

West Cote
Name of Property

Albemarle County, VA
County and State

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4. National Park Service Certification

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I, hereby certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register _____

See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the _____
National Register

See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the _____
National Register

removed from the National Register _____

other (explain): _____

Signature of Keeper Date of Action

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5. Classification

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Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing Noncontributing

5 _0_ buildings
0 _0_ sites
1 _0_ structures
6 _0_ Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register _0_

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.) N/A _____

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6. Function or Use

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Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: _____ Sub: _____
___ DOMESTIC _____ ___ single dwelling
___ DOMESTIC _____ secondary structure (office, smokehouse, well)
___ AGRICULTURE _____ storage (corncrib), animal facility (stable)_

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: _____ Sub: _____
___ DOMESTIC _____ ___ single dwelling _____
___ AGRICULTURE _____ ___ storage, animal facility _____

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7. Description

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Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

___ EARLY REPUBLIC _____ Early Classical Revival _____

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation ___ brick on stone _____
roof _____ metal _____
walls _____ brick _____

other ___ columns ___ plastered brick _____

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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8. Statement of Significance

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Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- ___ A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ___ B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ___ D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- a owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- b removed from its original location.
- c a birthplace or a grave.
- d a cemetery.
- e a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- f a commemorative property.
- g less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance ca. 1830 - 1950 Significant Dates ca. 1830

Significant Person
(Complete if Criterion B is marked above) _____

Cultural Affiliation N/A

Architect/Builder _____

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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9. Major Bibliographical References

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(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

West Cote
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Albemarle County, VA
County and State

Primary Location of Additional Data

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: _____

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10. Geographical Data

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Acreage of Property Approximately 37 acres

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

Zone Easting		Northing		Zone Easting		Northing	
1	17	706860	4178990	3	17	707210	4178540
2	17	707240	4178680	4	17	706790	4178410

See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

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11. Form Prepared By

=====

name/title John G. Zehmer, Jr., Architectural Historian

organization Va. Department of Historic Resources date January 2001

street & number 19-B Bollingbrook Street telephone 804-863-1621

city or town Petersburg state VA zip code 23803

West Cote
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Albemarle County, VA
County and State

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Additional Documentation
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Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage
or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

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Property Owner
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(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name ___Mrs. Susan L. Byrd_____

street & number ___West Cote___ telephone ___(804)-286-6311___

city or town ___Howardsville___ state ___VA___ zip code ___24562___

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Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7 Page 1

West Cote
Albemarle, Virginia

Summary Description: Set dramatically on a sweeping hillside overlooking the confluence of the James and Rockfish rivers, West Cote, in Albemarle County, Virginia features a two-story, brick, classical revival plantation dwelling built ca. 1830. A well-preserved example of a high-style house of the Early Republican era, it is associated in its design and execution with a group of houses in central Virginia that were constructed by builders who were either involved in or influenced by the construction of the University of Virginia to Thomas Jefferson's designs. Surviving outbuildings include a guesthouse, smokehouse, corncrib and stable. The unusually wide and deep ante-bellum well is also noteworthy.

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Section 7 Page 2

West Cote
Albemarle, Virginia

Detailed Description:

West Cote's massive brick dwelling rises two stories above a raised basement. The front is of oiled brick in Flemish bond with penciled joints. The north wall is of stock brick in Flemish bond while the other two walls are of five-course American bond. The main façade is five bays wide and features a two-story Tuscan portico with paired full-height columns and no pediment. The portico gives access to the front door, a double door under a large rectangular transom. The transom features tracery in the form of a fan with radiating ribs connected by two rows of swags and a three-petal flower in each of the upper corner quadrants. Over the transom is a lintel with corner blocks that extend beyond the door frame. This combination of elements is typical of buildings that bridge the Roman Revival and Greek Revival styles. The four basement windows have single sashes of nine panes each. The first-floor windows have nine-over-nine sash and the second-floor windows have six-over-six. The house has a low hipped roof covered with standing-seam sheet metal. The portico is crowned by a modern metal railing. The end elevations are unadorned except for the massive cornice and frieze that surrounds the house at the eaves. The cornice is decorated with a beaded molding inspired by an illustration in Asher Benjamin's *American Builders Companion*, 1805. The rear elevation has the same center door and fenestration as the front. There is a small two-story twentieth-century frame addition in the center of the rear wall.

