



# COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

## Department of Historic Resources

2801 Kensington Avenue, Richmond, Virginia 23221

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April 15, 2026

Alex Dandridge, Preservation Planner  
Department of Planning and Development Review  
City of Richmond  
900 E. Broad Street, Room 510  
Richmond, VA 23219

**Re: Brookbury, City of Richmond**

Dear Alex Dandridge:

The Department of Historic Resources (DHR), Virginia's historic preservation office, is planning to present the **enclosed** National Register nomination for Virginia's State Review Board and Historic Resources Board for recommendation to the National Register of Historic Places and inclusion in the Virginia Landmarks Register.

Because this resource is within your Certified Local Government, the Architectural Review Board (ARB) is entitled to a sixty-day comment period during which the ARB may review the draft nomination and relay any comments or concerns to the DHR. I hope you will consider the enclosed nomination at your next meeting and relay your comments to us. All comments will be forwarded to the SHPO Director and the Boards for consideration along with the nomination. We have scheduled the nomination for presentation to our boards on **Thursday, June 18, 2026**, and would like to receive your comments by that time in fulfillment of the comment period. This letter serves as notification initiating the sixty-day comment period and no further action will be taken on the nomination until we have received your comments, or the full sixty-day period has passed.

I look forward to receiving your comments. Should you have any further questions regarding the nomination or the register program, please contact Austin Walker, National Register Program Manager, at (804) 482-6439 or [austin.walker@dhr.virginia.gov](mailto:austin.walker@dhr.virginia.gov).

Sincerely,

Jolene L. U. Smith  
Director, Division of Resource Information & Register

cc: Mayor Danny Avula; Odie Donald II

Enclosure

Western Region Office  
962 Kime Lane  
Salem, VA 24153  
Tel: (540) 387-5443  
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Northern Region Office  
5357 Main Street  
PO Box 519  
Stephens City, VA 22655  
Tel: (540) 868-7029  
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Eastern Region Office  
2801 Kensington Avenue  
Richmond, VA 23221  
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## **Brookbury, City of Richmond, DHR File No. 127-0302**

The residential complex known today as Brookbury encompasses 8.28 acres at the center of what was once a large antebellum farm in Chesterfield County. Currently nestled within a mid-20<sup>th</sup> century suburban development at the southern fringe of the City of Richmond, the property retains its historic pastoral setting with an antebellum dwelling and a domestic yard surrounded by open pastures with a wooded perimeter, accessed by a long tree- and fence-lined driveway. The oldest built resources likely date to ca. 1811 and include a two-story, central-passage, Federal-style, brick dwelling with high-style, Classical Revival additions that complement the unaltered core of the dwelling. Additionally, a timber-framed domestic outbuilding that once served as a slave quarter is located near the dwelling. Extant 20<sup>th</sup> century resources on the property include a cistern, gazebo, playhouse, garage, in-ground pool, flagpole, lamppost, and carriage mounting steps, as well as natural landscape features.

Brookbury was likely built for Manchester attorney Samuel Taylor (1781–1853) and his second wife, Emily Fowler Taylor (1785–1882), shortly after their marriage in 1811. Despite several additions, the building's core retains many original architectural elements such as its single-pile, center-passage plan, fenestration, and interior trim. The additions feature complementary Classical Revival-style elements and materials, which exemplify the plantation property's transition to a seasonal home utilized for entertainment and recreation by a prosperous family at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Brookbury is locally significant under Criterion C in the area of Architecture as well as Criterion A in the area of African American Ethnic Heritage for its association with important events and trends in Chesterfield County's history pertaining to the lives of African Americans throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Both the Federal style dwelling and associated quarters at Brookbury are rare surviving examples of their form and construction from the antebellum period of former Chesterfield County and the Richmond area as a whole. The Classical Revival additions and alterations to the dwelling, designed by Henry Baskervill and completed between 1918 and 1923, likewise embody significant architectural trends of the period. The property's period of significance begins in 1811 with the construction of the historic core of the main dwelling and extends to 1923, capturing the historic evolution of the house as well as the construction of the quarters building and the period in which enslavement occurred on the former plantation.



## The National and State Registers in Virginia

### A Quick Guide to the National Register of Historic Places and Virginia Landmarks Register

- Established under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the **National Register of Historic Places** is the Nation's official list of historic properties worthy of preservation, administered by the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior. Properties listed in the National Register include districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that are significant in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture.

In 1966, the Virginia General Assembly established the Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission, now the Department of Historic Resources. DHR is the State Historic Preservation Office responsible for nominating properties to the National Register and managing the **Virginia Landmarks Register**, the State's official list of properties important to Virginia's history. The same evaluation criteria and nomination form are used for the National Register of Historic Places and the Virginia Landmarks Register.

#### ■ **Key Points**

- Listing in the National and State Registers is **honorary**. It recognizes a historic property's importance to its community, the State, and/or the Nation and encourages good stewardship.
- National and State Register listings **do not** place any obligations or restrictions on private property owners. Owners remain free to do what they wish with their property within existing laws and regulations and are not required to restore or maintain a property in particular ways as a result of listing.
- To ensure public participation in the process, property owners and local officials are notified and given the opportunity to comment on proposed nominations. When a nomination is submitted to the National Park Service, another public comment period is published in the Federal Register.

#### ■ **Benefits of Register Listing**

- Owners of listed properties may qualify for Federal and State Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credits, historic preservation easements, and Federal and State grants for historic preservation when funding is available.
- Federal agencies whose projects affect a listed property must give the Department of Historic Resources an opportunity to comment on the project and its effects on the property.

