

VLR-10/15/85 NRHP-6/13/86

Form 10-300
(July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Virginia	
COUNTY: Petersburg (in city)	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

1. NAME

COMMON:
Centre Hill

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
North of Franklin Street at end of Centre Hill Lane

CITY OR TOWN:
Petersburg (Watkins M. Abbitt, Fourth District Congressman)

STATE: **Virginia** COUNTY: **51 (in city)** CODE: **730**

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <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	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural	<input type="checkbox"/> Government	<input type="checkbox"/> Park	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/> Comments
<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> Industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Educational	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Religious		
<input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Scientific		

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY Attn.: **Henry W. Maclin, President.**

OWNER'S NAME:
Petersburg Battlefield Museum Corp.

STREET AND NUMBER:
Franklin Street

CITY OR TOWN: **Petersburg** STATE: **Virginia** CODE: **51**

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:
Clerk's Office of Hustings Court

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: **Petersburg** STATE: **Virginia** CODE: **51**

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
Historic American Building Survey

DATE OF SURVEY: **1920; 1936** Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
Library of Congress

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: **washington** STATE: **D. C.** CODE: **11**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: **Virginia**

COUNTY: **Petersburg (in city)**

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(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
Virginia	
COUNTY	
Petersburg (in city)	
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ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Number all entries)

6. Historic American Buildings Survey Inventory

1959 Federal

Library of Congress

Washington, D. C. 11

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input 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

I. General Statement :

A. Architectural Character: Centre Hill is an example of the transitional Greek Revival Style of the 1820's. The sumptuous interiors on the first floor are partly the result of an alteration around the middle of the century, and there have been other later alterations. The east wing was added about 1850.

B. Condition of the fabric: Good.

II. Description of Exterior:

A. Over all dimensions: The original five-bay house was 81' square, before the addition of the two-bay east wing. Both the main section of the house and the wing are two-stories high and have an English basement. There is a large cupola on the main section.

B. Foundation: Brick.

C. Wall Construction: Mellow vari-colored brick is laid in Flemish bond. Closers are used regularly at the corners and irregularly at openings. The east wing has brick pilasters between each window, and a stone water table.

D. Porches: The north facade has a flat-roofed five-bay verandah with a modified Greek Ionic intablature (after Minard Lafever) supported by six Greek Ionic columns. The north three-bay verandah has four identical columns and an identical entablature. Both verandahs have two pilasters employing the anthemion motif. The floors are of black and white marble. The verandahs are raised to the level of the first floor. On the podium of the steps leading to the south doorway reposes a carrara marble couchant wolfhound.

E. Chimneys: There are four interior end chimneys with corbelled brick and stone caps.

F. Openings:

1. Doors and Doorways: The recessed doorways have elliptical transoms with complex tracery and sidelights having double doors opening into the hall from the center bay of the north and south facades.

2. Windows: The windows on the south verandah have tall six-over-six double-hung wooden sashes. The rest of the windows on the lower floor are nine-over-six double hung sashes. On the second floor all the double-hung windows have six-over-six sashes, except for those in the wing, which have three-lights over three. All the windows have stone lintels with corner blocks with rosettes and louvered shutters. The center-bay windows have sidelights.

G. Roof: A low hip-roof with a flattened cupola and a dentil cornice covers the house.

III. Description of the Interior:

A. Floor Plans: The first floor has a spacious central hall with the stair in the northeast corner. Two large rooms open off each side of the hall. The wing contains two smaller rooms opening off a stair hall, entered from either of the two eastern rooms of the main block. The second floor has a central hall opening from the top of the stair with a narrow long hall branching to the east and the west. There are three large rooms across the front, and one on either side of the hall in the rear. Two rooms open off the hall in the wing.

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#7 Description

B. Stairways: There are two stairways. A wide three-run open-string stair with turned balusters and ornamental brackets ascends in the northeast corner of the main hall. The first two square newels are topped by urns, the others by spheres. This stair is an early-twentieth-century replacement of the original in the same location. A two-run stair leads up to the cupola from the second floor. A narrow two-run open-string stair ascends in the east end of the wing.

