and a paved walkway leads to the dwelling. Boxwoods flank the front porch steps. A cemetery is located southwest of the house and the modern outbuildings are located behind the house along the wood line.

Inventory

House	ca. 1792, 1834-1835	Contributing building
Cemetery	19 th Century	Contributing site
Well	19 th Century	Contributing structure
Garage	ca. 1985	Noncontributing building
Shed	ca. 1985	Noncontributing building

Building (Contributing)

House, ca. 1792, 1834-1835

The frame house was built in two distinct periods. Period I was built ca. 1792 and is a two-bay, single-pile, one-and-a-half-story dwelling on a Flemish-bond basement. Evidence of penciled joints survive on the front basement wall beneath the front porch. The exterior-end brick chimney is also laid in Flemish bond with stepped shoulders and a corbelled cap. The side-gable roof, now sheathed with wood shingles, has two gable-roof dormers, on the façade and rear slopes, that light the two upper-story rooms. Earlier photographs of the house show a standing-seam metal roof on both sections of the house. The original beaded weatherboard siding survives on the rear, where it is now sheltered by a one-story, shed-roofed frame extension. Modern beaded siding sheathes the remainder of this section. All of the windows have six-over-six-light wood sash; storm sash protect the half-story's dormer sash. The basement windows have wood horizontal bars on the front and rear western windows. On the north façade, the primary entry is framed by a three-bay, shed-roof front porch that was built by the current owners based on a 1920s photograph of the house. Trace evidence on the front of the house suggests that an earlier porch was smaller and framed just the door. The front door is a six-raised-panel door with a four-light transom. Additions to the one-and-a-half-story section consist of a screened porch on the

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eastern (side) gable end to the rear of the chimney and the aforementioned one-story, shed-roof, frame extension across the rear elevation. Both additions are on piers. The rear entry, which now enters the modern rear addition, has a six-flat-panel door.

The Period II section of the house, built 1834-1835, is a two-story, two-bay, single-pile, frame addition on a Flemish-bond basement with an exterior-end, Flemish-bond brick chimney with rodded joints, stepped shoulders, and a corbelled top. Most of the beaded weatherboard siding on this section is original and the gable roof has wood shingles. The original wood windows are nine-over-nine-light sash on the first story and six-over-nine-light sash on the second story. The basement windows have six-over-six replacement sash. The Period II section has just one window on the first-story rear elevation because of the location of the interior stair. The only exterior entrance into the Period II section is a basement entrance on the western gable end through a frame and brick pent that extends three feet beyond the end of the house.

The entire composition of the single-pile house measures 50 ft. 8 in. in length and 18 ft. 5 in. in depth. The original house is 28 ft. 6 in. long and the addition measures 22 ft. long. Both sections of the house were built using traditional framing, including mortise and tenon joinery, framing members and windows marked with Roman numerals, and guttered corner posts in the original section.

The interior of the Period I section has two, side-by-side rooms of unequal size. The smaller room measures 12 ft. 3 in. wide by 15 ft. 9 in. deep and contains both the front and rear entrances, although the rear door now enters the modern extension on the west (rear) side. A winder staircase is located on the partition wall in the rear corner adjacent to the rear door. The staircase was originally enclosed from the base to the ceiling, with the area below the staircase open. The wall has now been extended below the staircase and toward the front of the house to provide room for a half bath. The only natural light in this room is from the four-pane transom above the front door. To the east, the larger room is almost 16 feet square (16 ft. 3 in. wide by 15 ft. 9 in. deep) and contains a fireplace. It currently serves as the kitchen. Both rooms have simple beaded architrave trim for the windows and doors. The six-panel door between the two rooms is located at the front of the partition wall. The mantel features plain pilasters, a bolection frieze, and a plain mantelshelf. Both rooms have a flat beaded chair board. The original rear window in the kitchen was converted into a door when the rear extension was added.

The second floor of the Period I section features a center hall with the staircase, and a room on each side. The fireplace in the east room has a flat board, beaded surround, and no mantel shelf. Both rooms have board-and-batten doors and a plain, but beaded, surround. The smaller room, which has no fireplace, originally had no direct access to the Period II addition, but a small doorway was cut between the two sections. The second floor of the Period II addition is two feet above the floor on the second floor of the original house.

The first floor of the 1834-1835 Period II addition contains one room, two bays wide with a narrow passage measuring 2 ft. 7 in. wide adjacent to the original block. This passage has no

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exterior opening; it only contains the basement stair. The only exterior door accessing the Period II addition is in the west end of the basement.

When Isaac Cocke decided to build onto the original house, he created an elegant room with capacious dimensions. The room measures 18 ft. 2 in. by 15 ft. 9 in. with a 10-foot ceiling height. Cocke also hired Daniel T. Rea to decorate the room with grained doors and raised panel wainscot and a marbled mantel and baseboard. An elaborate fluted chair board encircles the room and ties into the trim above the staircase baseboard. The marbled baseboard continues up the stair and is signed on the baseboard by "Daniel T. Rea Painter." Rea framed his signature with a decorative leaf-like border with dots on the inside of the border. The open winder stair rises gracefully along the passage wall in the rear corner of the room. The stair railing has a square newel with a molded square cap, molded handrail, and rectangular balusters, two per tread. The mantel is very similar to the mantel in the original portion of the house, indicating that the finishes in the original house were probably updated when the addition was built. The addition's mantel has engaged columns, a bolection frieze, and a shelf with a scotia edge. The only difference between this mantel and the first-floor mantel in the Period I part of the house is the edge of the mantel shelf and engaged columns instead of pilasters.

Rae's marbled mantel and baseboard feature a gray background with black highlights on a diagonal orientation. His grained doors have light ochre-colored panels with darker stiles and rails in a light mahogany color, though the first-floor grained door has much lighter stiles and rails, resembling oak, than the second-floor doors. The raised panels have subtle swirls, occasionally with one long stroke in the raised panel. The first-floor door, which is only grained on one side, has two or three groups of typically three dots on the raised panels, perhaps made with fingertips. While most of the grained doors are raised-panel doors, flat-panel doors have been painted to simulate raised panels. The grained wainscot is the most subdued of the painted woods with a warm mahogany color.

Two windows, at both the front and rear, provide natural light in this large room. The windows and single door have fluted Greek Revival-style molding with bull's eye corner blocks. This is the only room in the house to have this type of woodwork. All other windows and doors, including on the second floor of the Period II addition, have architrave trim. The chair board in the remainder of the house is also fairly plain compared to the chair board in this room.

At the top of the center hall staircase in the Period I section is an opening that was cut into the wall after the Period II addition was built. The Period II block's second floor contains a short hall across the front that accesses a bathroom, formerly a small bedroom or trunk room, and one bedroom, which is the width of the addition. The finishes on the second floor consist of architrave trim for the window and door surrounds and a chair board matching that in the original part of the house, further indicating an upgrade to the finishes in the original house when the addition was built. Both the chair board and baseboard on the second floor are painted white. The bedroom features a painted Federal-style mantel with fluted pilasters and firebox surround, a three-part frieze, a denticulated and stepped cornice, and an articulated shelf. This style of mantel seems incongruous with the rest of the decorative elements in the house, which are fairly plain.

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The second-floor doors continue the decorating scheme of the first floor with their elaborate graining. The doors have four stacked rectangular panels aligned vertically with the largest lower panel. The grained doors are only located in this addition.

The finished basement contains two sections, both of which have exposed ceiling joists, and the Period II addition has exposed brick walls. The ceiling joists in the basement of the Period I house are hewn while they are pit sawn in the basement of the addition. There is an unadorned hearth on the chimney in the addition. The winder stair is enclosed with diagonal beaded boards.

Outbuildings (Noncontributing Buildings)

Garage/Workshop, ca. 1985

A garage/workshop is located to the rear of the house. It is a one-by-seven-bay, one-story building with a loading sized entrance on the east end and a pedestrian door on the north side. The walls are sheathed with vertical boards and there are a series of fixed windows on both sides. The gable roof overhangs on the rear elevation and is sheathed with V-5 metal. There is a flue on the rear slope of the roof. A shed-roof vehicle-shed extension is on the western end.

Storage Shed, ca. 1985

This is a one-story frame building set on brick piers with lattice between the piers. It is sheathed with horizontal boards and has a gable roof clad with V-5 metal. The door on the north end is covered with spaced boards. A shed-roof addition on the eastern side is sheathed with vertical boards and an open but roofed area on the rear elevation is partially enclosed with wire.

Structure (Contributing)

Well, 19th Century

A brick-lined well with concrete pipe top is located southeast of the house. The well is enclosed by a rail fence. The well was built to provide the main water source for the house.

Site (Contributing)

Cemetery, 19th Century

A cemetery is located in a grassy area a short distance southwest of the house. The cemetery is marked by a cedar tree. It is not known how old the cemetery is or how many graves are located within. There is one extant gravestone, inscribed on both sides, that appears to have been erected in the last half of the twentieth century. The east side is inscribed with "William Thomas Downer, Jr., born September 4, 1852, died March 20, 1920." The western side is inscribed with "Milton Downer, born July 18, 1856." No death date is given. The Downer family and descendants owned the property from approximately 1877 until 1982.

Integrity Analysis

Cherry Grove possesses good overall integrity. The house stands in its original location and, although the property has lost most of its original acreage, the location and setting continue to be rural with no modern intrusion except for two small outbuildings behind the house. The house has been sensitively restored by the current owners, who have preserved its significant historic features, both exterior and interior, while integrating modern necessities. All of the original

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woodwork and faux graining and marbling on the interior of the two-story section have been retained and unaltered. The layout of the dwelling is largely unaltered but for two small additions to the Period I block: the extension across its south (rear) elevation and a screened porch on the east (side) elevation. Cherry Grove, therefore, retains integrity of location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling and association.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☐ A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- ☐ A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- ☐ B. Removed from its original location
- ☐ C. A birthplace or grave
- ☐ D. A cemetery
- ☐ E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- ☐ F. A commemorative property
- ☐ G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

ca. 1792 – ca. 1835

Significant Dates

ca. 1792

1834–1835

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.)

Cherry Grove is located at 4381 Manfield Road, Aylett, King William County, Virginia. The dwelling was constructed in two stages. The first occurred ca. 1792, when William Cocke (1759–ca. 1802) purchased 200 acres of land from Ralph Wormeley and likely built the one-and-a-half-story frame house soon after. By 1801, Cocke owned 439.5 acres, but he died within a year or two, and his widow occupied the house until 1820. The farm passed to their son, Isaac Cocke, in 1821, who constructed a two-story frame addition to the house ca. 1834-1835 and hired Boston-born painter Daniel T. Rea to decorate the first-floor parlor mantel and baseboards, stairs, and doors on both floors with faux marbling and wood graining. Isaac Cocke died in 1835, and by 1837, his estate had been divided among his widow, Harriet Timberlake Cocke, and their children. Harriet Cocke's share included 101.75 acres and the house. She died in 1877, and her daughter Julia F. Cocke, who married Dr. William T. Downer at Cherry Grove in 1851, inherited the tract and house. Downer descendants owned the property until September 14, 1982, when Mattie Downer Hine, Julia and William Downer's granddaughter, sold it to James Wilson Ramsey. Cherry Grove is locally significant under Criterion C in the area of Architecture as a well-preserved example of a late-eighteenth- and mid-nineteenth-century middling farmhouse with refined interior decorative paintwork in fine condition. The period of significance begins ca. 1792 with the construction of the earliest section (Period I) of the house and ends ca. 1835 with the construction of the prominent two-story addition (Period II) and completion of Rea's decorative paintwork. Although decorative paintwork was a common feature of nineteenth-century dwellings both modest and grand, it rarely survives intact due to subsequent remodeling by later property owners. Retention of these decorative elements at Cherry Grove elevates the dwelling's architectural significance. Cherry Grove retains the integrity of its historic location, association, setting, feeling, design, materials, and workmanship.