Westcote is an I-house with a center passage plan on each floor. The basement is fully finished and houses a dining room and kitchen. The former has simple trim and the latter has modern but complementary finishes.

The upper floors exhibit unusual woodwork combining elements from several different styles. The first-floor doors have eight panels rather than the usual six. These are set in two vertical ranges with three equal horizontal panes over a single tall vertical panel at the base. The door cases are composed of symmetrically molded architraves with roundel corner block. The panels of the reveals correspond to those of the doors. The central passage has single-leaf doors of this design to each of its flanking rooms. The front and rear doors look identical, but are in fact double doors. There is a plastered dado between the simple chair rail and baseboard.

The stair rises in one long flight to a transverse landing and returns in a short flight to the upper floor. The rail, however, curves into the transverse section, rather than continuing perpendicular to the runs of the stair. The delicate foliated stair brackets are thereby forced to constrict and form a frieze-like pattern on the curved section. The brackets are similar to ones illustrated in Owen Biddle's *The Young Carpenter's Assistant* (1810). The molded handrail is supported by plain balusters that are square in section. The newel post is delicately fashioned and includes a block surmounted by a round urn-shaped section from which a round tapering column rises to a simple band below a cylinder cap. It is a handsome example of joinery and is related to ones at several other local houses including Mount Fair.

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Section 7 Page 3

West Cote
Albemarle, Virginia

The room to the left of the front door is the parlor. The wooden wainscot is not paneled. The window cases rest on the chair rail and are treated in the same way as the door cases including blocks at the point where the frames meet the chair rail. The reveals are paneled with narrow vertical panels. The most interesting feature of the room is the robust mantel, a local variation of the three-part Adam type. Here coupled fluted colonnettes flank the fireplace opening. In the frieze above, a center panel with an ovoid sunburst is flanked by round sunbursts in square panels. These, in turn, are flanked by pairs of applied turned spools in end blocks which are placed over the colonnettes. There is a thin molded shelf above a band of dentils. Like the stair details, this mantel is related to ones in other nearby houses. It is likely that some of these are the work of a yet unidentified area craftsman. Across the hall is the library similar in detail to the parlor. The mantel is simpler and is flanked by massive eight-panel doors that serve cupboards.

On the second floor, as would be expected, the finishes are simpler than those on the first floor. The east room mantel has fluted pilasters and a tall paneled frieze. The center panel features a motif with a diamond-shaped center with quadrant-cut corners. The mantel in the west room is similar, but more conventional, with three identical plain rectangular frieze panels.

Office: Standing in the southwest corner of the front yard is a one-story, two-bay frame structure that may be somewhat earlier than the main dwelling. It is about 16½ feet square, has a gable roof and contains one room and a finished loft. The interior was heavily altered in the 20th century. The off-center five-course American-bond end chimney is probably a late-19th-century replacement. The building is typical of ones that were common in plantation complexes throughout the state.

Smokehouse: The smokehouse stands on the east side of the main house. It is a one-bay, gable-roofed frame building of weatherboards with a slate roof. It is built entirely of circular-sawn members and probably dates from the late 19th century.

Well: Between the smokehouse and the dwelling is a massive circular brick-lined well. The well is about eight feet in diameter. The water surface is about 75 feet from the top and the total depth is just under 100 feet. It is one of the largest known hand-dug wells in Virginia. It is assumed to have been dug by slaves soon after the house was constructed.