C. Wall and ceiling finish: Painted plaster.

D. Doorways and Doors: Wide panelled doors have doorways with Doric pilasters supporting a complex molded and beaded entablature. The double sliding doors with enriched talon molding delineating the panels and flanked by Greek Corinthian engaged columns to divide the two west rooms are a later addition. On the second floor six-panelled doors are surrounded by molded trim with corner blocks and rosettes. These, too, are later additions.

E. Trim: The hall is elaborately trimmed with ceiling panels delineated by molding, a cornice employing an acanthus and blossom motif. A large elliptical arch carved with a dogwood blossom, egg-and-dart molding and acanthus leaves spans the center of the hall. The large keystone element of the arch also bears an acanthus leaf motif. A vertically panelled dado occurs in the hall and the east rooms. Rooms other than the hall have a heavy carved modillion cornice with egg and dart molding and acanthus leaves. Window trim consists of symmetrical molding with beading, corner blocks, and rosettes with beaded molding. Panelled wooden shutters fit into the window recesses. The altered second floor trim consists of symmetrically molded door and window trim. Some of the doors have simple arches, keystones and fanlights.

F. Heating: There are fireplaces in all of the rooms except for the halls and baths. The first floor rooms have marble mantels with keystones and carved spandrels. The mantels on the second floor are Colonial Revival. The present heating system incorporates hot water radiant heating. The circular radiators in the four corners of the hall are unusual.

IV. Site:

Centre Hill is set in downtown Petersburg on a hill over-looking the Appomatox River. A circular drive runs by the south facade enclosing a space of green lawn and large trees. A short lawn is between the house and lane on the north. The large original park surrounding Centre Hill has been greatly encroached upon by early-twentieth-century houses on the east and west, and by a modern apartment building on the north.

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|----------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century | |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

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

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Center Hill with its gracious facade, its fine interiors, its long association with the well-known Bolling and Davis families, and its connections with two United States presidents is a distinguished Petersburg landmark. The transitional Greek Revival-style house was built in 1823 for Robert Bolling, a member of a prominent and influential Petersburg family. Situated on the old militia muster ground, the building was surrounded by a large landscaped park. This house and another were soon thereafter described by Mrs. Anne Royall, a visitor to Petersburg, as being "superb buildings, and the view from them is grand and imposing." Much of the first-floor interior architectural decoration was installed around 1850, although certain features, such as the handsome Federal-style doorways are original. The east wing also was added in the 1850's.

After the siege of Petersburg, Major General G. L. Hartsuff, District Commander of the Northern forces, made the house his headquarters. It was during this period, on April 7, 1865, that Abraham Lincoln visited General Hartsuff at Centre Hill. Centre Hill remained in the Bolling family until 1901, when it was purchased by Charles Hall Davis. When President William Howard Taft visited Petersburg on May 19, 1909, to dedicate a monument to the Pennsylvanians and General Hartranft, who fought in the Siege of Petersburg, he was a guest at Centre Hill.

Edgar S. Bowling purchased the house in 1937 and gave it to the United States to be used as a museum. It was formally opened in 1950. In 1952, Centre Hill was deeded to the Petersburg Battlefield Museum Corporation; it still serves as a local history and military museum.

Although Centre Hill and its setting have been somewhat changed over the years, the house remains, as it always has been, an important and well-known example of Petersburg architecture at its grandest.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Scott, James G., and Edward A. Wyatt, IV, Petersburg's Story, A History.
Petersburg: Titmus Optical Company, 1960.

Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Staff.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			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	0	0	37	13	49
NE	0	0			
SE	0	0			
SW	0	0			

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: Less than 10 acres

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:

Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Staff

ORGANIZATION

Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission

DATE

September, 1972

STREET AND NUMBER:

Room 1116, Ninth Street State Office Building

CITY OR TOWN:

Richmond

STATE

Virginia

CODE

51

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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

J. R. Fishburne, Director

Title Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission

Date

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

Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date

ATTEST:

Keeper of The National Register

Date

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



JEFFERSON PARK 3.4 MI.
HOPEWELL 6.4 MI.

330 000
FEET

NEW BOHEMIA 3.9 MI.
SUFFOLK 57 MI.

12'30"

U.S.G.S. 7½' quadrangle (scale:1:24000)
Petersburg, Va. 1952

CENTRE HILL	
latitude	longitude
37°13'49"	77°24'04"