



# Rebecca Vaughan House

## THE HIGH POINT OF THE REBELLION

**NAT  
TURNER  
TRAIL**

1831  
Southampton  
Insurrection

**Y**ou are here in Courtland, the county seat of Southampton County, Virginia, at the Rebecca Vaughan House's new site. This building was moved from its original location, five miles away at the end of a long lane off Barrow Road. The last landowners killed during the 1831 Southampton Insurrection, were at this house. Today, it is the only structure remaining where enslavers died during the rebellion.

### What Happened Here?

Nat Turner and his men reached the widow Rebecca Vaughan's house around noon on August 22, 1831. Rebecca heard riders approaching, thinking it was her son, George, coming home with a group of fox hunters. The insurrectionists had already killed George. They then killed Arthur, Vaughan's other son, and the overseer near the still as they rode up to the house. Rebecca was inside with her 18-year-old niece, Anne Eliza Vaughan, who was visiting to plan her wedding. Hearing voices outside, Anne Eliza came downstairs. She was killed immediately, her body thrown outside. Rebecca asked to go upstairs to pray before meeting her Maker. The insurgents agreed, but she prayed too long. They killed her while she was still on her knees. Nat Turner then urged his followers to march toward Jerusalem, today's Courtland.



*"Nat Turner," painting, ca. 1934. Malvin G. Johnson, artist.*



*Rebecca Vaughan House, ca. 1900.*



*Reprinted in The Southampton Slave Revolt of 1831 by Henry Irving Frazier, 1971. Used with permission.*

*Likeness of Nat Turner from The Southampton Insurrection by William Sidney Drewry, 1900.*

### Nat Turner: An Enslaver's Description

"He is between 30 & 35 years old—5 feet six or 8 inches high—weighs between 150 & 160 rather bright complexion but not a mulatto—broad-shouldered—large flat nose—large eyes—broad flat feet rather knock kneed—walk brisk and active—hair on the top of the head very thin—no beard except on the up-per lip and the tip of the chin. A scar on one of his temples produced by the kick of a mule —also one on the back of his neck by a bite— a large knot on one of the bones of his right arm near the wrist produced by a blow—" – *William Parker, Esq. Letter to Governor John Floyd, September 14, 1831*