

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries complete applicable sections)

STATE: North Carolina
COUNTY: Warren
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE

1. NAME

COMMON:
Dalkeith

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
0.8 mile south of S.R. 1634 on S.R. 1636, east side

CITY OR TOWN:
Arcola vicinity

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:
Second

STATE: North Carolina CODE: 37

COUNTY: The Hon. L. H. Fountain CODE: 185

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
Mr. and Mrs. Clarence Skillman

STREET AND NUMBER:
P. O. Box 204

CITY OR TOWN:
Warrenton

STATE:
North Carolina

CODE:
37

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
Warren County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:
Warrenton

STATE:
North Carolina

CODE:
37

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:

DATE OF SURVEY:
 Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:

STATE:

CODE:

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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered		<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site	

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Dalkeith is one of the important group of related late Federal houses in Warren and Halifax counties, a group which includes Elgin, Oakland, and Mount Petros (the latter now gone) which are related by their common temple form and by distinctively handled classical details; these same highly individualized details are also found in the Coleman-White House in Warrenton, the lamented Montmorenci (parts of which are at Winterthur) and Prospect Hill (razed and its interiors taken to New England). Dalkeith, a relatively simple example, is a frame temple-form plantation house sharing with these other houses the unusual corner post and entablature treatment, late Federal mantels, and overall plan; it is distinguished from its fellows by the strong, almost masculine simplicity of the interior woodwork in contrast to the delicate elaboration of the other buildings of the group.

Dalkeith is impressively sited on a rise several hundred yards from the road, in the rolling farmland of southeast Warren County. The meadow in front of the house is dotted with great old trees, remnants of the park-like grove favored by plantation owners in the area. To the front and north of the dwelling, just within the fenced house lot, is a small frame office with a brick chimney. The main temple-form house, which faces east, is adjoined on the southwest by a small gable-roof dwelling facing south. Some distance to the north of the house lot is a large barn.

The temple-form house rises two stories over a brick cellar that was plastered and used formerly as dining room and kitchen. The building is covered with plain weatherboards and has a gable roof, its pedimented gable facade facing the road. The corners are defined by heavy molded pilasters, each having the outer corner treated by a distinctive vertical turned molding resembling a stack of spools. These pilasters carry an equally distinctive entablature. The mutules and triglyphs are grooved, and the latter have along their lower edge below the tenia, a fluted fan instead of guttae. The entablature outlines the pediment. This unusual entablature is characteristic of the houses in the "Montmorenci school."

The main facade has rather unusual fenestration. At the second level there are four evenly spaced bays, each filled with a window containing nine-over-nine sash. Symmetrically molded pilaster strips flank the openings and carry a simple entablature with heavy cornice--a treatment employed consistently throughout the house. The first level has identical windows in the four bays, corresponding with those above; crowded between the two center windows is the central entrance, consisting of a double door, each leaf with four flat panels vertically arranged, set in a frame like those of the windows. Protecting these three central openings is a pedimented entrance porch, with four fluted Doric columns carrying an academic entablature and simple pediment. The soffit of the entablature is flat-paneled. (The porch appears to be quite early, perhaps original, but is straight Greek rather than of the highly individualized classically-derived character of the main block.) Originally small porches served the doors that occupy the first bay on each side.

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The sides of the house are three bays deep. The rear elevation is unpedimented, and between the pairs of bays rise two single-shoulder brick chimneys. There is a collection of one-story additions connecting the main block to the small gable-roof house nearby.

The plan of the house is typical of temple-form dwellings, with minor variations. A lateral hall runs across the front, serving the exterior doors at either end, and opening into two parlors to the rear (west). In addition to the two doors serving the parlor are a central door between them serving a stair to the basement, and, at the north end of the hall, an open doorway serving an enclosed stair that rises north-south between hall and north parlor--a change from the usual placement of the stair in the end of the hall. The door to the north parlor is under this stair, opening into a small passage leading under the stair into the parlor, flanked by small (later) closets. On the parlor side, this passage is framed by freestanding unfluted Doric columns that carry a round arch outlined by a zig-zag motif.

The interior finish of the house--essentially unchanged--is relatively simple, with a combination of late Federal and Greek Revival motifs. The use of flat-paneled wainscot and vigorous three-part mantels is Federal; the symmetrically molded architraves with roundel corner blocks on doors and windows, and the broad flat moldings are more characteristic of the Greek Revival. The walls and ceilings are plastered, and some early woodgraining survives. The mantel in the north parlor is quite heavy, with symmetrically molded pilasters carrying a band of gougework beneath a three-part frieze beneath a heavy cornice adorned with a pierced lozenge band. That in the south parlor is similar, with a band of H-fretwork, and dentils adorning the shelf.