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

Historical Background

The dwelling at Cherry Grove presently occupies 1.5 acres of farmland in King William County, Virginia. The county is located in Tidewater Virginia between the Pamunkey River (southwest) and the Mattaponi River (northeast). Both rivers are named for the Virginia Indian tribes who have occupied the area for centuries. New Kent County lies south of the Pamunkey River, and King and Queen County, from which King William County was formed in 1701, lies north of the Mattaponi River. King William County's typically Tidewater terrain, lightly rolling and thickly wooded, drains mostly south and east. After settlement by Euro-Americans and farming for more than three centuries, the county remains very rural, with development limited to small pockets.

The county seat, King William, consists largely of a handful of modern government office buildings and a new courthouse. Nearby stands the original courthouse, believed to have been constructed about 1725. Unfortunately, that courthouse and clerk's office suffered several fires

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that destroyed all but a handful of county records. The most devastating fire occurred on January 17, 1885; as such, almost none of the pre-1885 county records that assist in tracing ownership and establishing dates for the construction of buildings—deeds, wills, court orders, suit papers—survive.² Fortunately, however, microfilm copies of personal property and land tax books, dating from 1782 to the present, can be found at the Library of Virginia (LVA) in Richmond because copies were sent, as required by law, by local assessors to the office of the Auditor of Public Accounts in the capital. Additionally, U.S. Census records from the mid- to late-nineteenth century are available virtually and on microfilm at the LVA. The census records include Schedules of Inhabitants, Slaves, and Agriculture. Together, the land tax books and census schedules are helpful in reconstructing, or at least partly reconstructing, the chain of ownership and estimated building construction dates for properties. Between 1782 and 1819, the land tax books only recorded the owners' names and the property's acreage, value, tax rates, and taxes paid. Beginning in 1820, however, they also listed the value of buildings, distance and bearing from the courthouse, an adjacent landowner or landscape feature such as a river, and a "remarks" column, in which the assessor could note that building values had increased or decreased over the previous year because of new construction or fire damage. Transfers of acreage could also be noted to include the names of the buyers. Unfortunately, some assessors were more conscientious than others in recording such information, so inconsistencies abound.

From information in the land tax and personal property tax books, it appears that the house at Cherry Grove was constructed in two stages. The first probably occurred ca. 1792, when William Cocke bought 200 acres from Ralph Wormeley and likely built a one-and-a-half-story frame house soon thereafter.

William Cocke was born, probably in Goochland County, in 1759.³ He married Sarah New, the daughter of William New and Patience Russell New, in 1779.⁴ He and his family had moved to King William County by 1782, when he was taxed for two horses, and two head of cattle. Personal property taxing practices of this period included enslaved people as taxable property. In 1782, Cocke was recorded as owning one enslaved Black male. A little more than a decade later, in 1793, Cocke's taxed personal property included four enslaved Black men over the age of sixteen.⁵ Slave ownership was a common path to prosperity for White enslavers due, first, to the inherited status of bondage for children born of enslaved women which thus allowed for continual increase in the number of enslaved people a person could own, and second, to the financial value assigned to enslaved people. White enslavers who needed to settle debts, establish a dowry, purchase land, or meet other financial needs simply sold one or more enslaved people as needed, thus swapping one "asset" for another in a manner that resulted in continual

² Library of Virginia, *Research Notes Number 30*, "Lost Records Localities: Counties and Cities with Missing Records," 3, on Library of Virginia website, https://www.lva.virginia.gov/public/guides/rn30_lostrecords.pdf, accessed Jan. 26, 2023.

³ Virginia Webb Cocke, *Cockes and Cousins* (North Carolina: Winston-Salem, 1974), 2:37.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Auditor of Public Accounts, Personal Property Tax Books, King William County, 1782 and 1793, Library of Virginia, Richmond, Va. (LVA). Cocke also was taxed for one horse in 1793.

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appreciation, at least for the White enslavers who possessed financial acumen. In 1792, William Cocke was taxed for the 200 acres he had purchased from Ralph Wormeley, V.⁶

Wormeley, the Cambridge-educated scion of an aristocratic colonial family, resided at Rosegill, his large estate in Middlesex County.⁷ The Wormeley family's lands in eastern Virginia included tracts in Caroline, Gloucester, King George, King William, Middlesex, and York counties. In the western part of the state, the family had large holdings in Berkeley and Frederick counties. Despite owning vast tracts, the family was deeply in debt by the mid-1770s and wanted to sell all the western lands. The Revolutionary War intervened to stymie that plan, however, and the discovery through an intercepted letter that Ralph Wormeley, V was a Loyalist led to his 1776 banishment to his tracts in the western counties. The Virginia government lifted the exile in 1778, and he returned to Rosegill to live very quietly until the war ended. During the first half of the 1780s, his indebtedness grew worse, but his finances slowly improved later in the decade. In the 1790s, he was able to remodel and enlarge Rosegill. Selling some of his land undoubtedly helped him to pay off debts and fund improvements.⁸

In 1782, as Wormeley's financial situation remained unsteady, his holdings in King William County alone totaled 5,675 acres.⁹ He sold 200 acres to William Cocke in 1792, and by 1793, sales to others had decreased Wormeley's holdings to 4,425 acres.¹⁰ In 1799, Wormeley sold to Cocke another 60 acres adjoining the earlier tract.¹¹ Given Wormeley's financial problems and his focus on improving Rosegill in the 1790s, it seems likely that it was William Cocke who constructed the one-and-a-half-story frame house at Cherry Grove soon after he bought the 200-acre tract from Wormeley in 1792.

Also in 1792, on May 24, Cocke's wife Sarah gave birth to their son Isaac.¹² William Cocke continued to acquire land, purchasing 40 acres bordering his and Wormeley's lands from William Dabney in 1798, and in 1801 buying 139.5 more acres from Dabney, bringing Cocke's total holdings to 439.5 acres.¹³ By 1802, William Cocke had died, and "William Cock's est[ate]" appeared in the land tax book for that year; "Sarah Cocke" appeared in the 1802 personal property tax book.¹⁴ A Cocke family genealogy asserts that William Cocke was "on a ship lost at sea in 1800" and that his wife "waited 3 years before proving his will," but no evidence was

⁶ Auditor of Public Accounts, Land Tax Book, King William County, 1792, LVA. This is the first time that William Cocke appeared in the land tax book.

⁷ For a biography of Ralph Wormeley V, see Jonathan H. Poston, "Ralph Wormeley V of Rosegill: A Deposed Virginia Aristocrat, 1774–1781," M.A. Thesis, College of William and Mary, 1979, <https://scholarworks.wm.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=4104&context=etd>, accessed Nov. 26, 2022.

⁸ Ibid., 7, 22, 37, 49, 54, 58–60.

⁹ Auditor of Public Accounts, Land Tax Book, King William County, 1782, LVA.

¹⁰ Ibid., 1792–1793.

¹¹ Elizabeth H. Ryland, *Abstracts of King William Record Books (Photostatic Copies) in Virginia State Archives* (N.p.: ca. 1940s), 3:32.

¹² Cocke Family Bible, on Rootsweb website, <https://sites.rootsweb.com/~gamonroe/bibles/cocke.htm>, accessed Nov. 27, 2022.

¹³ Ryland, *King William Record Books*, 3:29; Auditor of Public Accounts, Land Tax Book, King William County, 1801, LVA.

¹⁴ Ibid., 1802; *ibid.*, Personal Property Tax Book.

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offered to support these claims.¹⁵ In subsequent land tax books through 1820, the phrase “William Cocke’s est[ate]” was most commonly used to designate the 439.5-acre tract. From 1814 to 1817, the word “relict” was appended to the usual designation, suggesting that his widow, Sarah Cocke, was then in possession with a life estate. From 1818 through 1820, the appended entry reads “Isaac Cocke,” suggesting that Sarah Cocke had died, and the property had descended to the family’s eldest son. In the latter year, the first year that the value added to the land because of buildings is enumerated in the tax book, the assigned value was \$500. Beginning in 1821, Isaac Cocke was the sole owner assessed with the land tax.¹⁶

Isaac Cocke married Harriet Timberlake, presumably in 1816. Born on June 11, 1800, she was a daughter of Henry and Elizabeth Timberlake.¹⁷ Her place of birth was most likely Pleasant Green, her parents’ home, an eighteenth-century brick mansion just .75 mile east of Cherry Grove. The couple’s eldest child, William H. Cocke, was born on April 29, 1817, “at Pleasant Green.” The next child, Julia F. Cocke, was born on May 17, 1819, “at Cherry Grove.”¹⁸ Seven more children followed: Amelia, born July 24, 1821; Peyton L., born December 28, 1823; Wilson C., born April 29, 1826; Isaac N., born May 22, 1828; Benjamin A., born October 16, 1830; Edward J., born August 21, 1832; and Thomas L., born September 15, 1833.¹⁹ Perhaps it was this population explosion that prompted Isaac Cocke to construct a two-story frame addition to the dwelling ca. 1834-1835, effectively tripling the square footage. The addition’s completion is reflected in the 1835 land tax assessment, which doubled the land value due to buildings, from \$500 to \$1,000.²⁰

As the new addition approached completion, Cocke engaged a Boston-born painter to execute decorative touches to the first-floor parlor mantel and baseboards, the stairs, and doors on both floors. The painter’s name was Daniel T. Rea, and he came from a long line of Massachusetts painters of just about everything that could take paint, from houses to carriages to fire buckets to business signs to ships. At Cherry Grove, he painted the new addition’s first-floor mantel and baseboards—including those on the staircase—to resemble marble, and the door panels to look like burl walnut, maple, and mahogany. He even signed his work in a panel on the staircase: “Daniel T. Rea Painter.” Happily, his beautifully executed project has survived the years.

Daniel T. Rea (December 19, 1811-June 1880) was born into a family of Boston painters descended from his great-grandfather, Daniel Rea (ca. 1711-November 1, 1798), who was a tailor. The tailor’s namesake son, Daniel Rea, Jr. (1743-January 12, 1803), as he was referred to while his father lived, was apprenticed to a portrait painter named Thomas Johnston (ca. 1708-1767). Rea married Johnston’s daughter, Rachel Johnston (ca. 1746–1801), in 1764. When Thomas Johnston died, Daniel Rea, Jr. purchased the business from Johnston’s widow and

¹⁵ *Cockes and Cousins*, 2:37.

¹⁶ Auditor of Public Accounts, Land Tax Books, King William County, 1802–1821, LVA.

¹⁷ Cocke Family Bible.

¹⁸ *Ibid.* The record on the Rootswest site is a transcription of the information in the family Bible. It is not known if the two named places of birth were entered in the Bible at the time of birth, were added later, or are assumptions. The place or places of birth of the other children are not given.

¹⁹ *Ibid.* Thomas L. Cocke died a year and a half later, on March 16, 1835.

²⁰ Auditor of Public Accounts, Land Tax Books, King William County, 1834–1835, LVA.