#### ■ **Additional Information**

DHR Historic Registers Program:  
<https://www.dhr.virginia.gov/programs/historic-registers/>

VLR Online, an online database of State and National Register listings in Virginia:  
<https://www.dhr.virginia.gov/historic-registers/>



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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

### 1. Name of Property

Historic name: Brookbury

Other names/site number: Brookberry Farm; DHR ID# 127-0302

Name of related multiple property listing:  
N/A

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

### 2. Location

Street & number: 5216 Beddington Road

City or town: Richmond State: VA County: Independent City

Not For Publication:  N/A Vicinity:  N/A

### 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  local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

A  B  C  D

<p>_____  <b>Signature of certifying official/Title:</b>  <u>Virginia Department of Historic Resources</u>  <b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b></p>	<p>_____  <b>Date</b></p>
--	-------------------------------

<p>In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.</p>	
<p>_____  <b>Signature of commenting official:</b>    <b>Title :</b></p>	<p>_____  <b>Date</b>    <b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b></p>

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**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	structures
<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	objects
<u>6</u>	<u>4</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

DOMESTIC: Secondary Structure

AGRICULTURAL/SUBSISTENCE: Agricultural Outbuilding

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

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC: Single Dwelling

DOMESTIC: Secondary Structure

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

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## Narrative Description

### *Setting*

The main house faces north and is surrounded by a generally flat manicured lawn dotted with mature trees. The foundation of the primary dwelling is lined with overgrown shrubbery and plantings, while outbuildings are tucked into wooded areas or bamboo overgrowth. The main house is accessed via a paved circular driveway leading south from Beddington Road, as well as a service entrance from the east on Naptonic Lane. The primary entry drive is lined by a post-and-plank wood fence.

### *Main Dwelling: Exterior Description*

The original two-story, Federal-style house has a symmetrical façade that is five bays wide with a central entrance to a center-passage plan (Photo 1). The brick foundation with a raised basement is laid in Flemish bond and supports a frame structural system that is covered by a moderately pitched, side-gabled roof with plain boxed eaves. The roof is sheathed in standing-seam metal. Exterior-end brick chimneys are centered on the west and east (side) elevations and feature stepped shoulders at the transition from the second story to the attic space and S-shaped iron tie rods.



*Photo 1: Brookbury, North Elevation (Gordineer 2024).*

The primary entrance is on the north (primary) elevation and is filled with a double-leaf paneled wood door. Each leaf has three raised panels and brass knockers. Above the door is a transom with a double row of eight small rectangular panes. A simple wood door surround is adorned by molding surrounds with bullseye corner blocks. The windows on the first story are nine-over-nine, wood-framed, double-hung sash units while those on the second story are six-over-nine and set close to the roof eave, a common feature of the Georgian and Federal styles (McAlester 2018:201–232). All windows feature simple wood surrounds with wide wood sills while windows on the primary

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***Main Dwelling: Interior Description***

The interior of the core of the house features a center-hall, single-pile plan with a large room to the east and west of the hall measuring approximately 18 by 20 feet. The primary entrance is under the stair landing that provides access to the second floor. The U-shaped, open string staircase terminates at the south end of the hallway toward the 1923 rear addition. The entrance to the rear addition may have formerly been used as the original entrance to the house as it faces Falling Creek and is filled with a double-leaf, paneled wood door topped with an eight-light wood-framed transom similar to that in the primary entrance (Photo 2). Flooring throughout the house is wood, with thick hardwood flooring in the circa-1811 portion; thinner wood board set perpendicular to the original core can be found in the later additions (Photo 3). Evidence of “gauged” floorboards is visible within the basement, a technique utilized to ensure level flooring popular prior to the establishment of sawmills in the early to mid-1800s that were able to create dimensional lumber (Photo 4, p. 8) (Graham 2013:327–328). Doors are paneled wood of varying types. Interior trim in the core features channeled wood molding with bullseye corner blocks. On the first story, chair rails are featured with paneling below and plaster walls above.

