



VIRGINIA
HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION

File no.	76-6
Negative no(s).	5189

SURVEY FORM

Historic name	Effingham	Common name	
County/Town/City	Prince William County		
Street address or route number	14103 Aden Rd., Nokesville, Va.		
USGS Quad	Nokesville	Date or period	cl765 and later
Original owner	Col. William Alexander?	Architect/builder/craftsmen	
Original use	Residence		
Present owner	O. Anderson & Sara D. Engh	Source of name	Unknown
Present owner's address	3214 Old Dominion Blvd. Alexandria, Va. 22300	Source of date	Tradition, architectural evidence.
		Stories	2 stories
Present use	Residence	Foundation and wall const'n	Brick foundation, frame wall.
Acreage	680.7 acres		
		Roof type	Asphalt shingle-covered gable roof.

State condition of structure and environs House and environs are in good condition.

State potential threats to structure

Note any archaeological interest Probably a likely place for Indian sites.

Should be investigated for possible register potential? yes X no

Architectural description (Note significant features of plan, structural system and interior and exterior decoration, taking care to point out aspects not visible or clear from photographs. Explain nature and period of all alterations and additions. List any outbuildings and their approximate ages, cemeteries, etc.)

Effingham is a large, Tidewater-style, 2-story, mid-18th century, frame gable-roofed residence on a high basement. The house is remarkable, not only for the architecture, interiors, and fine state of preservation, but for the relatively large number of accessory buildings that have been preserved or adapted and sit in close association with the house. Located in the predominately rural, agricultural Nokesville area, north of Cedar Run, Effingham is the seat of a large, 680-acre cattle-breeding farm. A private drive about 1/4 mile long leads past an old stone blacksmith shop to the house and agricultural buildings that now comprise the farm.

The heavy-timber-constructed frame house has been described in various books on the County or region's architecture. and been included in two earlier architectural surveys, namely the WPA survey of 1936 and the HABS survey of 1959. A two-story, central-hall, double-pile plan house c a raised basement, Effingham is covered with wide, beaded weatherboards. The gable roof is covered with asphalt shingles. There is a massive, exterior, brick, double chimney at either end, joined by a pent closet. The bricks in the chimney are laid in flemish bond. The partly re built chimneys each have tiled weatherings (one set per stack) and corbelled caps. The five-bay ficade reflects an interior central hall plan. Architrave trim surrounds the doors and 9/9 and 6/6 replacement sliding sash windows, which are flanked by louvered shutters. A tall porch added by the present owners spans the front or west side. The giant portico is supported by 12-inch-square pillars and surmounted by a balustrade. The open, flagstone porch on the rear, also added by the present owners, spans only the rear entrance. Both the front and rear doors are re production, double-hung, paneled doors with a single-pane overhead. The doors are attached with reproduction H-L hinges.

The interior contains some ornate woodwork, both reproduction-style and original. The central hall has paneled wainscoting and architrave trim. (continued next page)

Interior inspected? yes

Historical significance (Chain of title; individuals, families, events, etc., associated with the property.)

Effingham was built on a portion of the 30,000-acre Brent Town Tract. This grant was made in 1686-87 by James II to three entrepreneurial Londoners, Richard Foote, ^{Nicholas Hayward,} and Robert Bristow, and a Catholic pioneer, George Brent. The venture began as an attempt to create a religious haven in the backwoods of an area that became Prince William County. The primary objective was to settle a large territory some miles away from the already-inhabited Tidewater regions of Northern Virginia.