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operated it as sole proprietor from 1769 to 1772. He then partnered with Thomas Johnston's son, John Johnston, until about 1787, when Johnston left the business. Daniel Rea, Jr. subsequently partnered with his own son, Daniel Rea, III (1767-January 12, 1832), until the elder Rea died in 1803.²¹ Daniel Rea, III married Sarah "Sally" Bangs (July 12, 1769-October 19, 1810) in Boston on April 21, 1789.²² The couple had a son, Daniel Rea (ca. 1790-February 17, 1828), who married Rebecca Stimpson (b. 1791) in Boston on January 20, 1811.²³ Their first child, Daniel Rea (who used the middle initial "T" as an adult), was born in Boston on December 19, 1811.²⁴

The Rea men were painters who executed projects for their clients. A glance through a company daybook for the period 1794-1798 reveals the scope of their undertakings. Besides painting the interiors and exteriors of houses, businesses, and ships, the Reas also painted carriages, fire buckets and bags, casks, coffins, militia drums, cartridge boxes, business signs, lamps, chairs and tables, bedsteads, "Venetian Shades," floor cloths, fences, dinnerware—almost anything that could retain paint. They also executed "japanning" (a baked-on finish that imitated East Asian lacquerwork) and applied silver and gold leaf, as well as paint, to furniture and picture frames. On March 25, 1795, for example, Henry Markell paid the Reas for "painting Seven winsor [sic] Chairs Mehogony Colour [and] Varn[ishin]g Ten ornamented [Windsor chairs]." Among the firm's better-known clients were John Adams and his son John Quincy Adams, printer Joseph Belknap, Harrison Gray Otis, John Hancock, Paul Revere, and many other merchants and politicians. One of the company's most interesting commissions was for "Painting and Gilding the [dedicatory] Board" for the "Monument on Breed's Hill in Charlestown, in Memory of Major General Joseph Warren and his Associates" in what became known as the Battle of Bunker Hill on June 17, 1775. The firm received payment for its work on November 2, 1794, the year before the monument was erected and dedicated. The fact that the company was selected for this important project suggests that the painters' skills were held in high regard in Boston.²⁵

Although Daniel Rea, Jr. and his son Daniel Rea, III were partners in the business, they worked at different locations in Boston and moved periodically. The city directory of 1789, for example, listed Daniel Rea, Jr. as "painter, head [of] Long-wharf" on the eastern side of the city near the end of Market Street, while Daniel Rea, III was listed as "painter, New-lane," which was inland

²¹ "Colonial North America at Harvard Library, Daniel Rea & Son account books, 1764–1802 (inclusive)," on Colonial North America website, [Daniel Rea & Son account books, 1764-1802 \(inclusive\) - Worlds of Change: Colonial North America at Harvard Library](#), accessed Oct. 30, 2022; Oliver Ayer Roberts, *History of the Military Company of the Massachusetts Now Called the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company of Massachusetts, 1637–1888* (Boston: Alfred Mudge & Son, 1897), 2:163. [3 vols.]

²² Rebecca Stimpson Family Tree, on FamilySearch website, <https://www.familysearch.org/tree/pedigree/landscape/2Z3G-KPP>, accessed Nov. 7, 2022.

²³ *New-England Palladium*, "Matrimony Notice," Jan. 22, 1811, on Genealogy Bank website, www.genealogybank.com, accessed Nov. 3, 2022; Charles C. Whittier, *Genealogy of the Stimpson Family of Charlestown, Mass.* (Boston: D. Clapp & Son, 1907), 81.

²⁴ Ibid. Daniel Rea's death date is given, erroneously, as Feb. 3. 1844.

²⁵ Daniel Rea & Son Daybook, 1794–1798, in "Colonial North America at Harvard Library, Daniel Rea & Son account books, 1764–1802 (inclusive)," on Colonial North America website, [Daniel Rea & Son account books, 1764-1802 \(inclusive\) - Worlds of Change: Colonial North America at Harvard Library](#), accessed Oct. 30, 2022.

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near Boston Common.²⁶ By 1796, both men were working in the northern end of the city, with Daniel Rea, Jr. on Charter Street near the Old North Church, while Daniel Rea, III had a “house [on] Liberty square” a few blocks east of the Old State House.²⁷ The men had moved again by 1798, when the directory listed Daniel Rea, Jr. at “Brattle square” about five blocks west of Long Wharf, and Daniel Rea, III on Prince Street at the northern end of town leading to the Charles River Bridge.²⁸ Beginning in 1803, when his father Daniel Rea, Jr. died, Daniel Rea, III was listed at 38 Prince Street, and he changed his suffix from III to Jr.²⁹ He remained at 38 Prince Street until 1806, but he was not listed in the directory in 1807. In 1809, “Daniel Rea” appeared at 38 Prince Street, where he was also listed in 1810.³⁰ This probably was Daniel Rea, III’s son, who married Rebecca Stimpson on January 11, 1811. Their son, Daniel Thaddeus Rea, was born on December 19, 1811. By 1813, Daniel and Rebecca Rea and their family had not only moved to Purchase Street on the waterfront a few blocks south of Long Wharf, but he had abandoned the painting trade and was listed as a “blockmaker”—a carpenter who crafted wooden blocks (as in “block and tackle”) for use on sailing ships.³¹ Purchase Street extended northeast along the waterfront from Summer Street to Broad Street; Liverpool Wharf was about halfway between the two streets, and almost opposite the wharf was a narrow street named Gridley Lane. Between 1816 and 1822, Daniel Rea is listed in the directories at either Gridley Lane or Liverpool Wharf.³² From 1823 until his death in 1828 from “intemperance,” Daniel Rea lived with his family in their house on Gridley Lane, while he worked as a “pump and block maker” variously at 3 Liverpool Wharf or at a shop on Gibbs Lane, also located across Purchase Street, near the wharf.³³ The 1828 directory lists Rebecca Rea, “widow, Purchase [Street].”³⁴ She remained there until 1830, by which year she had moved a few blocks southwest to 95 Summer Street.³⁵ She stayed on Summer Street until 1837, when she appeared in the directory at “2 South Foster place,” most likely present-day Foster Street between Charter and Commercial streets in the city’s far north end.³⁶ Rebecca Rea did not appear in the 1838 directory or those that followed.³⁷

²⁶ *The Boston Directory* (Boston: John Norman, 1789), 37, Boston Athenaeum website, <https://cdm.bostonathenaeum.org/digital/collection/p16057coll32>, accessed Nov. 3, 2022.

²⁷ *Ibid.* (John West, 1796), 86.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 1798, p. 95.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 1803, p. 104.

³⁰ *Ibid.* (Edward Cotton, 1809), 115; *ibid.*, 1810, p. 162.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 1813, p. 211.

³² *Ibid.*, 1816, p. 178; *ibid.* (John H. A. Frost and Charles Stimpson Jr., 1820), 174; *ibid.*, 1821, p. 198; *ibid.*, 1822, p. 197.

³³ Massachusetts, U.S., Town and Vital Records, 1620–1988, entry for “Daniel Rea Jr.,” in “Record of the Deaths and Burials in the Middle District for the Year 1828,” on Ancestry.com website, https://www.ancestry.com/discoveryui-content/view/43801680:2495?tid=&pid=&queryId=879b4f20462156710741a00d0f30ede2&_phsrc=TMz1256&_phstart=successSource, accessed Nov. 6, 2022; *The Boston Directory* (Boston: John H. A. Frost and Charles Stimpson Jr., 1823), 191, *The Boston Directory* (Boston: John Norman, 1789), 37, Boston Athenaeum website, <https://cdm.bostonathenaeum.org/digital/collection/p16057coll32>, accessed Nov. 3, 2022., accessed Nov. 3, 2022; *ibid.*, 1825, p. 219; *ibid.*, 1826, p. 228.

³⁴ *Ibid.* (Hunt and Stimpson, 1828), 228.

³⁵ *Ibid.* (Charles Stimpson Jr., 1829), 222; *ibid.*, 1830, p. 257.

³⁶ *Stimpson’s Boston Directory* (Boston: Charles Stimpson, 1831), 270; *ibid.*, 1832, p. 272; *ibid.*, 1833, p. 277; *ibid.*, 1834, p. 293; *ibid.*, 1835, p. 307; *ibid.*, 1836, p. 307; *ibid.* (Stimpson & Clapp, 1837), 320.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 1838, 314.

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Daniel T. Rea likely lived with his mother after his father died, as he does not appear under his own name in the city directories. Based on his later career, it is obvious that he received training in the craft of painting, perhaps from his father and grandfather, perhaps from an apprenticeship with another painter, or maybe from a combination of both. The 1828 city directory had 182 listings that referenced painting as a trade, from generalists to those who specialized in painting carriages, portraits, and miniatures. Half a dozen painters operated within a few blocks of the Reas' Gridley Lane residence, if young Daniel sought a neighborhood apprenticeship or job. Painter Jeremiah Haven worked on Pearl Street, a short block from Gridley Lane; Samuel A. Hayward painted on Sea Street, off Summer Street; painter Samuel Jackson Jr. was on Summer Street; Loring and Thaxter, painters, had their shop on Broad Street at the corner of Purchase; Jedediah Tuttle lived in a house on Summer Street and kept his shop on Sea Street. If Daniel had wanted to specialize, Thomas I. and Joseph W. Welsh, carriage painters, kept shop on Federal Street, a couple of blocks east of Summer Street.³⁸

One way or another, Daniel T. Rea learned to paint the types of works that the trade and customers demanded. The abundance of painters in Boston suggested that there was a sizeable market for their skills, but it may also have been the case that the market was saturated, with little space for expansion or for artists to start new businesses. Perhaps, to a young man, the best prospects lay elsewhere. For whatever reason, Daniel T. Rea left home sometime in or before 1834, when he was about twenty-three years old, and traveled south, to Virginia. Exactly why Rea came to Virginia is not known. His skills were in demand in Virginia—and no doubt elsewhere—as is evidenced by an advertisement in a Richmond newspaper in 1833: “C. W. M’Ginness, House, Sign, and Ornamental Painter, Gilder, etc. at his old stand, next to the Compiler Office, Richmond. Two apprentices wanted to the above business; boys from the country not over 15 years old.”³⁹ The products that M’Ginness offered his customers were the same as those that generations of Reas had created in Boston.

Whether Rea came to Virginia with a job offer in hand or merely hoping for one, he soon found a wife. Elizabeth L. Graves was born in 1815 in New Kent County, about twenty miles east of Richmond.⁴⁰ She was a daughter of Colonel Richard Graves, who besides serving in the militia was also a member of the county court. He had been elected to the Virginia General Assembly’s House of Delegates for the sessions between 1812 and 1824, excepting the 1820-1821 session.⁴¹ Rea and Elizabeth Graves were married, most likely in New Kent County, on February 5, 1835, by the Rev. James Clopton, a Baptist minister.⁴² The wedding may have been held at Richard

³⁸ *The Boston Directory* (Boston: Hunt and Stimpson, 1828), 138, 140, 157, 181, 274, 284.

³⁹ *Daily Richmond Whig & Public Advertiser*, Oct. 1, 1833, Virginia Chronicle, Library of Virginia website, [Richmond Enquirer 14 February 1835 — Virginia Chronicle: Digital Newspaper Archive](#), accessed Oct. 29, 2022.

⁴⁰ “Walker Family Cemetery, Elizabeth L. Graves Rea,” on Find a Grave website, [Elizabeth L. Graves Rea \(1815-1837\) - Find a Grave Memorial](#), accessed Oct. 29, 2022.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*; Cynthia Miller Leonard, *The General Assembly of Virginia, July 30, 1619–January 11, 1978: A Bicentennial Register of Members* (Richmond: Virginia State Library, 1978), 271, 274, 278, 282, 286, 290, 295, 300, 310, 315, 320.

⁴² *Richmond Enquirer*, Feb. 14, 1835, in Genealogy Bank website, [www.genealogybank.com](#), accessed Nov. 30, 2022.

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Graves's house, Spring Hill (formerly known as Indian Fields), which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and Virginia Landmarks Register.⁴³ Since they married in February 1835, to assume that Rea arrived in Virginia in 1834 allows time for a meeting and courtship. It also allowed him time to paint Isaac Cocke's house in King William County. Cherry Grove is located about twenty-five miles northwest of Colonel Graves's Spring Hill in a straight line.