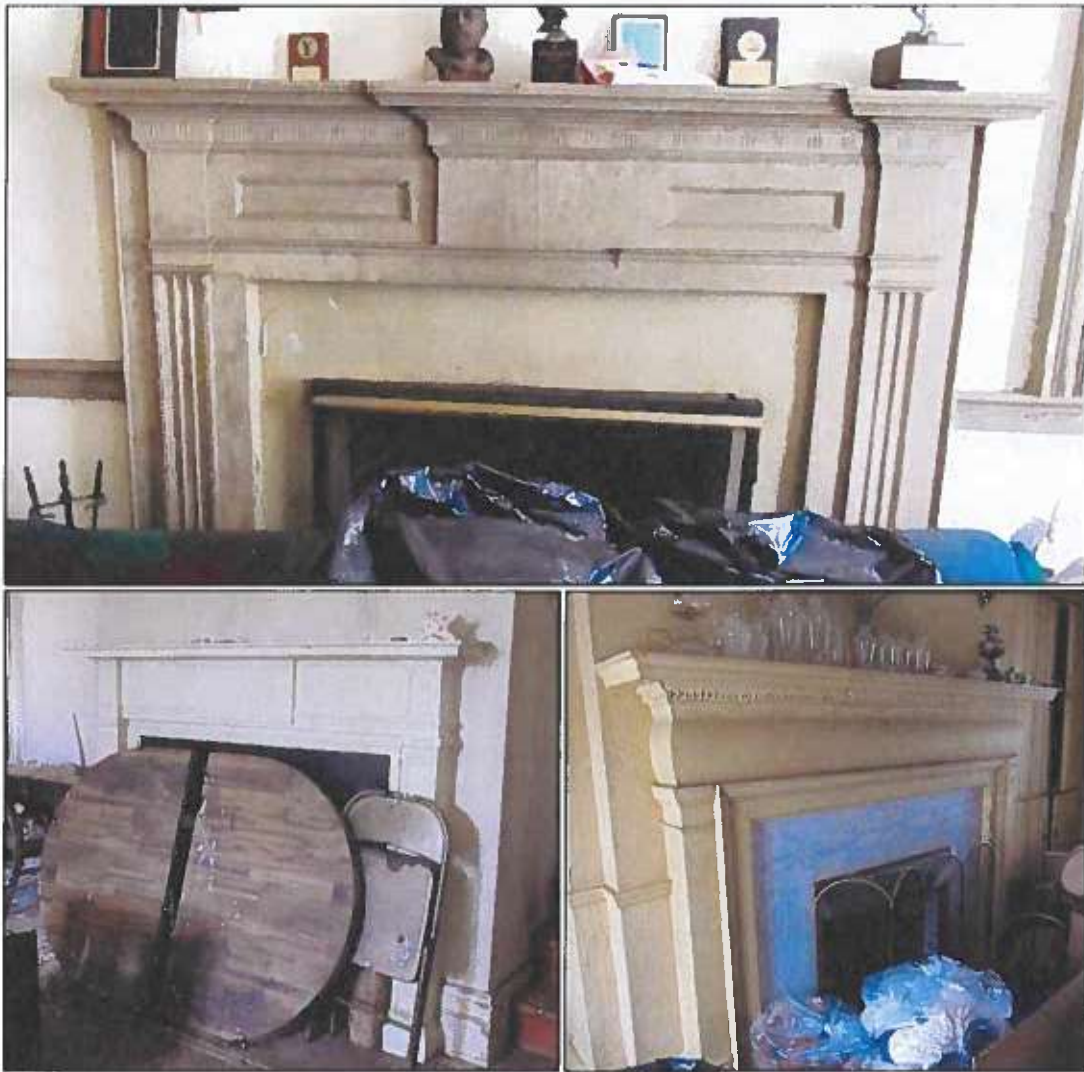


*Photo 2: (Left) View of Double-leaf, Paneled Doors (Wagner and McDonald 2020).  
Photo 3: (Right) Flooring Between Circa-1811 Portion and Circa-1923 Addition (Gordineer 2024).*

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windows symmetrically placed between the porch on the primary elevation and the corners of the house. These windows are mirrored on the south elevation. The window at the southwest corner was changed into a doorway for the mid-nineteenth-century and 1923 additions.



*Photo 5: (Top) Fireplace Mantle in the Study.*

*Photo 6: (Lower Right) East Parlor.*

*Photo 7: (Lower Left) Dining Room (Gordineer 2024).*

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The west section measures 12 by 14 feet (168 square feet) and was likely constructed pre-1850. Similar to the east section, it is constructed on a stone pier foundation with no visible mortar present that supports a heavy-timber-frame structural system with mortise and tenon studs and diagonal down bracing. Cut nails with indiscernible heads and wire nails were visible in the framing. The west section is clad in thick wood board butted. The side-gabled roof sheathed in v-crimp metal matches the pitch of the east building. A centrally located board-and-batten door secured by iron strap hinges with spade-shaped tips is on the north elevation. Imagery from the 2020 DHR survey revealed an exposed structural and roofing system; there is some evidence at the southeast corner, though, that the structural system was once covered in the same wood plank siding at the interior as the exterior (Wagner and McDonald 2020). The roof system reveals thick wood boards spaced apart and reveals evidence of whitewash (Sanford 2025). The northwest corner of the building reveals a mortise-and-tenon, large timber down brace; however, the matching down brace is missing as there is an empty mortise-and-tenon socket (Sanford 2025). The open space features wood flooring and wood shelving that was cut into the framing members east of the door on the north wall. The brick fireplace using an iron lintel on the east wall has been cut into the bottom 10 rows of the base of the chimney from the east portion and has been patched with cementitious mortar over the years. It features a simple wood mantel shelf supported by wood brackets set high above the fireplace opening (Photo 14, p. 12). The door and some structural members show evidence of heat exposure.



*Photo 10: (Left) 2024 View of Extant Quarter, Looking South (Gordineer 2024).*

*Photo 11: (Right) 2020 View, Looking South (Wagner and McDonald 2020).*

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Early Twentieth-Century Gazebo (Contributing)

An octagonal, open-air gazebo shelter historically referred to as “the tearoom” was built in the first decade of the twentieth century (Photo 15). The gazebo is marked by eight angular concrete posts supporting a framed, low-pitched, asphalt-shingle roof. This structure is in the grassy median created by the circular driveway, just west of the main dwelling.



*Photo 15: Early Twentieth-Century Gazebo/Tearoom, Looking North (Gordineer 2024).*

Early-Twentieth Century Playhouse (Contributing)

A rectangular one-room playhouse is situated southwest of the main dwelling and was built in the first quarter of the twentieth century. Written histories also refer to this building as the “red house,” as it was painted red at some point in time, although it was most recently painted white. This one-story, one-bay, frame building sits more than 6 inches above the ground on a mortared, brick-pier foundation. It is clad in lapped weatherboard siding and sawn cornerboards and topped by a gabled roof sheathed in crimped metal sheeting with exposed rafter tails and overhanging eaves along the east and west elevations. A single-leaf, four-paneled, wood door is centered on the east elevation and provides sole access to the playhouse. The west and south elevations feature six-over-six, double-hung-sash, wood-framed windows. On the south elevation, a small circular vent indicates that the playhouse was once heated by a small wood stove.

Pre-1946 Cistern (Non-contributing)

A brick cistern is southwest of the house and west of the former quarter. It was constructed pre-1946 in stretcher-bonded brick. It previously featured a metal structure above it, but the metal structure has been overtaken by bamboo and is no longer extant.

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of the house, the diet of the residents, the financial status of the home, their buying habits of food and drink but also of ceramics and other cooking and serving vessels.

- Areas around the main house also have potential to inform us about the dates and methods of construction for each of the sections of the house. It may be possible through archaeology to answer questions about the earliest construction date of the first house at Brookbury Farm” (Portor 2020).

In addition to the archaeological studies performed on the extant quarter, the former presence of a row of additional quarters provides further archaeological potential. A review of aerial imagery and historic data suggests that this area has not been disturbed since the quarters were removed, and the potential to explore the archaeological deposits from a series of quarters is unique.

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**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ETHNIC HERITAGE: African American  
ARCHITECTURE

**Period of Significance**

ca. 1811-1865 (Criterion A)

ca. 1811-1923 (Criterion C)

**Significant Dates**

ca. 1811

1918

1923

**Significant Person**

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

**Cultural Affiliation**

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

**Architect/Builder**

Henry Baskervill

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

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courthouse was relocated from Williamsburg to Richmond in 1752 due to the belief that it was a safer location (Manarin and Dowdey 1984). Tobacco was well established as the cash crop during this time, but during the Revolutionary War, Virginia planters were cut off from their tobacco markets, destabilizing their economy. After the Revolution established American independence, the agricultural reform movement, and the demand for food in larger Eastern cities, farmers in Chesterfield and the rest of Virginia began cultivating corn, oats, and wheat in addition to tobacco, and rearing livestock such as cows, sheep, and pigs (O'Dell 1983:x; Salmon and Salmon 2025). Enslaved labor was used to cultivate crops in Chesterfield County and Virginia since the early 1600s and an assemblage of domestic, farm, and service buildings as well as housing were necessary for the successful operation of the plantations that populated the landscape. Chesterfield benefited from its vast forests, providing cheap and convenient timber for building and heating (O'Dell 1983:x, xii).