Sometime after 1738, the descendants of the four original proprietors divided the Brent Town Tract. George Brent's descendants took the northeast quarter. The Bristows took a northern tract adjoining the Brents. The Haywards took the southeast quarter, and the Footes took the southernmost parcel, now lying in Fauquier and Prince William Counties. Effingham was built on a part of the Hayward share of the Brent Town Grant. Effingham's supposed builders, the Alexanders, came from Tidewater Stafford County, along the Chotank Creek. They migrated, along with the Footes, Fitzhughs, Stuarts and others, to the middle piedmont lands in the vicinity of Cedar Run and established around Brent Town an aristocratic community of fine mansions, English gardens, and cultivated fields. Tobacco and slavery were the mainstays of the economy. Dumfries, a few miles to the southeast, was the market and exporting port and social center. Effingham's builder, Col. William Alexander (1744-1814), was a great-grandson of John Alexander who in 1669 owned a 6,000-acre patent on Hunting Creek. This tract later became the site of an early tobacco warehouse and eventually of the City of Alexandria.

(continued next page)

Published sources (Books, articles, etc., with bibliographic data.)

Primary sources (Manuscript documentary or graphic materials; give location.)

Names and addresses of persons interviewed Mrs. Engh (owner)

[illegible][illegible]

Date **SEP 1981**

CONTINUATION SHEET
EFFINGHAM

Published Sources (continued)

Emmie Ferguson Farrar and Emilee Hines, Old Virginia Houses Along the Fall Line (c1971), pp. 87-92.

Eleanor Lee Templeman and Nan Netherton, Northern Virginia Heritage, (c1966), p. 186.

HABS, Virginia Catalog (c1976), p. 183.

"Historical Marker Placed by D.A.R.," Alexandria Gazette, 8 June 1968.

"Effingham is a 200-Year-Old Landmark," Manassas Journal-Messenger, 8 May 1969.

Architectural Description (continued)

The doorways are surmounted by heavy mouldings. The paneling on the north wall of the double living room, or northeast and northwest rooms, was found in the attic and installed by the present owners; the early woodwork, a corner cupboard, mantels, and possibly paneling, was bought by the Duponts in 1936. A reproduction Georgian-style corner cupboard in the dining room or southwest room was copied by a local cabinetmaker from a photograph of the cupboard taken in its original location in the northwest corner of the first floor northwest room. The mantel in the dining room is a late Federal- or early Victorian-style piece having a moulded shelf supported by moulded colonettes. The oak floors in the first floor were laid on top of the old floors. Upstairs, the floors are of random or medium-width pine. There is a concealed stairway on either side of the central hall. Rising along the hall's north wall is a winding stair, while there is a straight stair from the kitchen along the hall's south wall. An ornately-carved pedimented doorway exists between the hall and the rear sitting room, or northeast room. According to one source, the crown moulding in the hall, dining room, and living rooms is original to the house. On the second floor are the central hall and three or four bedrooms. There is a finished attic.

According to photographs taken in 1936, Effingham once had a larger collection of outbuildings, including a kitchen, a frame coach house and weaving cottage, and some log cabins, none of which now exist. The old out buildings remaining standing (and well-preserved) include a small, rebuilt, stone blacksmith shop and tack house, a frame former servants' quarters, now serving as a guest house and office, and a frame smokehouse. There is a large modern complex of agricultural buildings southwest of the house. One or two tenant houses also exist on the property. The Alexander family cemetery can be seen north of the house. It is surrounded by a low stone wall and contains some very recent burials in addition to those recorded in the WPA guide.

Historical Significance (continued)

Colonel Alexander was married to Sigismunda Mary Massey in 1765. It is supposed that Effingham was built for the Colonel and his bride. Their son Lawrence inherited Effingham in 1814, and in 1828 he sold it to John Macrae. In 1829, William Foote purchased the plantation from John Macrae. In 1833, Allen Howison purchased the estate, then totaling 622 acres, from William Foote.

Effingham has had a succession of owners since the Howison purchase. The present owners acquired the property, which now amounts to about 680 acres, in 1955 from C. Kenneth and Margaret A. Francis.

A graveyard at Effingham contains markers for Lucy and Benjamin Farrow; William Alexander; Lucy, James, Elizabeth, Allen, and Amanda Howison; Harriet W.D. Beadle; William Alexander Dade; and Daniel McLean.