The newlyweds did not linger long in Virginia, however, but soon moved south all the way to Georgia. By the fall of 1835, Daniel T. Rea was residing and working in Macon (Bibb Co.), Georgia, where he announced that he and a man surnamed Simpson had "taken the shop lately occupied by Mr. Thomas McCleskey, nearly opposite the new Market, and are now prepared to execute all kinds of House and Sign Painting, Gilding and Glazing, Chair Painting, Paper Hanging, Oil Nut and Burnished Gilding, Enameling, etc., etc. Having in their employment some of the most efficient workmen to be found in the city. They will be able to undertake largely, and execute with neatness and despatch."⁴⁴ By April 1836, Rea was operating the new business by himself.⁴⁵ Business must have boomed, because in November 1836, Rea advertised in two states: "Wanted. Six good Journeymen Painters for which liberal wages will be given. Macon, Sept. 19. The *Charleston Mercury* will give the above four insertions."⁴⁶ His advertisement in the March 2, 1837, issue of the *Macon Georgia Telegraph* specifically mentioned not only that he had "in his employment some of the most efficient workmen to be found," but also that he was prepared to execute "Imitation of Woods and Marble" among his offerings.⁴⁷ In 1838, Rea's business was associated with a man named Tandy.⁴⁸ Rea's movement from independent owner back to partner may have been a result of the Panic of 1837, which began with bank collapses in May of that year. The effects lingered for several years, especially in the South, and may have been a factor in Rea's changing fortunes.

Elizabeth L. Graves Rea, however, may never have seen Macon, for she died in Georgia, "in Richmond county [Augusta is the principal town] at the residence of Gen. Valentine Walker, in the 22 year of her age . . . after an illness of ten months," on March 18, 1837.⁴⁹ She and Daniel Rea had had a son, Clarence Valentine Walker Rea, born in Richmond County, Georgia, on

⁴³ Holly Marie Williams, "Spring Hill," DHR File No. 063-0080, National Register of Historic Places Form, July 11, 2002.

⁴⁴ *Georgia Messenger* (Macon), Nov. 12, 1835, Newspapers.com website, www.newspapers.com, accessed Oct. 27, 2022.

⁴⁵ *Macon Georgia Telegraph*, Apr. 21, 1836, Newspapers.com website, www.newspapers.com, accessed Oct. 3, 2022.

⁴⁶ *Georgia Messenger* (Macon), Nov. 10, 1836, Newspapers.com website, www.newspapers.com, accessed Oct. 3, 2022.

⁴⁷ *Macon Georgia Telegraph*, March 2, 1837, Newspapers.com, www.newspapers.com website, accessed Oct. 3, 2022.

⁴⁸ Mary Levin Koch, "A History of the Arts in Augusta, Macon, and Columbus, Georgia, 1800–1860" (M.A. thesis, University of Georgia, Athens, Georgia, 1983), 164.

⁴⁹ *Georgia Messenger* (Macon), March 30, 1837, Newspapers.com website, www.newspapers.com, accessed Oct. 27, 2022; "Walker Family Cemetery, Elizabeth L. Graves Rea," tombstone, on Find a Grave website, [Elizabeth L. Graves Rea \(1815-1837\) - Find a Grave Memorial](http://www.findagrave.com), accessed Oct. 29, 2022.

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April 7, 1836.⁵⁰ Valentine Walker reared the boy, whom he termed an “orphan,” “from early infancy” after Elizabeth Rea’s death. When Walker died in 1852, he bequeathed the teenager \$200 in money “as well as a horse, saddle and bridle not to exceed \$150.00.”⁵¹

According to a genealogist cited on the Find a Grave website, Daniel T. Rea “deserted Elizabeth, and General Valentine Walker befriended her and her son.” To support this interpretation, he noted that Clarence Valentine Walker Rea later dropped “Rea” and employed Walker as his surname. Further to support the desertion theory, one might add Valentine Walker’s use of the word “orphan” in his will, which could suggest that Daniel Rea had abandoned his son. Valentine Walker (1779-1852) and his brother Freeman Walker, Jr. (1780-1827), were the youngest sons of Freeman Walker, Sr., of Charles City County, Virginia, which is adjacent to New Kent County. The brothers had moved to Augusta, Georgia, by May 1807, when Valentine Walker married his first wife, Polly Arrington.⁵²

Perhaps the Walker and Graves families of Virginia were relatives or friends and Elizabeth Rea turned to Valentine Walker for help when she became ill around June of 1836, just two months after Clarence was born. Apparently, then, Daniel T. Rea and his wife left Virginia after their wedding but before the birth of their son in April 1836. They settled for a while in Augusta, but Daniel Rea moved on to Macon, Georgia, before November 1835 and established his business there. About two months after the birth of her son, Elizabeth L. Graves Rea fell ill and lived the rest of her brief life at General Walker’s house, where she died ten months later, on March 18, 1837.⁵³ Walker then adopted the infant, Clarence. In addition, Daniel Rea’s mother, Rebecca Rea, moved to Georgia either in 1837 or 1838, when she disappeared from the Boston city directory.⁵⁴ Perhaps Daniel wrote her to come to help when Elizabeth fell ill but she arrived too late. She remained in Georgia, where she died of “fever” in Richmond County in August 1846, when she was “brought in dead from the Country” to Savannah.⁵⁵

Rea subsequently married Louisa C. Craigs on May 5, 1839, and a son, George, was born to them by 1840.⁵⁶ Soon, however, Rea’s business and personal life took a turn for the worse. By January 29, 1840, Rea had sold his business— “disposed of his entire stock in trade”—to

⁵⁰ “Col. Clarence Valentine Walker,” on Find a Grave website, <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/37351259/clarence-valentine-walker>, accessed Oct. 29, 2022. The year on his grave marker is 1835, but in the 1900 census he gave his birth year as 1836.

⁵¹ “Walker Family Cemetery, Elizabeth L. Graves Rea,” on Find a Grave website, [Elizabeth L Graves Rea \(1815-1837\) - Find a Grave Memorial](https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/37351259/elizabeth-l-graves-re), accessed Oct. 29, 2022.

⁵² “Seclusaval and Windsor Spring, Richmond Co., Georgia,” National Register of Historic Places nomination, 1988, on National Park Service website, <https://npgallery.nps.gov/GetAsset/48903ae5-4bba-4eba-9961-70f840c219b7>, accessed Oct. 28, 2022.

⁵³ “Walker Family Cemetery, Elizabeth L. Graves Rea,” on Find a Grave website, [Elizabeth L Graves Rea \(1815-1837\) - Find a Grave Memorial](https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/37351259/elizabeth-l-graves-re), accessed Oct. 29, 2022.

⁵⁴ *Stimpson’s Boston Directory* (Boston: Charles Stimpson, 1837), 320; *ibid.*, 1838, p. 314, Archive.org website, <https://archive.org/details/>, accessed Nov. 3, 2022.

⁵⁵ “Savannah, Georgia Vital Records, 1803-1966, Rebecca Rea,” on Ancestry.com website, www.ancestry.com, accessed Nov. 1, 2022.

⁵⁶ “Vital, Georgia Marriages, 1808-1967,” on FamilySearch website, www.familysearch.org, accessed Oct. 3, 2022; George’s age is reported as ten in the 1850 Alabama census and eighteen in the 1860 census.

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William Pinkham.⁵⁷ On Thursday, September 2, 1841, on order of the Bibb County Inferior Court, a sheriff's sale was advertised, to take place the following Tuesday (September 7). The purpose of the sale was to satisfy liens against Rea by Thomas Lowe and F. Sims. Numerous personal items belonging to Rea were to be sold, including "one horse and wagon and harness, one sofa and bureau, 1 pair of card tables, 1 pair of crickets [perhaps a cutting machine], 1 pair of andirons, 1 large looking glass, 1 backgammon board, [and] 9 fine reed bottom chairs."⁵⁸ Perhaps there were no buyers because on October 7, 1841, the same items were advertised for another sale to satisfy Thomas Lowe.⁵⁹ In between the attempted sales, Rea was undoubtedly humiliated by the following newspaper announcement of his expulsion from the local militia: "Company Room, Macon, Sept. 11th, 1841. At a meeting of the Macon Volunteers, Captain Isaac Holmes in the Chair, —On motion, it was unanimously *Resolved*, That Daniel T. Rea having been guilty of conduct unbecoming a gentleman and a soldier, he be expelled from the ranks of this Corps, and his name stricken from the Roll Book. C. C. Usher, Sec."⁶⁰ Matters soon got even worse, when in August 1842, a lien was levied against the four-acre lot on which Rea and his family lived south of Macon to satisfy a claim by Thomas P. Stubbs.⁶¹ Another claim was levied against the property in February 1843 by Peter Stubbs and Daniel Gunn.⁶² But Rea also benefited from a ruling of the court in March 1843, when he was among those who were awarded a lien against an enslaved man named Tom, aged 20, "the property of Ossian Gregory."⁶³

By 1844, Rea and his family had moved to Tallahassee, Florida, where he participated in a meeting of "Mechanics" on Monday, May 12, 1845. He was appointed head of a committee to "correspond with the various candidates" in an approaching election—the brand-new state's first—and seek their support for a lien law designed to protect the interests of tradesmen. One of the candidates for the House of Representatives in the new Florida legislature, Amos M. Alexander, then clerk of the court, responded a few days later and promised his support for such a law.⁶⁴

The family moved to Louisiana, where daughter Alice Rea was born, by 1849. The next year, they were in Mobile, Alabama, where Daniel Rea (who the census taker recorded as "Ray") was listed in the 1850 census as a painter, age 39, born in Massachusetts. Louisa Rea's age was given as 25, born in Georgia. They had three children: George, age 10, born in Georgia ca. 1840; Florence, age 6, born in Florida ca. 1844; and "Alace" (Alice), age 1, born in Louisiana ca.

⁵⁷ *Georgia Messenger* (Macon), Nov. 10, 1836, Newspapers.com website, www.newspapers.com, accessed Oct. 3, 2022.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, Sept. 2, 1841.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, Oct. 7, 1841.

⁶⁰ *Macon Georgia Telegraph*, Sept. 14, 1841, Newspapers.com website, www.newspapers.com, accessed Oct. 27, 2022.

⁶¹ *Georgia Messenger* (Macon), Aug. 25, 1842, Newspapers.com website, www.newspapers.com, accessed Oct. 27, 2022.

⁶² *Ibid.*, Feb. 23, 1843.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, March 9, 1843.

⁶⁴ *Star of Florida*, May 16, 1845, Genealogy Bank website, www.genealogybank.com, accessed Oct. 27, 2022; *ibid.*, May 23, 1845.

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1849.⁶⁵ Sometime before January 1857, presumably, Louisa Rea died, and on January 11, 1857, Daniel T. Rea married Eliza Laws in Mobile.⁶⁶

Eliza Laws had been married earlier, as the 1860 census shows. Beside Daniel T. Rea (again spelled “Ray”), age 49, painter, born in Massachusetts, and Eliza Rea, age 32, born in Tennessee, the following children were listed: George Rea, age 18, painter, born in Georgia ca. 1842; Florence Rea, age 16, born in Florida ca. 1844; Thomas Laws, age 16, painter, born in Alabama; Sarah Laws, age 12, born in Alabama; Alice Rea, age 11, born in Louisiana ca. 1849; Mary Rea, age 6, born in Alabama ca. 1854; and Nicholas Laws, age 8, born in Alabama. Two immigrant painters who lived in the household—Daniel O’Connor and Charles Walter, both 16—were born in Ireland and England, respectively.⁶⁷

During the Civil War, Daniel T. Rea was involved in construction-related activities for the Confederate Ordnance Service in Mobile. On September 30, 1863, he received \$240 to pay for panes of glass in different sizes. On November 11, 1863, he received \$12 for four whitewash brushes. He was paid \$1,109 on December 17, 1863, for brushes, linseed oil, turpentine, and other painting-related items. On December 31, 1863, he was paid \$4,200 for 24 boxes of “French Window Glass.” He also furnished panes of glass to the Engineer Service and was paid \$15 on July 18, 1864.⁶⁸

After the war, Rea visited New Orleans, arriving at the City Hotel on September 11, 1865. Perhaps this was a family-related visit, since his daughter Alice had been born in Louisiana about 1849.⁶⁹

On February 2, 1869, Daniel T. Rea led the signatories on a petition submitted to the Mobile Common Council to have a gas lamp installed at the corner of St. Louis and Hamilton Streets. Rea was commissioned a justice of the peace in Mobile on April 15, 1869.⁷⁰ In October 1869, Rea was “announced as the Mechanics’ and Workingmen’s Independent Candidate for the vacancy in the Legislature, created by the death of Ovide Gregory.” Rea was not elected.⁷¹

⁶⁵ U.S. Census, Inhabitants, Mobile, Alabama, 1850, Ancestry.com website, <https://www.ancestry.com>, accessed Oct. 27, 2022.