The second-story rooms have no wainscot, but the floor-length architraves frame panels beneath the windows. On this floor, the hall runs across the house almost midway back, and there are two small unheated rooms to the front and two larger ones with fireplaces to the rear. These have mantels of similar proportions to those below, but lacking the carved ornament.

The interior of the small building to the rear has horizontally sheathed wainscot and a simple mantel of early Federal character. The interior of the office to the front also is plastered, and there is a mantel similar to those of the main dwelling.

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian | 16th Century | 18th Century | 20th Century
 15th Century | 17th Century | 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1820s

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Phi- | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | losophy | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Human- | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | itarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Dalkeith, built about 1825, and first owned by planter John Burgess, is a handsome and little-altered temple-form plantation house related in form and detail to other important late Federal period houses in Warren and Halifax counties. It was the Civil War refuge of an important North Carolina political figure and judge, Asa Biggs, who wrote his autobiography there.

Dalkeith is located in the Fishing Creek area of southeast Warren County, where there is an unusually great concentration of impressive plantation houses--most of them connected with members of the locally dominant Alston family, who had held property there since the eighteenth century. In 1814 the estate of Samuel Alston--over 4,000 acres--was divided among his children. The eldest daughter, Caroline, received a tract of 535 acres, which she and her husband Solomon Williams sold in December 15, 1824, for \$3,050, to Thomas Bragg. Bragg was a Warrenton builder--contractor for the 1833-1840 North Carolina Capital--and the father of Braxton and Thomas Bragg, who were to gain considerable distinction, the former as Civil War general and the latter as North Carolina senator and governor, and attorney general for the Confederacy. After holding the property for eight months, Bragg sold the place on August 23, 1825, for \$3,750, to John Burgess of Halifax County. Family tradition, supported by recollections of a board inscribed "Bragg, 1825," contends that Bragg constructed the house which he sold to Burgess; this may well be true, but no documentary evidence supports it, and the price difference is not conclusive.

John Burgess of Halifax County had married Martha Jane Alston of Warren County in 1824; presumably the young couple occupied the place upon purchase or soon after. Burgess expanded his land holdings through several purchases of nearby land in the 1820s and 1830s. County tax records 1826-1828 show him holding 1,150 acres evaluated at \$3,450, along with 14 slaves. By 1850 these records show only 345 acres but 27 slaves; and by 1854, he listed 854 acres and 25 slaves. The 1850 census, however, listed him with 600 acres improved and 1,100 unimproved. He produced a variety of crops but listed no cotton or tobacco, and held 66 slaves. In his household were his wife, four daughters and a young son; two young black men--presumably free blacks--were also listed in the household, as laborers. By 1860 Burgess was producing tobacco--20,000 pounds of it--and his slaves had increased to seventy.

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During the war, according to tradition, Burgess "decided to join the migration to Texas," and sold Dalkeith in 1864. In a deed of March 30, 1864, for five bonds of \$1,000 each (bonds issued by the state before 1860), Burgess transferred the "parcel of land called 'Dalkeith'" to Asa Biggs. Biggs, a native of Martin County, was one of the state's most outstanding political figures in the years before and during the Civil War. After serving in the state legislature, he served in the United States Congress 1845-1847 and in the Senate 1855-1858. Upon his appointment as a United States district judge he was succeeded in the senate by Thomas Bragg, son of the earlier owner of the Dalkeith property. An ardent states' rights supporter, Biggs abruptly resigned his federal post, on April 23, 1861, notifying President Abraham Lincoln that he was "unwilling to hold a commission in a Government which has degenerated into a military despotism." Biggs served as secessionist delegate to the state Secession Convention of 1861 and on June 17 was appointed judge of the District Court of North Carolina by Jefferson Davis; he was commissioned in 1862.

In his autobiography headed "Dalkeith, Warren County, North Carolina, March 1865" Biggs recalled that

In February 1862 we were driven from our dear home at Williamston, . . . by the approach of the Yankee invaders up Albemarle Sound, after the fall of Roanoke Island. About six weeks we lived . . . /near/ Tarboro and from thence we removed to a dwelling . . . west of Rocky Mount, where we continued to reside until I purchased this place in September 1863, and here we were all located in December 1863. . . . I selected this place as secure from Yankee raids and invasion, and although we have been excluded from society and the social intercourse to which we had been accustomed, and find it difficult with my limited means to obtain sufficient "food and raiment," yet so far we have not suffered, and the Lord providing for our wants we continue to this day. . . .