During the eighteenth century, settlement was concentrated along the major rivers and creeks and continued to be the most prized land among elite planters for the fertile soils and access to waterways (O'Dell 1983:xi). As the county's population grew throughout the eighteenth century, Chesterfield's landscape reflected an overall rural settlement pattern of dispersed domestic and commercial farmsteads interspersed with forests, and by the end of the century, the entire county was subdivided through large land patents and grants. Although small village centers were created featuring clusters of homes and businesses, Chesterfield remained rural countryside with large landowners who used the open areas for farming between the cities of Richmond and Petersburg during the antebellum period (Foster 1996). Access to interior lands was aided by the development of new transportation networks outside of those focused on the water, such as Midlothian Turnpike completed in 1802 and the construction of the Chesterfield railroad in 1831 (University of Virginia 2008). As the nineteenth century progressed—bringing the abolishment of slavery, introduction of larger commercial enterprises, and employment opportunities in cities—larger plantations were subdivided into small- or medium-sized farms (O'Dell 1983:x–xi). The larger property known as Falling Creek, in which Brookbury was derived, reflects the early colonial period trends in wealthy landownership of substantial plantations in desired fertile locations along waterways within the county. As Brookbury is subdivided and changes hands throughout the nineteenth century, it emulates this shift from vast plantation estate to medium-scale farm of the postbellum period.

### ***The Development of Brookbury***

Brookbury was constructed on land that was once part of a larger property known as Falling Creek owned by Abram Salle (also seen as Abraham, Sallee, Salley, Sally, or Sallé) (circa 1736–1796), a Revolutionary War veteran (Hoar 1976; Porter 2020). Family lore from a later owner (the Bemiss family) indicated that an Englishman with the surname of Brookbury owned the property and is said to have constructed the core of the primary dwelling prior to the American Revolution, although it maybe have been as early as 1752 according to some records; however, he was said to have been in sympathy with the British and returned to England prior to the war (Crump n.d.; Hoar 1976). In Jeffery O'Dell's 1983 book *Chesterfield County: Early Architecture and Historic Sites*, Salle is noted to have assembled a 1,500-acre tract on the south side of the James River between 1760 and 1763. Salle was the likely original owner of another larger plantation called Salisbury

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The Taylors sold the approximately 357-acre Brookbury property to Povall Turner (1802–1860s) in May 1846 for \$4,000, but it was incorrectly described in that deed necessitating the production of an updated deed in 1851 (CCCC 1851:DB 39:380). Turner and his wife may have lived briefly at Brookbury but also purchased surrounding tracts, including Elizabeth Fowler Hatcher's portion of her grandfather's estate (CCCC 1851:DB 39:380). Povall Turner married Lucinda Alvis in 1822 and together they had six children, born between 1826 and 1840 (FamilySearch n.d.; Weisiger III 1981). Although it is unclear where in Chesterfield County they were living, Povall and his family were noted as living in an unstated district in the county near the Winfree, Brooking, and Alvis families in the 1830 federal population census prior to purchasing the Brookbury property (U.S. Census 1830). He continued to be recorded in census records in Chesterfield County's Lower District in the 1840 and 1850 census records where he owned 350 acres of improved land and 1,750 acres of unimproved land (U.S. Census 1840, 1850; U.S. Census Agricultural Schedule 1850). In the 1850 census agricultural schedule, Povall's farm is valued at \$10,000 which is slightly less than his neighbors; however, he leads in farm technology with machinery valued at \$1,000 (U.S. Census Agricultural Schedule 1850). After selling the property in Chesterfield County in 1852, where the record states that Povall is residing on the Brookbury property, Povall Turner was living in New Kent County in the early 1860s prior to his death (CCCC 1852:DB 40:266; U.S. Census 1860).

### ***Slavery at Brookbury During the Early to Mid-Nineteenth Century***

It is clear from the archival record that from the beginnings of Brookbury, housing was needed for the persons being held in bondage by various property owners. Although unclear if Abram Salle ever lived on the Brookbury property and in the place of the current Brookbury house, Salle was recorded to own at least 70 enslaved persons in 1786, which was at least three times above the average of his Chesterfield neighbors (CCCR 1786–1811). Beginning in 1811, Samuel Taylor was taxed for one White male, likely an indentured servant, and two enslaved persons (CCCR 1876–1811). After obtaining the Brookbury property, Taylor was taxed for one White male, eight enslaved persons, and two horses (CCCR 1812–1826). Along with Samuel Taylor's wife and children, 17 enslaved people were noted in the 1820 federal population census as occupants at the Taylor's Chesterfield County property (U.S. Census 1820). They included four males under the age of 14, three males between the ages of 14 and 25, and one male over the age of 45, as well as six females under the age of 14, one female between 14 and 25 years of age, and two females over 45 years of age. By the 1830 census, Samuel Taylor owned 20 enslaved persons including eight males and 12 females (U.S. Census 1830). Taylor's ownership decreased by the 1840 federal population census, as he was recorded in the Upper District of the county with one enslaved female between the ages of 10 and 24; however, a John Taylor is listed as the next entry noting 20 enslaved persons, but the relation is unknown at this time (U.S. Census 1840).