⁶⁶ “Marriage, Alabama County Marriages, 1809–1950,” FamilySearch website, www.familysearch.org, accessed Oct. 3, 2022.

⁶⁷ U.S. Census, Inhabitants, Alabama, Mobile, 1860, Ancestry.com website, <https://www.ancestry.com>, accessed Oct. 27, 2022.

⁶⁸ Daniel T. Rea, Fold3 website, www.fold3.com, accessed Oct. 3, 2022.

⁶⁹ *New Orleans Times*, Sept. 12, 1865, Genealogy Bank website, www.genealogybank.com, accessed Oct. 27, 2022.

⁷⁰ *Mobile Register*, Feb. 3, 1869, Genealogy Bank website, www.genealogybank.com, accessed Oct. 27, 2022; Alabama, U.S., Civil Appointments, 1818–1939, Ancestry.com website, www.ancestry.com, accessed Oct. 3, 2022.

⁷¹ *Mobile Register*, Oct. 26, 1869, Genealogy Bank website, www.genealogybank.com, accessed Oct. 27, 2022; Rea’s name does not appear on “Category: Members of the Alabama House of Representatives,” Wikipedia website, https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Category:Members_of_the_Alabama_House_of_Representatives&pagefrom=Terrell%2C+John+Dabney+Sr.%0AJohn+Dabney+Terrell+Sr.#mw-pages, accessed Oct. 28, 2022.

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In the 1870 census of Mobile, Daniel T. Rea was listed as a “House Painter,” aged 63, living with Eliza Rea, “Keeping House,” age 42; Mary Rea, “At School,” age 16; Sarah A. Laws, “At Home,” age 20; and Jeremiah N. Laws, “Clk. in Store,” age 18.⁷²

Daniel T. Rea was listed on June 11 in the 1880 census as “widowed.” His age was given as 70, and he was still recorded as a painter. His daughter, Florence E. Rea, single, aged 38, “Keeping house,” was the only other occupant of the dwelling.⁷³

Eliza Rea, however, did not die in 1880. Instead, according to the census enumeration on June 1, she was residing in Cincinnati, Ohio, “at home” in the residence of Eugene Carey, who was married to her daughter Sarah Laws. Eliza “Ray” was recorded as widowed, and her relationship to the head of the household was “Mother-in-law.”⁷⁴ In the 1900 census, she was living in Cincinnati and boarding in the house of Rudolph Cox. Aged 72, she had been born in Tennessee in December 1827.⁷⁵ She worked as a dressmaker. She died in Cincinnati, Ohio, on October 31, 1905, and her funeral was scheduled for November 2 “from residence of her son Thos. M. Laws, No. 4214 Chambers St.” She was “aged 78 years, relict of the late Daniel T. Rea.”⁷⁶ It seems possible, then, that Daniel T. Rea died soon after June 1, 1880, in Mobile, and that Eliza Rea moved before June 15, 1880, to Cincinnati, where she resided until her death in 1905. This, of course, does not explain the census taker’s entry for Daniel “Ray” as “widowed,” unless it was simply an error. No records of Daniel T. Rea’s death and burial have been found.

Unlike Rea, who spent much of his life moving from place to place, Isaac Cocke and his wife grew roots at Cherry Grove. Cocke had prospered between 1818, when he first appeared in the land tax books, and 1835. According to the personal property tax books, in the former year he enslaved two African Americans above the age of 16, and he owned four horses.⁷⁷ In 1835, the number of people enslaved by Cocke had grown to thirteen persons over the age of twelve years; enslaved children may not have been included in these levies. Cocke’s other taxable personal property consisted of six horses and a gig.⁷⁸ He also enlarged his landholdings to 479 acres by 1824.⁷⁹ Unfortunately, he was only able to enjoy his prosperity, reflected in the completed addition and the extra space and decoration in his house, for a short time. He died on March 26, 1835, aged not quite forty-three years.⁸⁰ His widow, Harriet Cocke, was left to cope with the deaths of her husband and her youngest child, Thomas L. Cocke, within ten days of each other, and to rear her surviving eight children, ranging in age from not yet three years to almost

⁷² U.S. Census, Inhabitants, Alabama, Mobile, 1870, Ancestry.com website, <https://www.ancestry.com>, accessed Oct. 27, 2022.

⁷³ Ibid., 1880.

⁷⁴ U.S. Census, Inhabitants, Ohio, Cincinnati, 1880, Ancestry.com website, <https://www.ancestry.com>, accessed Oct. 27, 2022.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 1900.

⁷⁶ *Cincinnati Post*, Nov. 1, 1905, Newspapers.com, www.newspapers.com, accessed Oct. 27, 2022.

⁷⁷ Ibid., Personal Property Tax Books, 1818.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 1835.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 1824.

⁸⁰ Cocke Family Bible.

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eighteen.⁸¹ She also had to supervise the management of the farm and preserve her late husband's estate for their children.

By 1837, Isaac Cocke's estate had been distributed among his widow and children "by deed and division."⁸² Harriet Cocke received life rights to 101.75 acres including the house, while William H. Cocke received 35 acres; Julia F. Cocke, 42 acres; Amelia Cocke, 49 acres; Peyton L. Cocke, 42 acres; Wilson C. Cocke, 35 acres; Isaac N. Cocke, 60 acres; Benjamin A. Cocke, 40 acres; and Edward J. Cocke, 60 acres.⁸³ None of the children's tracts had value added on account of buildings. In 1840, a statewide reassessment year, the value of the buildings on Harriet Cocke's land was reduced to \$700; perhaps for the loss of some outbuildings (the assessor did not give a reason).⁸⁴

On March 26, 1844, William H. Cocke died, and his parcel reverted to Harriet Cocke. Likewise, Wilson C. Cocke died in about 1847, when his parcel also reverted to her.⁸⁵ She then owned 171.75 acres. The value because of buildings on her parcel remained at \$700 until 1851, when it was reduced again, to \$500.⁸⁶ Of Harriet Cocke's other living children in 1847, Edward J. Cocke was the only one who did not survive her; he served in Captain W. P. Carter's Company, Virginia Light Artillery, in the Confederate army during the Civil War and died on May 31, 1862, of wounds received at the Battle of Seven Pines.⁸⁷ Amelia Cocke died in Roanoke, Virginia, on November 7, 1894.⁸⁸ Peyton L. Cocke died on September 5, 1882, in Monroe County, Georgia.⁸⁹ Isaac N. Cocke served in the 25th Virginia Infantry during the Civil War, died on July 8, 1907, and is buried in Hollywood Cemetery in Richmond.⁹⁰ Benjamin A. Cocke, who by 1861 was an "Insurance and Collecting Agent" in Richmond who specialized in hiring out "servants," died in King William County in March 1882.⁹¹

⁸¹ Ibid., ages according to birth record. Thomas died on March 16, 1835, ten days before his father.

⁸² Auditor of Public Accounts, Land Tax Book, King William County, 1837, LVA.

⁸³ Auditor of Public Accounts, Land Tax Book, King William County, 1837, LVA; the 1837 land tax book showed that Harriet Cocke was assigned 97 acres, but in 1838 the quantity was increased to 101.75 acres with the explanation that 4.75 acres had been omitted from the total in 1837.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 1840.

⁸⁵ Cocke Family Bible; Auditor of Public Accounts, Land Tax Books, King William County, 1844, 1847, LVA.

⁸⁶ Ibid., 1851.

⁸⁷ U.S., Civil War Soldier Records and Profiles, 1861–1865, on Ancestry.com website, www.ancestry.com, accessed Nov. 30, 2022; National Park Service, The Civil War, Search for Soldiers, Soldiers' Details, Cocke, Edward J., on National Park Service website, <https://www.nps.gov/civilwar/search-soldiers-detail.htm?soldierId=63018B8E-DC7A-DF11-BF36-B8AC6F5D926A>, accessed Nov. 30, 2022.

⁸⁸ *Salem Times-Register*, Nov. 16, 1894, Virginia Chronicle, Library of Virginia website, <https://viriniachronicle.com/?a=d&d=STR18941116.1.3&e=-----en-20--1--txt-txIN-salem+times%252Dregister+16+november+1894----->, accessed Nov. 30, 2022.

⁸⁹ Peyton L. Cocke, Find a Grave website, https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/47357901/peyton_l-cocke, accessed Nov. 30, 2022.

⁹⁰ Isaac N. Cocke, Family Search website, <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:XRMV-C86>, accessed Nov. 30, 2022.

⁹¹ *Richmond Enquirer*, Jan. 4, 1861, Genealogy Bank website, www.genealogybank.com, accessed Nov. 30, 2022; "Virginia, U.S., Death Registers, 1853–1911, King William, 1882, Register of Deaths," on Ancestry.com website, <https://www.ancestry.com/discoveryui-content/view/355249:62152>, accessed Nov. 30, 2022.

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In 1842, the size of elder daughter Julia F. Cocke's inheritance declined from 42 to 41.25 acres after she sold .75 acre to Richard E. Tompkins.⁹² On February 4, 1851, she married Dr. William T. Downer at Cherry Grove.⁹³ They may have known each other since childhood, since he was born ca. 1820 about a mile west of Cherry Grove, near Etna Mills.⁹⁴ Julia F. Downer disappeared from the land tax books in 1851.⁹⁵ Dr. Downer appeared as a landowner for the first time in 1853, assessed for 40 acres, his wife's inheritance.⁹⁶ He sold that parcel to "H[arriet] Cocke" in 1858.⁹⁷ In 1856, Downer also was assessed for 332 acres purchased from Thomas H. Taliaferro's estate, with \$100 that year for the value added for buildings.⁹⁸ He quickly improved the property, called Bell Forest, which was located a mile north of Etna Mills and about two miles northwest of Cherry Grove, increasing the value of buildings there to \$500 in 1857.⁹⁹ Despite a report that his house there burned down about December 1878, this \$500 value remained the same through 1889, when Downer died.¹⁰⁰ He must have rebuilt very quickly if the unchanged valuation is accurate.¹⁰¹

According to the 1850 census, Harriet Cocke enslaved nine Black persons at Cherry Grove. Five of these individuals were males aged fifty-five, twenty-eight, twenty, thirteen, and eleven, and four of them were females, two of whom were twenty-one, while one was a thirteen-year-old girl, and one was an infant who was two months old.¹⁰² The 1860 census recorded Dr. Downer as enslaving six African Americans at Bell Forest: a forty-five-year old man and young boy of four years, and four women aged fifty-five, twenty-four, eighteen, and sixteen.¹⁰³ The fates of these individuals after the Civil War is not currently known. In 1880, Bell Forest totaled 370 acres, of which 80 were tilled, 30 were in pasture, 200 were woodlands, and 50 were unimproved. The farm's value, including land, fences, and buildings, was \$2,500. Farm implements and livestock were valued at \$100 and \$150 respectively. With slavery abolished, landholders had to pay workers to manage the work on their farms; laborers at Bell Forest were paid \$150 in 1880. The value of farm products was \$500. Four tons of hay were harvested. There were two horses, two head of cattle whose milk produced twenty pounds of butter, eight hogs, thirty chickens, and four

⁹² Auditor of Public Accounts, Land Tax Book, King William County, 1842.

