

# Red Hill Farm Listed As Historic Landmark

An Amherst County landmark is one of six additions recently named to the Virginia Landmarks Register by the Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission.

Red Hill Farm at Pedlar Mills, owned by Edward Lewis, was settled in 1754 by Capt. Charles Ellis who served in the Albemarle Militia under Thomas Jefferson's father, Col. Peter Jefferson.

According to the commission, "this formal country residence is the finest Federal-style house in Amherst County. The house was built from profits of the family's mercantile interests both in the county and in Richmond. The Adamesque detailing, finely executed stair, and spacious plan suggest that the family was familiar with the fine residences being erected in Richmond and adapted their refined lines for their country home."

Referred to as "monumental" in OLD VIRGINIA HOUSES OF THE PIEDMONT by Emmie Ferguson Farrar and Emilee Hines, the house is described as "a Georgian Brick mansion, 55 feet long with four huge rooms on each floor...The original mantles are intact and vary in style with the most elaborate being of Adam design with tobacco leaf motif."

Reportedly, Red Hill Farm was often visited by Edgar Allan Poe, whose father, John Allan, was associated in the practice of law in Richmond with Charles Ellis, who entered the partnership in 1795, going there from the Ellis home in Amherst County.

The Virginia Landmarks Register is the state's official schedule of pro-

perties worthy of preservation and currently lists over 850 places. Included are buildings, structures, sites, and districts of state-wide or national historical, architectural, or archaeological significance. All places added to the register are nominated to the National Register of Historic Places, maintained by the Department of the Interior.

Other recently named additions to the register include:

**Danville Tobacco Warehouse and Residential District:** Both in its visible and archeological resources, this district encapsulates the development of Danville from its prehistoric origin as a Native American fishing center to its subsequent position as the primary tobacco market center of Virginia. Structures within the district, representing the best industrial and residential architecture constructed in postbellum Danville, trace the evolution of its industry from the rise of locally owned firms in the 1870s to the expansion of tobacco conglomerates in the 20th century.

**Horn Quarter, King William County:** One of the most impressive and highly ornamental Federal-style residences in Virginia, this house was erected in 1829-30 for George Taylor, son of the noted agrarian reformer, politician, and pamphleteer John Taylor of Caroline County. In addition to its architectural embellishments, which include a magnificent three-story spiral stair, Horn Quarter is noted for the remnants of its original elaborate gardens and for being one of the earliest Virginia houses with documented indoor plumbing.

**Jones Point Lighthouse and Dis-**

**trict of Columbia Cornerstone, Alexandria:** The south cornerstone, one of the oldest artifacts related to the nation's capital, marks the origin of the 1791 survey that carved the District of Columbia from the states of Virginia and Maryland. The Jones Point Lighthouse, built adjacent to the south cornerstone in 1855, aided Potomac River shipping for 70 years and is significant in illustrating Federal concern for the improvement of inland navigation in the 19th century.

**Seaton, Halifax County:** This documented work of the Halifax master-carpenter Josiah Dabbs is one of the best preserved mid-19th-century Gothic Revival cottages in Southside Virginia. Built in 1856-57 for William M. Howerton, the son of tobacco entrepreneur Philip Howerton, the residence expresses the architectural taste of one of the county's leading families and illustrates the popularity of the Gothic style among cultivated people in the years just prior to the Civil War.

**Wells Theatre, Norfolk:** Designed by the New York firm of E. C. Horn and Sons, the Wells Theatre is significant both as a representative of early 20th-century popular culture and as an outstanding example of Beaux Arts theatre architecture in Virginia. Opening on August 23, 1913, as part of the Southern vaudeville chain operated by Jacob and Otto Wells, the theatre enjoyed popular success until the late 1920s when it was converted to a movie theatre and sold. The Wells retains most of its original ceiling murals and plaster decorations.



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