Although records do not clearly indicate that Povall Turner occupied Brookbury, during his time in Chesterfield County and ownership of the Brookbury property, he was recorded as owning up to 29 enslaved persons. In the 1830 population census, Povall was noted to own eight enslaved persons, inclusive of three males and five females (U.S. Census 1830). In 1840, Povall was recorded in the Lower District of the county with his family that included an additional adult male,

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Similar to other enslavers, David was known to father several children with his enslaved women. Eliza Ann, born August 9, 1853, was born an enslaved person with her father being noted as David C. Winfree and mother, Judith (Virginia Birth Registers 1853). In another case, Emily Winfree, who was born in approximately 1834 to John W. Scott and Emily Jones, was originally “enslaved in the household of Jordan Branch,” a brother-in-law to David C. Winfree by his sister Lucy Ann and lawyer and the powerful sheriff of Petersburg, Virginia (Meck and Refo 2021; Virginia Department of Health 1919). Emily was sold from the Branch estate after Jordan’s death in 1858 (FamilySearch 2013; Meck and Refo 2021). Emily and her daughter, Mariah, were sold to A.B. Hutchinson, but by 1860, they both came under the ownership of David C. Winfree (Meck and Refo 2019). In June 1864, David Winfree joined the 1st Regiment Virginia Reserves to defend the Confederacy in Richmond and by the end of that year, he was diagnosed with “syphilitic rheumatism” (Virginia Museum of History and Culture n.d.). With the diagnosis, David auctioned his Chesterfield farm property and purchased or subdivided a 109.5-acre parcel for Emily and had a cottage constructed in 1866 (Meck and Refo 2019). He also assigned a trustee by the name of A.A. Allen to help Emily financially before his death on March 20, 1867 (Meck and Refo 2019).

By 1870, Emily had her own residence where she looked after her six children: Maria, Elizabeth, Walter, James, Henry, and Clifford (U.S. Census 1870). James, Clifford, and Walter each have David C. Winfree listed as their father on their death certificates (Virginia Department of Health 1936, 1937, 1946). Emily worked a variety of jobs including domestic servant and laundress (Hill Directory Company 1907; U.S. Census 1870). By the early 1900s, she had moved from Manchester to 1515 Stockton Street, and she died in 1919 (Hill Directory Company 1907; Mander 2009).

### ***Brookbury During the Postbellum Period***

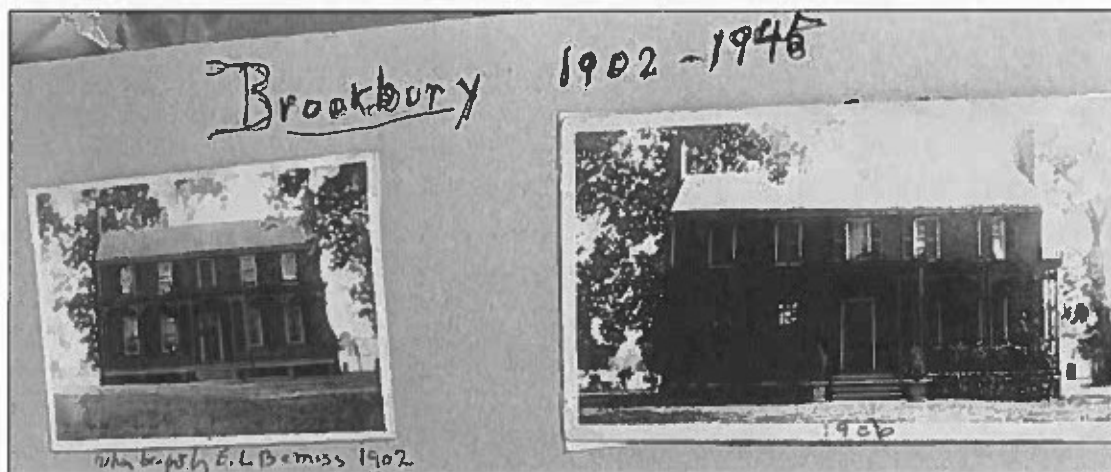
In 1866, George N. Wilson (1816–1901) purchased 200 acres from David C. Winfree after he listed it for auction (CCCC 1866:DB 48:63; Virginia Death Registers 1853–1911). Initially, “the residence, with 200 acres” was intended to be rented (The Richmond Times 1865:8). However, a later advertisement for the auction stated that David was selling a total of 548.5 acres inclusive of a grist and sawmill, 15,000 feet of 1 inch wood plank, as well as an “excellent brick dwelling, with four rooms above the basement, and all necessary out-houses, and a large icehouse filled with ice” (Richmond Dispatch 1865:4). After selling the plantation, David opened an apothecary at the corner of First and Byrd streets in the City of Richmond where he stocked “fresh drugs and medicines,” a soda foundation, and a “stock of good and useful fancy articles” such as combs and perfumery prior to his death in 1867 (The Richmond Times 1866:3, 1867:3).

George Wilson was born in Chesterfield County around 1816 and married Hypatia Allen on June 29, 1837 (Dodd et al. 1740–1850). They had ten children born between 1841 and 1859 (Dean n.d.). On February 6, 1869, Hypatia died. Soon after, George married Mary Ellen Watkins (1837–1932) of Powhatan County, Virginia and they had six children (Dean n.d.). George worked as a tinner, as well as a lawyer, and owned \$8,000 in real property and \$1,000 in personal property (Daily Dispatch 1867:2; U.S. Census 1870). It is during the Wilson family ownership that the property is

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constructed (Photo 17, p. 26). A wing was added to the east by Eli Bemiss to change the house from an I-house to an L-shape plan around 1918; the new wing included a dining room, pantry, and kitchen (Hoar 1976). This wing featured four bedrooms and two long verandas, as the Bemisses called them (Hoar 1988). A second larger wing was added to the southwest corner of the 1811 building in 1923 after their Grace Street house was sold and “as World War I came to an end and included a bigger dining room, a pantry, and a big kitchen,” changing the house to the U-shaped plan that is observed today (Hoar 1988). The old dining room was converted into a library and the old kitchen into a first-floor bedroom (Hoar 1976). Central heat and electricity were added at this time as well (Hoar 1976). There may have been an addition in this location pre-1923 as the west elevation of this addition was recessed further than the present-day addition and featured an entrance at the southwest corner of the house that creased a triangular shaped porch with a screened door and a window. Evidence of this earlier addition is visible in what is currently used as the kitchen where a load bearing wall has been boxed in. This beam runs north toward the core and encloses what is used as the dining room creating a separate hallway where the 1923 entrance within the Classical Revival addition is now located.