⁹³ *Richmond Daily Times*, March 10, 1851, Genealogy Bank website, www.genealogybank.com, accessed Oct. 6, 2022.

⁹⁴ Place of birth for Dr. Downer given on William T. Downer Jr., Death Certificate, Mar. 12, 1920, Virginia, U.S., Death Records, 1912–2014, LVA, Ancestry.com website, <https://www.ancestry.com>, accessed Oct. 27, 2022. The U.S. Census records for the years 1850–1880 give his age as 30, 40, 50, and 60 respectively, suggesting the 1820 birth year.

⁹⁵ Auditor of Public Accounts, Land Tax Book, King William County, 1851, LVA.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 1851. Probably the acreage (41.25 in 1842) had been re-surveyed to an estimated 40 acres.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 1853.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 1856.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 1857.

¹⁰⁰ Death notice in *Norfolk Landmark*, May 12, 1889, Newspapers.com, www.newspapers.com, accessed Oct. 18, 2022; *Richmond Daily Dispatch*, March 5, 1879, Genealogy Bank website, www.genealogybank.com, accessed Oct. 6, 2022.

¹⁰¹ The King William County assessor neither changed the value nor mentioned a fire in the post-1878 land tax books.

¹⁰² U.S. Census, Slave Inhabitants, 1850, Virginia, King William County, LVA, Ancestry.com website, <https://www.ancestry.com>, accessed Oct. 27, 2022.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 1860.

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“other” poultry. Forty acres planted in corn produced seventy bushels, while ten acres planted in wheat produced eighty bushels. Thirty bushels of “pulse” (peas and beans) also were grown.¹⁰⁴ No agricultural census records were found for Cherry Grove.

Because of the destruction of county records at the King William County courthouse and clerk’s office, one can only speculate that after Harriet Cocke’s death in 1877, Julia F. Cocke Downer inherited the Cherry Grove tract, although the land tax book “remarks” column is silent on the subject. In support of the theory, almost all of Julia Downer’s siblings were either dead or living elsewhere in 1877, and it is clear from post-1885 records that the farm descended in the Downer family through Dr. Downer’s and Julia Downer’s children and grandchildren. Julia F. Cocke Downer, age 65, died on June 7, 1888, most likely at Bell Forest, of “Heart Disease.” Her husband, Dr. W. T. Downer, reported her death.¹⁰⁵

Dr. William T. Downer died less than a year after Julia Downer, on May 10 or 11, 1889, also at Bell Forest.¹⁰⁶ Their three sons survived them: William T. Downer Jr. (born ca. 1853), John Walter Downer (born ca. 1856), and Milton C. Downer (born ca. 1861).¹⁰⁷ On September 16, 1889, because their father had died intestate, the three brothers divided his estate among themselves. William T. Downer Jr., who very likely resided at Cherry Grove, relinquished all claims to his father’s farm, Bell Forest, to his two brothers. In turn, they conveyed to him all their claims to Cherry Grove, which adjoined the land of W. W. Dabney, and amounted to approximately 175 acres.¹⁰⁸ Beginning in 1876, when he was about twenty-three years old, and continuing through 1881, William T. Downer Jr. paid land taxes on 108 acres adjacent to Dabney’s farm. He sold 20 acres to Spencer Smith in 1882. In 1883, he sold 60 acres to Charles and Isaiah Smith and 20 acres to W. W. Dabney.¹⁰⁹ The land tax book for 1895 confirmed that the 319-acre Bell Forest tract on which Dr. Downer had lived, north of Etna Mills, went to John W. Downer, who divided it into two 159.5-acre shares and transferred one by deed to Milton C. Downer on Sept. 14, 1894.¹¹⁰ The book also recorded the fact that William T. Downer Jr. was assessed for 175 acres “adj[acent to] Dabney’s” in 1895; Milton C. Downer had transferred his share of the tract to William T. Downer Jr. on Sept. 14, 1894, as well.¹¹¹

William Thomas Downer Jr., son of Dr. William T. Downer and Julia F. Cocke Downer, died on March 12, 1920, “in his sixty-eighth year.” He was survived by his wife, Mattie L. Downer; daughters, Mrs. Dorsey E. Fleshman (Elizabeth F. Downer), Carrie L. Downer, and Mattie H.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., Agriculture, 1880.

¹⁰⁵ Virginia, U.S., Death Registers, 1853–1911, King William, 1888, Register of Deaths, on Ancestry.com website, <https://www.ancestry.com/discoveryui-content/view/355766:62152>, accessed Oct. 6, 2022.

¹⁰⁶ *Norfolk Landmark*, May 12, 1889, Newspapers.com, www.newspapers.com, accessed Oct. 18, 2022.

¹⁰⁷ U.S. Census, Inhabitants, 1870, Virginia, King William Co., LVA, Ancestry.com website, <https://www.ancestry.com>, accessed Oct. 27, 2022; Ibid., 1860, 1870; Ibid., 1880.

¹⁰⁸ King William County Deed Book 13, pp. 55–56, deed, recorded Sept. 14, 1894, Office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court, King William, Va.

¹⁰⁹ Auditor of Public Accounts, Land Tax Book, King William County, 1876–1883, LVA.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 1895.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

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Downer; and sons, Julian T. Downer, Warner W. Downer, Carey W. Downer, Peyton J. Downer, Grover C. Downer, and William T. Downer. There were also four grandchildren.¹¹²

Elizabeth “Bettie” F. Downer had married Dorsey E. Fleshman, son of William F. Fleshman, on Thursday, April 6, 1911, at the home of the bride’s cousin, Mr. and Mrs. Draucker, at 304 Rowland St. in Richmond. The bride’s father had given her away. Miss Carrie L. Downer, the bride’s sister, was maid of honor. According to a newspaper announcement, the bride and groom were departing immediately on their honeymoon, would be given a reception at the bride’s home, Cherry Grove, in King William County, on April 17, and would subsequently “be at home” after April 20 at 412 East Leigh St., Richmond.¹¹³

By October 1926, a dispute had arisen among the heirs of William T. Downer Jr. that was considered in the circuit court of the county. Bettie F. Fleshman, her husband Dorsey E. Fleshman, and Mattie and “Willie” T. Downer, unmarried, were complainants, while Julian T. Downer, Carrie L. Downer, William W. Downer, Cary W. Downer, James P. Downer, Grover C. Downer, and Mattie Lewis Downer, widow and administratrix of William T. Downer Jr., were the defendants. The issue was whether it was practical to partition the estate (Cherry Grove) of William T. Downer Jr. among his heirs or compel a sale and divide the proceeds. A commissioner was appointed to evaluate the alternatives and report back to the court.¹¹⁴

On March 16, 1929, a court sale by Richard Florance, Special Commissioner, was advertised for the W. T. Downer farm, Cherry Grove, near Enfield, King William County. It included “about 200 acres with main dwelling house and outbuildings thereon,” as well as a “store house and gasoline station with about 1 ½ acres of land” at the intersection in Enfield of the roads leading north to Epworth and southeast to Manquin. The sale was by decree of the Circuit Court of King William County entered December 6, 1928, in the chancery suit pending “under the short style of B. F. Fleshman, et als. vs. J. T. Downer, et als.” “The farm consists of about 200 acres, and has thereon a good dwelling house, with brick foundation and metal roof, and containing nine rooms and large hall, barn and other outbuildings, and adjoins the lands of the Wormley estate and others, and is about one mile from Enfield, Va.”¹¹⁵

On October 12, 1929, Florance sold the estate to Carrie L. Downer for \$2,550 in cash. The deed described the property as:

A farm consisting of about two hundred (200) acres of land with a main dwelling house and other buildings thereon, in King William County, Virginia, in Acquinton Magisterial District, near Enfield,

¹¹² *Richmond Times Dispatch*, March 21, 1920, Genealogy Bank website, www.genealogybank.com, accessed Nov. 18, 2022.

¹¹³ *Richmond Daily Dispatch*, Apr. 12, 1911, LVA.

¹¹⁴ King William Co. Circuit Court, Chancery Order Book 7, pp. 177–178, Oct. 26, 1926, Office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court, King William, Va.

¹¹⁵ *Richmond Times Dispatch*, Mar. 13, 1929, Genealogy Bank website, www.genealogybank.com, accessed Oct. 24, 2022.

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Virginia, being the home place of the Downer Family, and the residence of Mr. W. T. Downer, before his death, and which has been the residence of his widow Mrs. Mattie Lewis Downer, practically all the time since the death of the said W. T. Downer.¹¹⁶

Carrie L. Downer died on September 1, 1951.¹¹⁷ On March 18, 1955, an auction sale of the Cherry Grove tract was held “by the attorneys and agents in fact for the heirs of Carrie L. Downer, deceased.” The sale included:

all the certain tract or parcel of land in Acquinton District, King William County, Virginia, near Enfield, Virginia, containing 200 acres, more or less, it being the property of which Carrie L. Downer died seized and possessed, and having been conveyed to her by deed of Richard Florance, Special Commissioner, dated October 12, 1929, and recorded in the Clerk’s Office of King William County, Virginia, in Deed Book 54, Page 224, which property is known as the Cherry Grove Plantation or the Downer Home Place.¹¹⁸

On May 4, 1955, Grover C. Downer, Mattie D. Hine, Bettie D. Fleshman, Carey W. Downer, and other family members and spouses sold Cherry Grove to Bettie D. Fleshman and Carey W. Downer. It was the same property “of which Carrie L. Downer died seized and possessed.”¹¹⁹

Bettie D. Fleshman died early in 1957. Her will, dated September 22, 1956, had been probated on March 18, 1957, in Henrico County, and she had bequeathed her interest in the property to her daughter Dorsey Elizabeth Fleshman. On March 25, 1957, Dorsey E. Fleshman, widower, and Dorsey Elizabeth Fleshman, sold Cherry Grove to Carey (*sic*: Cary) W. Downer.¹²⁰

On December 7, 1963, Mattie D. Hine was both grantor and grantee in a deed to herself of property that she had inherited under provisions of the will of her brother, Cary W. Downer, so that there would be a recorded deed to the property. The tract consisted of 1.25 acres of land at Cherry Grove, to include the house and the cemetery. Cary Downer had sold the remainder of the property to Eugene L. Campbell.¹²¹

¹¹⁶ King William Co. Circuit Court, Deed Book 54, pp. 224–225, recorded Oct. 21, 1936, Office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court, King William, Va.

¹¹⁷ *Richmond Times Dispatch*, Sept. 2, 1951, Genealogy Bank website, www.genealogybank.com, accessed Dec. 6, 2022.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, Mar. 6, 1955, accessed Oct. 24, 2022.

¹¹⁹ King William Co. Circuit Court, Deed Book 76, pp. 129–131, recorded June 24, 1955, Office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court, King William, Va.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, Deed Book 78, pp. 231–232, recorded June 24, 1957.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, Deed Book 88, pp. 459–460, recorded Dec. 13, 1963. Deed from Cary W. Downer to Eugene L. Campbell, dated July 30, 1959, Deed Book 81, p. 362, recorded July 31, 1959.

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Mattie D. Hine sold the property to Lawrence R. McDonald on October 3, 1975. McDonald executed a deed of trust the same day to T. J. Headlee and A. L. Witcher Jr., of Richmond.¹²² When McDonald failed to pay the debt to Mattie D. Hine, Headlee foreclosed and conveyed the property back to Hine on October 15, 1979.¹²³

On September 14, 1982, Mattie D. Hine sold Cherry Grove to James Wilson Ramsey.¹²⁴ Ramsey and his wife, Shirley W. Ramsey, conveyed the property to Timothy Lee Ramsey and his wife, Marjorie Elaine Ramsey, the present owners, on July 9, 1991.¹²⁵

Architectural Context

The original section of Cherry Grove is located in a cluster of surviving colonial and pre-1800 houses. Three of these houses are located approximately one mile to the northeast. These include Seven Springs (NRHP 1980; 050-0064), a ca. 1729 brick house, and two frame houses built about 1800: Enfield (050-0062), and Sycamore Green (050-0095). Enfield appears originally to have been a two-bay house that was later expanded. Located closer to Cherry Grove but across Judy Swamp to the east is Pleasant Green (050-0056), a large two-story, five-bay brick house built in 1760. To the south is The Grove (050-0030), a large two-story frame house built ca. 1770, and to the southeast is Mount Columbia (NRHP 1989; 050-0049). Mount Columbia began as a single-room house built in the 1790s and was significantly enlarged when a two-story, five-bay brick house was built in the early 1800s onto the original house, which became a rear ell. Cherry Grove has a parallel evolution, albeit on a much smaller and less grand scale.