While the Biggs family was at Dalkeith, Henry Biggs, aged 17, joined the Confederate troops in July, 1864; an elder son, William, was already serving as captain of Company A, 17th Regiment, North Carolina troops. On April 8, 1865 (the day before Lee surrendered to Grant), the younger boy was mortally wounded--the only member of his battery known to have been hit. A family Bible entry, lined "Dalkeith, May 7, 1865," records the loss:

Thus fell our dear and beloved boy, defending the rights of his Country; and, in the Providence of an All wise God, he is spared the mortification of witnessing the subjugation of his native land.

Biggs did not remain long at Dalkeith after the war but removed to Tarboro, whence he wrote to Thomas Bragg on July 5, 1866, that he had settled permanently and that his "prospects of making a living are fair, though at present I get but little cash." Because of a controversial protest he signed concerning actions of the North Carolina Supreme Court, Biggs moved in 1869 to Norfolk

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8. B

where he entered business with his brother, Kader. In 1871 he sold Dalkeith to Henrietta Daugherty of New Jersey for \$4,039. In 1884 she sold the place to George and Rebecca Davis, who had rented it for a time. In 1909 Davis left the property to his daughter Mattie Davis Hunter, who had lived there after her marriage in 1896. Dalkeith is now owned by Lula Hunter Skillman, who lives there with her husband C. E. Skillman.

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9.

Skillman, Lula Hunter. Information on Dalkeith, copy in survey files.
Spruill, F. S. Presentation of Portrait of Honorable Asa Biggs to U. S.
District Court, Raleigh, 1915.
U. S. Census, Warren County, 1850, 1860.
Warren County Records, Warren County Courthouse, Warrenton, North Carolina
(Subgroups: Deeds, Wills).
Warren County Records, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, North
Carolina (Subgroups: Deeds, Wills, Estate papers, Tax records).

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Research and architectural description by Catherine W. Cockshutt, survey supervisor,
 Ashe, Samuel A., ed. Biographical History of North Carolina from Colonial Times to the Present, Greensboro, North Carolina; Charles L. Van Noppen, 1907.
 Biggs, Asa. Autobiography. Raleigh: North Carolina Historical Commission, 1915.
 Biggs family Bible. Compiled genealogy file, Archives and History, Search Room.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY				OR	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES							
CORNER	LATITUDE				LONGITUDE			LATITUDE			LONGITUDE	
	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	36°	16'	56"	77°	59'	26"						
NE	36°	16'	56"	77°	58'	58"						
SE	36°	16'	39"	77°	58'	58"						
SW	36°	16'	39"	77°	59'	26"						

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 20 acres

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Survey and Planning Unit

ORGANIZATION: Division of Archives and History DATE: 7 October 1974

STREET AND NUMBER:
109 East Jones Street

CITY OR TOWN: Raleigh STATE: North Carolina CODE: 37

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name Robert E. Stipe

Title State Historic Preservation Officer

Date 7 October 1974

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

 Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date _____

ATTEST:

 Keeper of The National Register

Date _____

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



DALKEITH

Houliester Quad

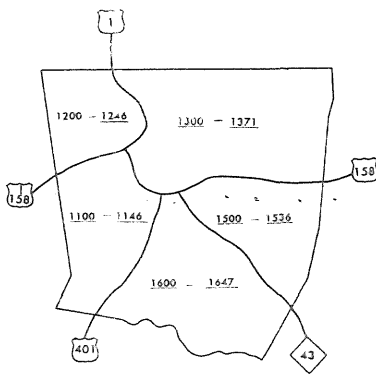
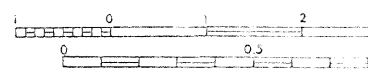
WARREN CO

NORTH CAROLINA

PREPARED BY THE
 DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND
 DIVISION OF HIGHWAYS—PLANNING AND
 IN COOPERATION WITH THE
 U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
 FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION

1974

SCALE



KEY TO COUNTY ROAD NUMBERS
 ALSO NUMBERS 1901

NOTE: MAP INCLUDES ONLY STATE MAINTAINED ROADS
 OR IMPORTANT NON-SYSTEM ROADS.
 MILEAGE NOT SHOWN ON FRONTAGE ROADS.

SCALE FOR ENLARGEMENTS