*Photo 16: 1902 and 1906 Images of Brookbury Showing Victorian-Era Porch (Porter 2020).*

The Bemisses made several more additions and alterations to the property (Figure 1, p. 27). In addition to the main house, additional outbuildings including a playhouse, the boy’s cottage, a barn, tennis courts, and the tearoom were constructed, of which only the playhouse and tearoom remain within the current property boundaries (Hoar 1976). Buildings that were extant during the Bemiss family ownership include a servants or slave quarters, a dairy, a laundry, a dwelling for Paige, a dwelling for John Veneable, a Red House, and a smoke house (Figure 2, p. 28) (Hoar 1988). Imagery from 1968 shows a row or street of outbuildings, all of which were housing for the enslaved Blacks during the antebellum period. They located southwest of the main house with inconsistent and relatively close spacing, indicating ad hoc construction of this alignment rather than a single building campaign (Sanford 2025).

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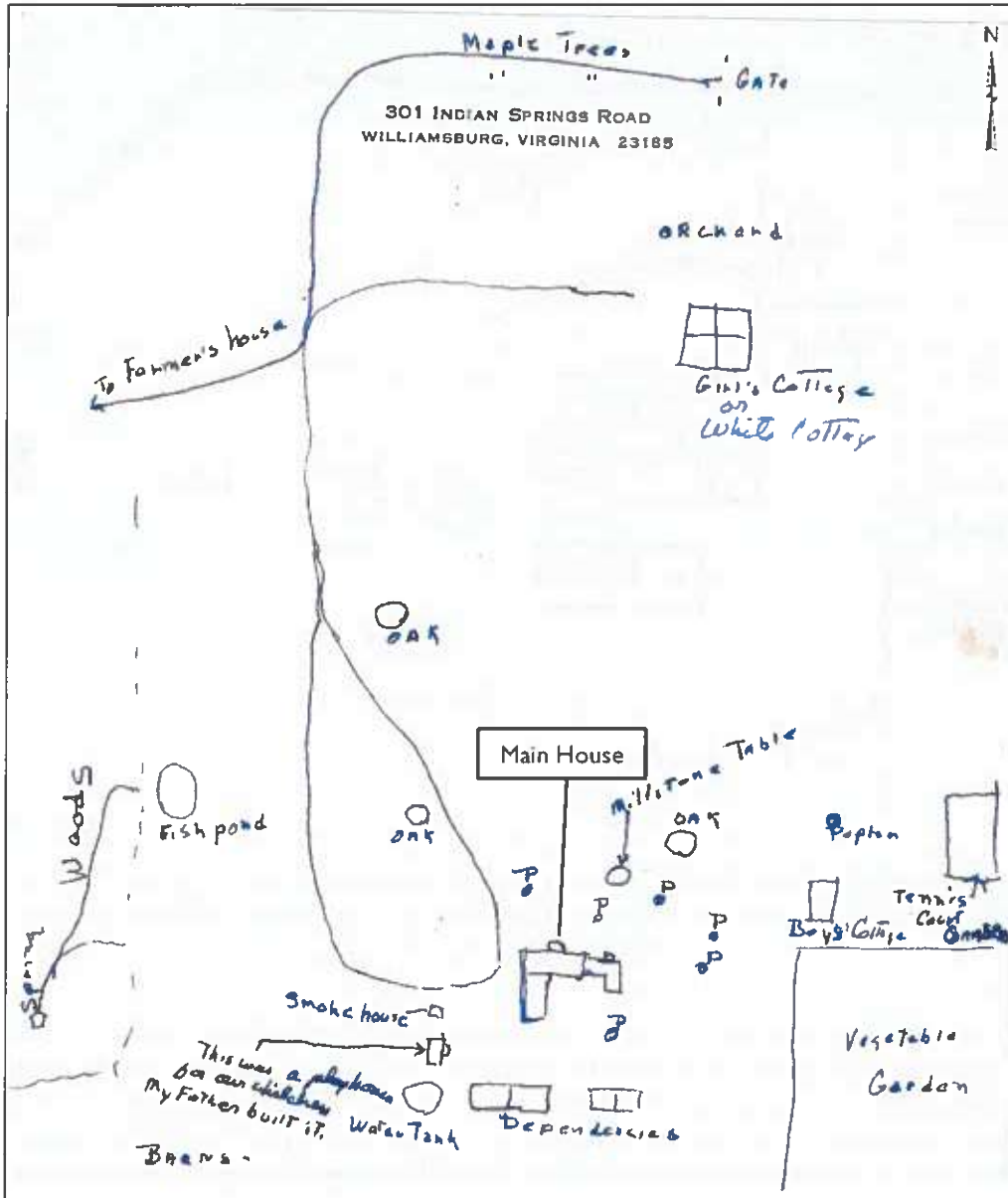


Figure 1: Sketch of Plan of Brookbury as Presented in a Letter from Maria Bemiss Hoar to the Sheffields in 1976 (Hoar 1976). Not to scale. The "Main House" caption was added as part of this nomination document for clarity.

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*Photo 18: (Upper) 1968 Image of the Row of Slave Quarters with Extant Quarters at Right, Looking South.*

*Photo 19: (Lower) Southwest (Luck 1968).*

Eli Bemiss died in 1924, but his wife continued to live at Brookbury as her primary residence while the children and extended family continued to use the house as a second home until 1946 (Hill Directory Co., Inc. 1934:178–179; Porter 2020). Occasionally referred to as Brookbury or Brookbury Farm in newspapers starting around this time, Cyane was noted to reside with her children, a 60-year-old Black servant named Charles Page (also seen as Paige), and a 38-year-old Black cook named Emma Armstead (U.S. Census 1930). Robert D. Ross, a 70-year-old farm manager also noted to be living with the family, had been employed by the Bemiss family since at least 1910 (U.S. Census 1910, 1930). During this period, a survey was conducted of the Bemiss property and indicated it totaled approximately 180 acres bounded by Biggs, Mayes, and Schapp (Figure 3, p. 30) (F.M.B. 1937). Prior to Cyane Bemiss' death in 1952, C.E. Copley purchased three tracts, the first of which included Brookbury, in 1946 (CCCC 1946:DB 296:273; Dowling 2012). It is likely right before this sale that one original mantel was removed and is now at Brookberry Farm in Lewisville, North Carolina, as the house was built in 1950 by Elizabeth Gray, the niece of Eli Lockhart Bemiss (Fearnbach 2021). Between 1954 and 1976, Brookbury was

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### *Sheffield Occupation and Accomplishments*

Born in Arkansas during the Great Depression, Judge Sheffield worked his way through college and post graduate institutions. He earned a bachelor's degree in political science at the University of Illinois in 1955 with one year completed at Texas College with a football scholarship. After starting law school at the University of Illinois, he enlisted in the military and became a Sergeant in the Air Force (Rosenfield 1980). He married Patricia Henrietta Allen on December 22, 1956, in Richmond (Virginia Department of Health 1956). After the Air Force, he completed his law degree at Howard University, where he became close friends with Douglas L. Wilder, the first popularly elected governor in the United States (Rosenfield 1980).

