United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

See instructions in How to Complete National Register Forms
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name
   historic
   Edward Tabb House
   and/or common
   "Rural Hill"

2. Location
   On the western side of West Virginia Secondary Route #4, 1.7 miles
   south of the intersection with W.Va. State Route #9— not for publication
   street & number
   city, town
   Hedgesville
   state West Virginia
   code 54
   county Berkeley
   code 003
   x vicinity of congressional district

3. Classification
   Category
district 
x building(s)
structure
site
object
Ownership
public
private
both
Public Acquisition

Status
x occupied
unoccupied
work in progress
Accessible
x yes: restricted
yes: unrestricted
x no
Present Use
agriculture
commercial
educational
entertainment
government
industrial
military
museum
park
private residence
religious
scientific
transportation
other:

4. Owner of Property
   name
   Mr. and Mrs. David R. Dillon
   street & number
   "Rural Hill", Route #6, Box 91
   city, town
   Martinsburg
   x vicinity of
   state West Virginia

5. Location of Legal Description
   courthouse, registry of deeds, etc.
   Berkeley County Courthouse
   street & number
   100 West King Street
   city, town
   Martinsburg
   state West Virginia

6. Representation in Existing Surveys
   title
   Berkeley County Historic Landmarks Commission Survey
   has this property been determined eligible? x yes ___ no
   date
   1973 - 1983
   ___ federal ___ state x county ___ local
   depository for survey records
   Berkeley County Courthouse
   city, town
   Martinsburg
   state West Virginia
Situated on a hill at the end of a half-mile private driveway, "Rural Hill" is a large, thirty-seven feet (37') deep and sixty-two feet (62') across, two story, central block with wing Federal dwelling house constructed ca. 1810 of coursed rubble limestone. The front section is five bays wide, the rear section is divided into three bays, and the two bay, two story kitchen wing has a two-tiered recessed entrance porch. The main entrance porch has coupled Doric columns with like pilasters and a Chippendale transom is over the entrance door. Windows have 12/12 and 12/8 double sash with rough cut radiating stone lintels. The outstanding feature of the front façade is the corbel and lozenge cornice with elaborate fretwork architrave.

The front section has a central hall, one room each side. The four-flight, open-well stair has elaborate scroll step-end decoration and the graceful balustrade is walnut. Panelled wainscoting with reeded pilasters follow on the stair wall. Door facings are elaborate and varied. Those in the hall and main parlor have a full entablature on panelled (hall) or reeded (parlor) pilasters topped with acanthus leaf work. The end block trim on the frieze also varies. In the parlor, it matches that on the mantel, small coupled urns. The hall door end block trim matches that used on a second floor mantel, fanciful Adams urns. Coupled cornicopia is used in still another. Fret work cornices decorate most of these rooms.

The three bay, two story rear section was added in a cross gable manner, ca. 1830, also in coursed rubble limestone construction. Windows are 12/8 double sash with the same quirked ovolo exterior trim. The plan is central hall, one room each side with a very nice open-well stairway in the hall. Door and window trim is symmetrically molded with small rosette corner blocks. The one fireplace in this section has a mantel with a single panelled frieze over like pilasters.

Two fireboxes in the house have decorative cast iron plates covering the jambs and rear wall of the firebox. They are decorated with the classical urn motif and are very similar to those manufactured by Mark Richards, ca. 1811, of Philadelphia.

First floor window and door jambs in the 23" stone walls are panelled throughout the house, and door locks were imported from Willenhall, England.
8. Significance

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Specific dates 1810/1820
Builder/Architect Edward Tabb/ John Tabb

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

"Rural Hill", built ca. 1810 and 1820, is historically significant for its associations with the Tabb family and for being an excellent example of period workmanship and design.

About 1770, four sons of William Tabb moved from Gloucester County, Virginia, to Berkeley County. They were Robert, William, George, and Edward. All but Edward served in the Revolutionary War. By 1795, Edward had acquired 490 acres and subsequently built "Rural Hill". Edward had no children but raised here his nephews John, William, and Edward Tabb. By 1819, John Tabb (still another nephew) owned all the shares of his uncle's "Rural Hill" estate and ultimately amassed 1123 acres. He was a well known agriculturist and also owned several mills, including the Patterson Mill near Martinsburg. At his death in 1847, a complete inventory was made of the house, room by room, and farm. Included were twenty-one slaves, some of which were sold at this time, and over $10,000 worth of flour sold in Baltimore in just six months. In 1857, "Rural Hill" was sold out of the Tabb family. It has been owned by the Dillon family since 1934.

"Rural Hill" is also significant as an example of period architecture. The craftsmanship throughout the house is excellent. The mantels and other trim in the Federal section in particular are of well developed classical, Adams designs. These designs are carried into other rooms resulting in a uniformity but are not continuously repeated so that the design characteristics remain interesting. The door locks were traced by the National Park Service in Harpers Ferry to Willenhall, England.

The later section was perhaps added as a dormitory. The rear windows became clothes presses with panelled doors, very nicely done. The stone construction is the same, so the sections blend together very well.
9. Major Bibliographical References

"Rural Hill Mansion House", pamphlet written and published by Mr. and Mrs. David R. Dillon, 1973. Copy in the possession of the Dillon family at "Rural Hill".

10. Geographical Data

| Acreage of nominated property | 1 acre |
| Quadrangle name               | Big Pool, WV-MD |
| Quadrangle scale              | 1 : 24,000 |

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**Verbal boundary description and justification**

Nominated property includes 100' on each side of the house (see map).

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

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11. Form Prepared By

**name/title**
Frances D. Ruth - Chairperson

**organization**
Berkeley County Historic Landmarks Commission

**date**
September 30, 1983

**street & number**
Route #2, Box 320

**telephone**
(304) 754-7097

**city or town**
Martinsburg

**state**
West Virginia

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

- [ ] national
- [X] state
- [ ] local

As the designated State Historic Preservation 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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

**State Historic Preservation Officer signature**

**title**
Commissioner, WV Department of Culture and History

**date**
November 18, 1983
Big Pool Quadrangle

Area 1 acre

Berkeley County, West Virginia

SCALE 1 : 7,920

Copied September 1983 from photo AGS-43-27, Nov 23 1937 by Galtjo L. Geertsema
Edward Tabb House
("Rural Hill")
W.Va. Route 4,
Hedgesville vicinity,
Berkeley County,
West Virginia

Big Pool, W.Va.-Md.
U.S.G.S. Quadrangle
U.T.M. Coordinates
17/757790/9378040

Butlers Chapel
Dry Run

ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Heavy-duty ——— Light-duty ————
Medium-duty ——— Unimproved dirt ————

State Route

THE S. SPENCER MOORE CO.
118 CAPITOL STREET
CHARLESTON, W. VA. 25301
PH. 304-342-6185

BIG POOL, W. VA.—MD.
SE/4 HANCOCK 15' QUADRANGLE
N3930—W7800/7.5
MINOR CORRECTIONS MADE 1976
1958

AMS 5363 II SE—SERIES V854