There are a number of surviving pre-1800 houses in King William that have a similar exterior form to the original house at Cherry Grove, although Cherry Grove is smaller than most.¹²⁶ They are story-and-a-half frame dwellings with side-gable roofs and an end brick chimney. Most were three or five bays wide and, much less frequently, two bays like Cherry Grove. While not as large or built of brick as some of its neighbors, the two-bay, one-and-a-half story Cherry Grove house would still have been a substantial house at the time it was built. Typically, these early houses were expanded with a two-story addition on one end that contained a new main entrance. While Cherry Grove followed the same pattern of expansion, it atypically has no new primary entrance into the addition, only a secondary entrance into the basement.

Cherry Grove has fine examples of both graining and marbling. Graining, marbling, and other forms of decorative interior painting like that found in the addition at Cherry Grove became fashionable in the early nineteenth century and continued to be used for decoration into the early twentieth century, especially wood graining. Decorative interior painting can include a variety of elements such as graining, marbling, spongework, smoking, trompe l'oeil, as well as painted wall scenes. This type of decoration allowed homeowners to embellish a room or an entire house in a

¹²² Ibid., Deed Book 121, pp. 5–9, recorded Oct. 7, 1975.

¹²³ Ibid., Deed Book 138, pp. 158–160, recorded Oct. 23, 1979.

¹²⁴ Ibid., Deed Book 147, p. 402, recorded Sept. 14, 1982.

¹²⁵ Ibid., Deed Book 201, pp. 318–320, recorded July 9, 1991.

¹²⁶ Stantec Consulting Services, *An Architectural Survey of King William County*, 2014. On file at the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Richmond, Virginia.

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fashionable decor. These techniques provided the means to change plain and cheaper materials into expensive woods, fancy wallpaper, and marble. Although this type of painting allowed homeowners of lesser means to decorate their house with the latest fashion, the use of this type of painting was not restricted to middling landowners who lived in modest houses. Wealthy landowners with large houses also utilized elements to decorate the interiors of their homes.

This type of decorative painting was undertaken by both itinerant painters as well as settled painters like Daniel Rea's family in Boston who had a shop and advertised their services in local newspapers and business directories. While the Rea family moved around in Boston, they were considerably more settled than itinerant painters until Daniel T. Rea's wanderlust took him to Virginia and states farther south. Itinerant painters, on the other hand, moved around quite a bit but usually in a limited geographical area and might reside temporarily with the family for whom they were painting. They might be paid with room and board allowing such decoration to be more widely available to patrons who were not wealthy.

The names of most of the painters of these interior decorations are mostly unknown. Where the painters are known, the name may have been passed down through strong family tradition, through family papers, or through advertisements in period newspapers. Decorative painters who signed their work, as Daniel Rea did at Cherry Grove, are extremely rare. A study of decorative painting in historic buildings in North Carolina only identified two signatures and one set of initials.¹²⁷

Wood graining was by far the most popular form of decorative interior painting and its use continued well into the twentieth century. As early as 1828, an English trade publication suggested that "the very great improvement that has been made within the last ten years in the art of imitating the grain and color of various fancy woods and marbles and the facility and consequent cheapness of their formerly expensive work, has brought it into general use."¹²⁸ Doors were the most frequently grained element although it was also applied to mantels, wainscots, or other features that were typically made of wood.

Marbling wood, or painting it to resemble marble, was also a popular type of decoration and was found on elements that were frequently executed in stone. Marbling was typically applied to mantels, baseboards, wainscots, and stair risers. Wood-grained doors and marbled baseboards were a popular combination. The use of this type of decoration was typically well planned to create a cohesive appearance in the house.

No other surviving houses with decorative painting similar to that at Cherry Grove have been identified in King William or nearby Hanover County. Information on the graining or marbling of domestic interiors in King William County is limited because a 2014 countywide survey, the most recent architectural survey, did not include documentation of building interiors. Those interiors of King William houses that have been documented did not include graining or

¹²⁷ Laura A. W. Phillips, *Grand Illusions, Historic Decorative Interior Painting in North Carolina*, (Raleigh: North Carolina Office of Archives and History, 2018), 35.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, 11.

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marbling like that of Cherry Grove. Shuttlewood (NRHP 2022; 063-095), a mid-nineteenth century I-house in neighboring New Kent County, has grained doors, marbled mantels and baseboards in one room, and a variegated paint scheme in the passage. None of the decorative work at Shuttlewood is signed, as it is at Cherry Grove. By the time Shuttlewood was built, Daniel T. Rea, who painted Cherry Grove, had been gone from Virginia for about fifteen years.¹²⁹

Retention of Rea's decorative paintwork at Cherry Grove is an architecturally significant, character-defining feature of the dwelling. The style, colors, and ornamental attributes of his work are significant for their craftsmanship as well as the insight they lend to popular tastes with regard to mid-nineteenth century interior decorative features selected by families of middling means. Such elements have been well-documented in grander residences but examples of decorative paintwork in more modestly endowed houses are rarer and, therefore, offer important study potential. The social, cultural, and financial aspirations of middling families during the mid-nineteenth century are part of spectrum that extends from the colonial era to today. The *in situ* materials, along with their symbolic meanings, at Cherry Grove make the dwelling a rare, significant example of vernacular architecture enhanced by this particular artisan, Daniel T. Rea, whose work has demonstrably been shown not to exist elsewhere in Virginia. Furthermore, the dwelling's comparative value for improving understanding of middling domestic architecture, as well as the works of other artisans who specialized in paintwork, in the Virginia Tidewater is immense.

¹²⁹ Ashlen Stump and Carl Lounsbury, "Shuttlewood," DHR File No. 063-0095, National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, March 29, 2022.

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9. Major Bibliographical References

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ____ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- ____ previously listed in the National Register
- ____ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ____ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ____ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- ____ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
- ____ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- ☒ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☒ Other State agency
- ____ Federal agency
- ☒ Local government
- ____ University
- ____ Other

Name of repository: Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Richmond, Va.; Library of Virginia, Richmond, Va.; King William County Circuit Court Clerk's Office, King William, Va.

Cherry Grove
Name of Property

King William County, VA
County and State

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): 050-5115

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 1.25

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 37.733300° Longitude: -77.210477°

2. Latitude: Longitude:

3. Latitude: Longitude:

4. Latitude: Longitude:

Or

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

☐ NAD 1927 or ☐ NAD 1983

1. Zone: Easting: Northing:

2. Zone: Easting: Northing:

3. Zone: Easting: Northing:

4. Zone: Easting: Northing:

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The nominated property corresponds to tax parcel #26-69A as recorded by King William County, Virginia. The attached tax parcel map was accessed February 2, 2023. The true and correct historic boundary is shown on the tax parcel map as well as the sketch map/ photo key.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The historic boundary corresponds to the modern tax parcel on which the historic house and cemetery are located. This is the extent of the larger historic property that is currently owned by the property owner and available for listing in the National Register. Integrity of the

Cherry Grove
Name of Property

King William County, VA
County and State

acreage and any potential outlying architectural and archaeological resources historically associated with the property is unknown. All known historic resources and the dwelling's immediate setting are encompassed by the historic boundary.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Ashley Neville & John Salmon
organization: Ashley Neville, LLC
street & number: 11311 Cedar Lane
city or town: Glen Allen state: VA zip code: 23059
e-mail: ashleyneville@comcast.net
telephone: 804-307-4601
date: June 30, 2023

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: Cherry Grove

City or Vicinity: Aylett

County: King William County

State: Virginia

Photographer: Ashley Neville

Date Photographed: Photographs 4-9, 11 and 14 were taken September 2022. The remainder, 1-3,10, 12, 14-16 were taken January 2023.

Cherry Grove

Name of Property

King William County, VA

County and State

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

- Photo 1 of 16 House, view to the southeast
- Photo 2 of 16 House façade, view to the southeast
- Photo 3 of 16 House rear, view to the northeast
- Photo 4 of 16 Mantel in original house, view to the northeast
- Photo 5 of 16 Second floor of original house (steps accesses Period II addition), view to the southwest
- Photo 6 of 16 First-floor room in addition showing stair, view to the northeast
- Photo 7 of 16 Signature of painter on stair, view to the northeast
- Photo 8 of 16 Marbled mantel in first-floor room of addition, view to the southwest
- Photo 9 of 16 Grained wainscot and marbled base in first-floor room of addition, view to the southwest
- Photo 10 of 16 Grained first-floor door in addition, view to the northeast
- Photo 11 of 16 Grained second-floor door in addition, view to the southwest
- Photo 12 of 16 Mantel in second-floor bedroom of addition, view to the west
- Photo 13 of 16 Cemetery, view to the northeast
- Photo 14 of 16 Well, view to the east
- Photo 15 of 16 Noncontributing shed outbuilding, view to the southeast
- Photo 16 of 16 Noncontributing garage, view to the southeast

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.



Legend

 County Boundaries

TOPOGRAPHIC MAP

Cherry Grove

King William County, VA

DHR No. 050-5115



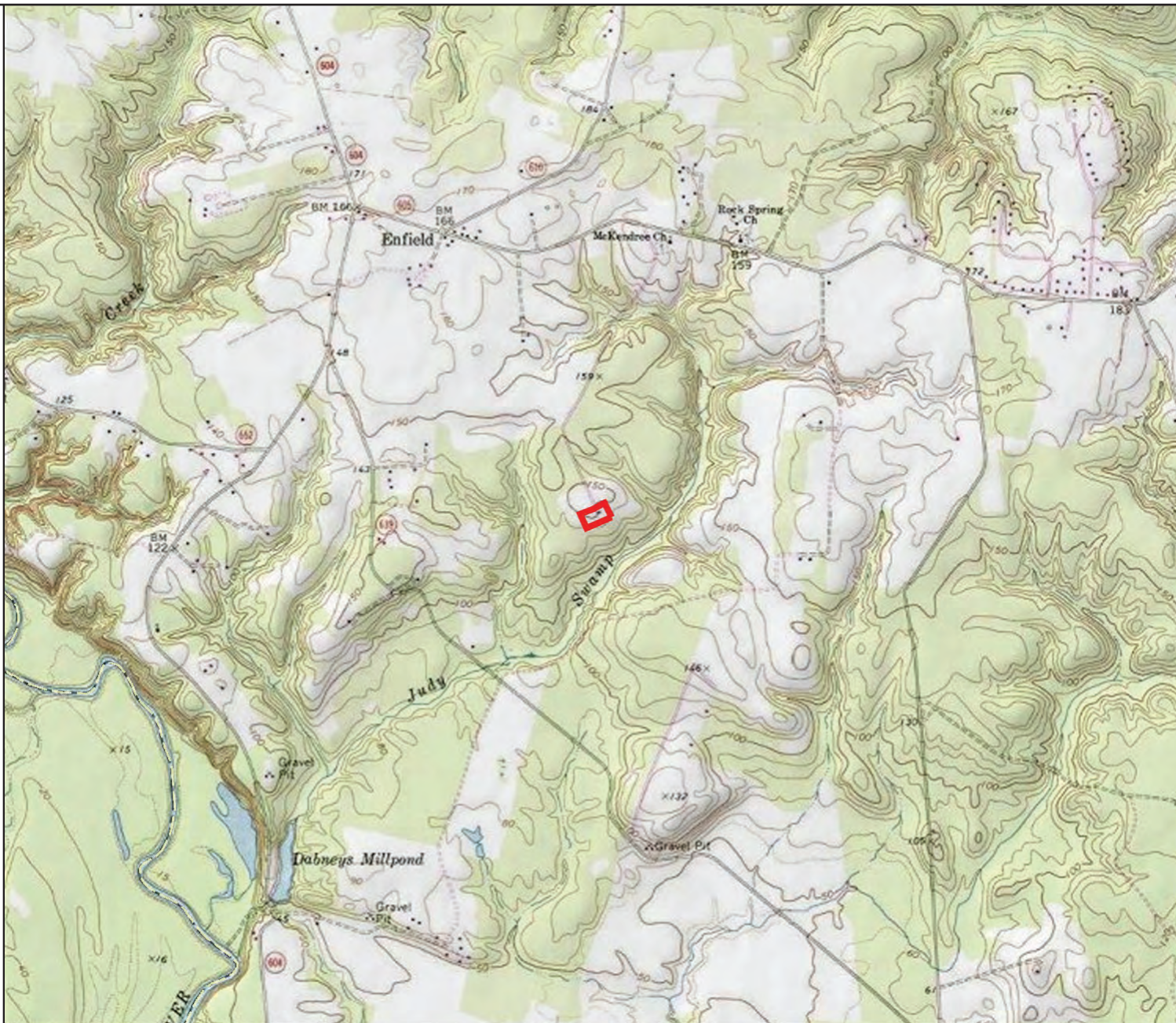
Historic Boundary



Feet

0 600 1200 1800 2400

1:36,112 / 1"=3,009 Feet



Title:

Date: 6/27/2023

DISCLAIMER: Records of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (DHR) have been gathered over many years from a variety of sources and the representation depicted is a cumulative view of field observations over time and may not reflect current ground conditions. The map is for general information purposes and is not intended for engineering, legal or other site-specific uses. Map may contain errors and is provided "as-is". More information is available in the DHR Archives located at DHR's Richmond office.

Notice if AE sites: Locations of archaeological sites may be sensitive the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), and the Archaeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA) and Code of Virginia §2.2-3705.7 (10). Release of precise locations may threaten archaeological sites and historic resources.



Legend

 County Boundaries

AERIAL VIEW - VICINITY

Cherry Grove

King William County, VA

DHR No. 050-5115



Historic Boundary



Feet

0 500 1000 1500 2000

1:18,056 / 1"=1,505 Feet



Title:

Date: 6/27/2023

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Legend

 County Boundaries

ROAD MAP

Cherry Grove

King William County, VA

DHR No. 050-5115

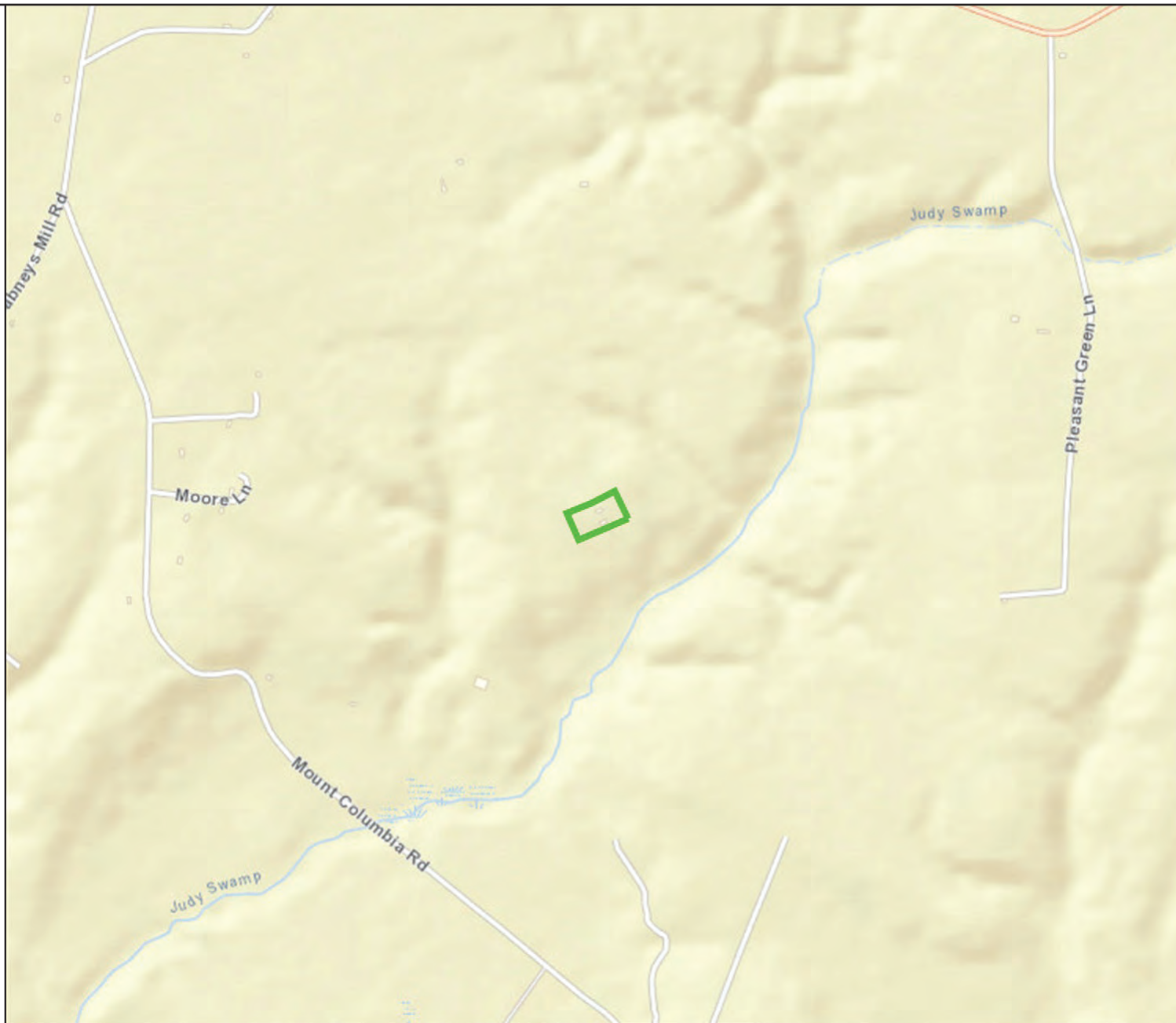
 Cherry Grove



Feet

0 500 1000 1500 2000

1:18,056 / 1"=1,505 Feet



Title:

Date: 4/28/2023

DISCLAIMER: Records of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (DHR) have been gathered over many years from a variety of sources and the representation depicted is a cumulative view of field observations over time and may not reflect current ground conditions. The map is for general information purposes and is not intended for engineering, legal or other site-specific uses. Map may contain errors and is provided "as-is". More information is available in the DHR Archives located at DHR's Richmond office.

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Legend

 County Boundaries

LOCATION MAP

Cherry Grove

King William County, VA

DHR No. 050-5115

Location Coordinates

Latitude: 37.733300°

Longitude: -77.210477°



Historic Boundary



Feet

0 50 100 150 200
1:2,257 / 1"=188 Feet

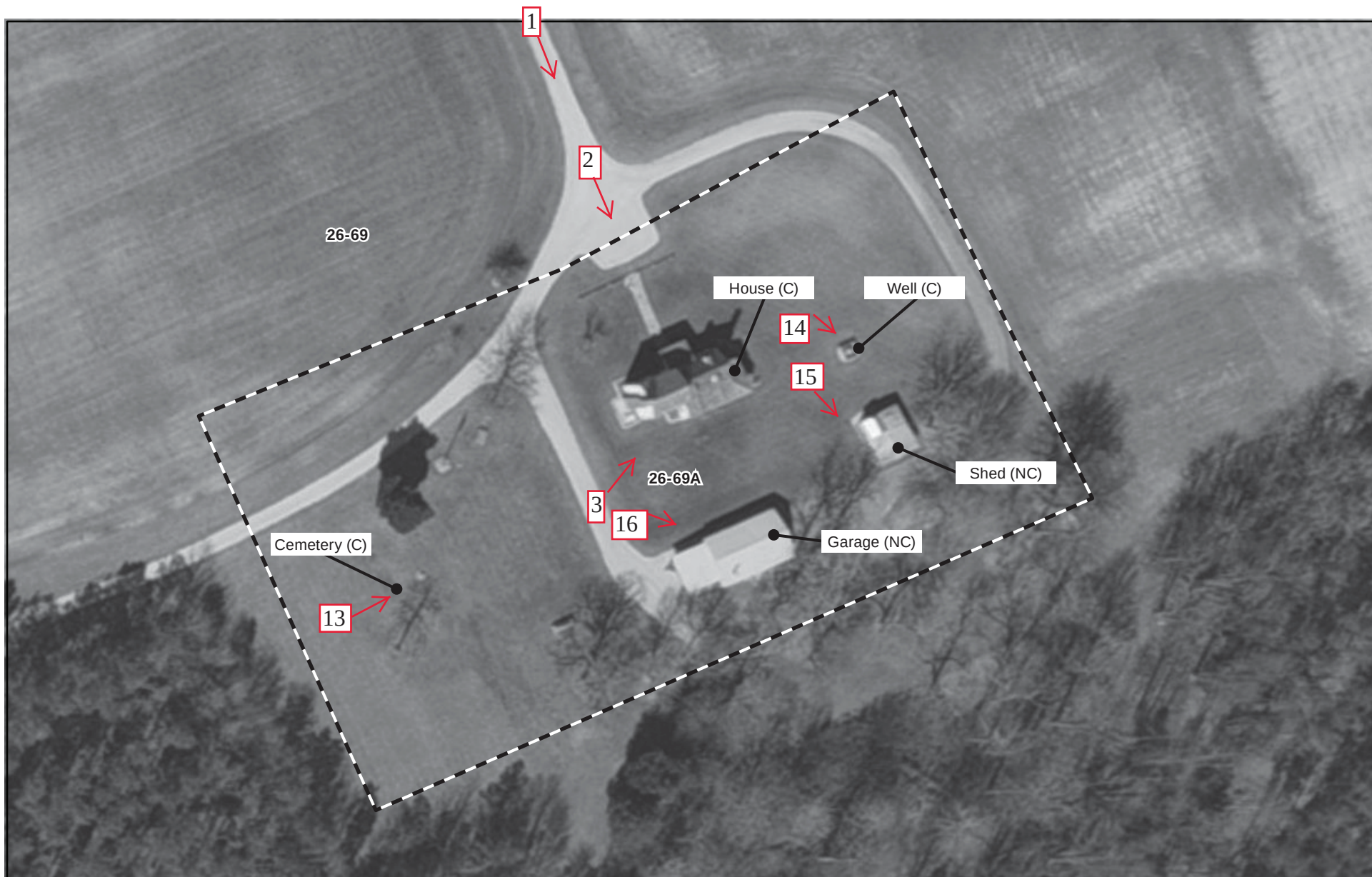


Title:

Date: 6/27/2023

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SKETCH MAP/ PHOTO KEY (exterior views)

Cherry Grove

King William County, Va.

DHR No. 050-5115

— Historic Boundary

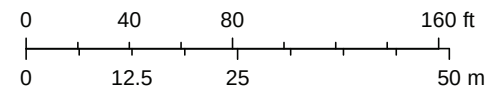
Latitude 37.733300°

Longitude -77.210477°

1 Photo Locations



1:1,128



Virginia Geographic Information Network (VGIN)



January 24, 2023

- 

Provisioning Boundary
- 

County Boundary
- 

West Point Boundary
- 

Road Centerline
- 

Historic Boundary
- 

Parcel 29-69A