During law school, Sheffield worked for the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights as a law clerk for Spottswood Robinson, who was the Dean of Howard Law School, a U.S. District Court Judge, and Judge of the U.S. Court of Appeals and gained invaluable experience in civil rights defense (Rosenfield 1980). Sheffield also taught law at Howard University, the University of Virginia, and University of Richmond (Smithfield Times 1976; Suffolk News-Herald 1974a). Additionally, he was state president of the Old Dominion Bar Association, a member of the Board of Visitors at Virginia Commonwealth University, a member of the Board of Directors of the Boy Scouts of America, a member of the American Civil Liberties Union, and a 32nd degree Mason (Richmond Times-Dispatch 1974a:18; Smithfield Times 1976). In 1964, he started practicing law, and his office building was in the Jackson Ward Historic District at 14 ½ W. Leigh Street (Rosenfield 1980). As a trial attorney, he worked in the Civil Rights division of the U.S. Justice Department (Smithfield Times 1976).

“In 1974, the Virginia State Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights issued a report, *Judicial Selection in Virginia: the Absence of Black Judges*, which drew attention to the fact that there were no women or minorities among Virginia's 335 full-time district and circuit court judges” (Virginia Appellate Court History n.d.). Judge Sheffield was appointed to the Virginia Circuit Court by Governor Mills E. Goldwin and sworn in on November 1, 1974, to fill the seat of former Judge A. Christian Compton, who had become a member of the State Supreme Court (Suffolk News-Herald 1974b; VUU Informer 1974). At least one other full-time Black judge was elected just prior to Judge Sheffield on January 30, 1974: Judge Willard H. Douglas Jr. (City of Richmond n.d.). Roland J. “Duke” Ealey and Oliver Hill were two African American lawyers who persuaded Governor Goldwin to nominate Sheffield to the court (Lazarus 2023; Wallenstein 2004). In the same year, Sheffield was asked to lead two legal programs at Virginia Union University with one focusing on training legal assistants and secretaries (Richmond Times-Dispatch 1974b:1). He supervised seven other judges.

In 1978, Judge Sheffield submitted his resignation from his position of Richmond Circuit Court judge under Governor John N. Dalton, but his resignation was not effective until 1984 (Richmond Times-Dispatch 1984; Suffolk News-Herald 1978). The following year, Sheffield was considered for Judge of the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia under President Jimmy Carter's administration, as attention surrounded his work with Civil Rights groups (Suffolk News-Herald 1979a; Suffolk News-Herald 1979b). In December 1979, Sheffield secured the nomination for federal judgeship (Suffolk News-Herald 1979c); however, Sheffield was never confirmed for

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and 1900s (Visser 1997:24–25). Also of note is that it was common to reuse nails, particularly in outbuildings (Visser 1997:24). Additionally, the quarters were historically part of a row or street of enslaved housing, or dependencies, previously recorded in 1968, for a total of at least four (Hoar 1976, 1988; Porter 2020). Although traditionally spaced further apart, analysis by Dr. Douglas W. Sanford, a historic archaeologist who began the Virginia Slave Housing Project with Dr. Dennis Pogue, revealed that the orientation, alignment, and spacing of the quarters as visible in the 1968 imagery indicates ad hoc or multiple building campaigns rather than one planned approach (Sanford 2025). One of the demolished buildings was covered by a side-gabled roof and featured a three-bay porch. Between the early twentieth century and 1960, the extant buildings were utilized as housing for servants, and interiors were only slightly modified. The demolished buildings were used as a dairy and laundry during the twentieth century as well (Hoar 1976, 1988). It appears that these quarters were likely out of use by the 1970s when this part of Chesterfield County was annexed into Richmond (Sanford 2025).

Such one-room plan houses were characteristic throughout the plantation-covered South during the eighteenth through the mid-nineteenth centuries, representing “the major plan type found in surviving slave quarters in Virginia and Maryland,” but “became less popular by the mid-1800s and more closely associated with the lifestyle of the poor” (Lanier and Herman 1997:15). In Chesterfield County, enslaved “families lived almost without exception in one-room-plan dwellings,” with more than 90 percent of Black families residing in such housing into the second quarter of the twentieth century (O’Dell 1983:100). A review of a database of historic Mutual Assurance Society policy records stemming from a multi-year project studying over 200 extant slave quarters conducted by Dr. Pogue and Dr. Sanford and housed by the University of Maryland provides more background data for the analysis of the Brookbury quarters (Pogue and Sanford 2024; University of Maryland School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation n.d.). There is one quarter from an 1803 policy associated with the Henrico County property known as Retreat that appears approximately the same size and construction as the quarters extant at Brookbury (Pogue and Sanford 2024; University of Maryland School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation n.d.). This building, measuring 14 by 16 feet (224 square feet), was one story in height, of wood frame construction, and featured an end brick chimney; slightly larger in size compared to the Brookbury quarters that measure about 168 and 192 square feet. It was set away from the main house near a smokehouse but likely within the domestic complex of that property, rather than further away from the plantation seat in the fields. Other quarters documented in these records in Chesterfield County were relatively larger than those found on the Brookbury plantation. Dating between 1802 and 1837, they were noted to typically measure about 12 by 24 feet (288 square feet) to 26 by 33 feet (858 square feet), the larger of which were likely multi-family dwellings such as duplexes and barracks (Pogue and Sanford 2024). All appear to have been frame, detached, and set away from the primary house. Several are noted to align with other quarters or other domestic outbuildings such as smokehouses, kitchens, and laundries indicating although separated from plantation owners, they were a part of the domestic sphere.

In general, residences for the enslaved placed near a plantation house were better constructed and composed of wood set on masonry foundations and featured brick chimneys (Pogue and Sanford 2024). Additionally, quarters from the nineteenth century were frequently “improved” compared

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and vernacular Classical Revival architecture representative of the evolution and development of the property throughout the period of significance of circa 1811 to 1923 under this criterion. Despite several additions over its existence, Brookbury continues to exemplify Federal-style characteristics, particularly those common throughout the South, through its symmetrical façade, Flemish-bond brick structural system, flanking exterior-end chimneys, and six-over-nine sash windows (McAlester 2018:217–229). Additionally, the core continues to retain its original central-passage plan, which made its debut in Virginia in the early eighteenth century (Wenger 1986:137). The center passage was an upgrade to previous two-room plans that did not allow for much private space on the primary level for the gentry. According to architectural historian Mark Wenger (1986:137), the addition of the central passage not only allowed for a circulation space without disturbing activities in a formal dining room or informal parlor but also maintained social boundaries by restricting access to outsiders, such as enslaved servants. However, Wenger describes that by the mid-eighteenth century, a double-pile house form was encouraged, which differs from the Brookbury plan which is single pile, and the center passage transitioned into yet another living space for the gentry (Wegner 1983:141). At Brookbury, the center passage is embellished with a chair rail, crown molding, and a scrolled detailing on the open stringer of the staircase. Such level of decoration is in keeping with evolving trends of Virginia gentry towards the latter quarter of the eighteenth century and turn of the nineteenth century. At the time of construction, Brookbury was likely not the most formidable example of the Federal style and central passage plan plantation seats of what was then outside of the City of Richmond; however, efforts were made to stay abreast of the housing trends of the Virginian elite. This analysis also concurs with Brookbury's estimated period of construction of circa 1811, when the Taylors come into ownership of the property. According to the evaluation of land holdings and tax assessment records, Abram Salle was certainly counted amongst the Virginia planter elite and his property known as Falling Creek likely featured a more substantial dwelling while the core of Brookbury was a slightly modest representation. Given the physical and archival evidence, it is likely the house was built for his granddaughter, Emily Fowler, and grandson-in-law, Samuel Taylor, who would have been considered at the time as minor rural gentry.

Once plentiful across the landscape of Chesterfield and neighboring localities, extant plantation properties around the City of Richmond are becoming scarcer as redevelopment spurred by suburbanization has made its mark. Additionally, a plantation house with associated outbuildings including housing for the enslaved is even more rare. Twelve resources are documented in VCRIS that are categorized as embodying the Federal style in Chesterfield and neighboring Henrico County, six of which are listed in the National Register of Historic Places. In Henrico County, the Clarke-Palmore House (NRIS 04000576; DHR 043-0085) was originally constructed in 1819 in the Federal style but similar to Brookbury, the dwelling features characteristics from later alterations. It was listed in the NRHP under Criterion C in 2004 for its embodiment of the Federal and Greek Revival styles (Smither 2004). The resource also retains an early nineteenth-century brick kitchen, but it was converted into a barn in the twentieth century. In Chesterfield County, Castlewood (NRIS 76002099; DHR 020-0014) was listed in the NRHP in 1976 under Criterion C for its unique representation of the neo-Palladian style (Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Staff 1976). Comparable to Brookbury, the five-part house was built in stages, albeit the sequence is unclear, yet still presents a unified composition. The central two-story section on a brick English

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**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

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** DHR ID #127-0302

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**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** 8.28

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°27'36.14"N      Longitude: 77°29'33.53"W
2. Latitude: 37°27'36.81"N      Longitude: 77°29'24.43"W
3. Latitude: 37°27'42.08"N      Longitude: 77°29'27.77"W
4. Latitude: 37°27'41.78"N      Longitude: 77°29'31.51"W

**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: |

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### 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: Brookbury

City or Vicinity: Richmond

County: City of Richmond

State: Virginia

Photographer: Isabella R. Gordineer

Date Photographed: 02/14/2024

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

1 of 26:

Brookbury, Northwest Oblique  
VA\_CityofRichmond\_Brookbury\_0001

2 of 26:

Brookbury, Northeast Oblique  
VA\_CityofRichmond\_Brookbury\_0002

3 of 26:

Brookbury, North Elevation  
VA\_CityofRichmond\_Brookbury\_0003

4 of 26:

Brookbury, West Elevation  
VA\_CityofRichmond\_Brookbury\_0004

5 of 26:

Brookbury, South Elevation  
VA\_CityofRichmond\_Brookbury\_0005

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17 of 26:

Brookbury, Gazebo Roof Framing Detail, Looking North

VA\_CityofRichmond\_Brookbury\_0017

18 of 26:

Brookbury, Flagpole, Looking West

VA\_CityofRichmond\_Brookbury\_0018

19 of 26:

Brookbury, Slave Quarter, North Elevation

VA\_CityofRichmond\_Brookbury\_0019

20 of 26:

Brookbury, Slave Quarter Interior, Looking Southwest

VA\_CityofRichmond\_Brookbury\_0020

21 of 26:

Brookbury, Cistern, Looking Southwest

VA\_CityofRichmond\_Brookbury\_0021

22 of 26:

Brookbury, Play House, East Elevation

VA\_CityofRichmond\_Brookbury\_0022

23 of 26:

Brookbury, Play House, West Elevation

VA\_CityofRichmond\_Brookbury\_0023

24 of 26:

Brookbury, Garage, East Elevation

VA\_CityofRichmond\_Brookbury\_0024

25 of 26:

Brookbury, Barn, Looking East

VA\_CityofRichmond\_Brookbury\_0025

26 of 26:

Brookbury, Pool, Looking East

VA\_CityofRichmond\_Brookbury\_0026

Embedded Photographs

Photo 3: Brookbury, North Elevation

Photo 4: (Left) View of Double-leaf, Paneled Doors (Wagner and McDonald, 2020)

Photo 3: (Right) Flooring between c. 1811 block and c. 1923 addition (Gordineer 2024)