Corncrib: Standing about 75 yards northwest of the main house, the corncrib was built with ground-to-plate post construction, a form of construction that was common in early Virginia, but certainly not at the end of the 19th century when it is assumed this structure was built. To further complicate the analysis of the crib, timbers from a much earlier building were reused in its construction. There are members marked with Roman numerals that obviously have no relationship to each other either numerically or structurally. It is a rectangular structure 9 by 15 feet, with the gable end to the front. The roof is covered with standing-seam metal. The walls are sheathed with vertical wood slats one to two inches wide secured with cut nails. These were used to facilitate ventilation to keep the corn from mildewing. In the 20th century fine wire mesh was

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Section 7 Page 4

West Cote
Albemarle, Virginia

nailed around the exterior to keep out animals. The unusual construction of the front gable in what resembles the Stick Style, with projecting plate and return cornice, suggests that it may have been built around 1900 when the property was owned by the Blair family. Except for this detailing, the building is unornamented. The front door is of plain batten construction and swings on large iron strap hinges. A wrought-iron hasp secures the door to the jamb. Wire nails used on the door and other areas indicate that the building underwent repairs in the 20th century.

Stable: The building appears to be an early 20th-century building with an asymmetrical gable roof. It is covered with vertical board sheathing and a slate roof. Local workers familiar with West Cote recalled several years ago that the present barn and another one lost about 50 years ago were moved from the flats on the Rockfish River below the house.

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Section 8 Page 5

West Cote
Albemarle, Virginia

Statement of Significance: West Cote, in Albemarle County, Virginia, is one of a group of area houses that were built during the Federal period by talented craftsmen who were connected by experience or training to the buildings designed by Thomas Jefferson, his proteges or his friends. These structures all exhibit fine brickwork, academic classical detailing, and interior finishes of various types ranging from sophisticated Neo Classicism to regional folk art. These country houses were built during the economic expansion that followed the War of 1812. This came at the time when western Virginia became well settled and better roads, improved rivers and the building of canals encouraged the creation of wealth in both agriculture and trade. The building of the mansion at West Cote, ca. 1830, was indicative of all these elements and the story of its various owners mirrors the general history of the area and the era. West Cote is significant under Criterion C, for architecture.

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Section 8 Page 6

West Cote
Albemarle, Virginia

Historical Background:

What is now West Cote was once a part of large tracts of land assembled in the 1730s and 1740s by Allen Howard. Howard was one of a group of large landholders who were the contemporaries of Peter Jefferson, father of Thomas Jefferson. These men led and promoted the settlement of what eventually became Albemarle and its adjacent counties. Howard and his descendants lived near the confluence of the James and Rockfish rivers. The present house at West Cote was built about 1830 by one of those descendants, William Howard Carter (probably a grandson or great-grandson of Allen Howard).

Carter inherited the property in 1826. In 1837 he petitioned to erect a ferry across the James River near West Cote. The architectural and construction details indicate that he built Westcote between these dates. It was an era of house building and a number of large brick mansions rose both on the hills and in the valleys of Albemarle. This came at a time when the building of the University of Virginia was just being completed. This large state project brought to the area a group of skilled workmen, some of whom trained others. Many of both groups remained in the general area and became builders of houses, churches, and courthouses and made changes to older buildings. It is likely that someone who worked on the University buildings or was trained by University workmen built West Cote. Its fine brickwork, impressive portico (Jeffersonian in detail, but not in massing), and geometric front-door transom all are reminiscent of the retired president's idiosyncratic style.

By 1840 William Howard Carter was in financial straits. In that year he sold West Cote to Johnathan Crank, a neighbor. Two years later Crank sold the property to William D. Boaz who owned it for 12 years. Boaz sold West Cote in 1856 beginning a succession of six sales until 1893 when Andrew Blair, a prizefighter from Richmond, bought it. The Blair family used West Cote mainly as a retreat and called it "Summer Hill." They owned it until 1948, the longest family ownership in the history of the property. The next owners were the Grady Covingtons. Susan Byrd, the present owner, has owned the house since 1997.

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CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 9, 10 Page 7

West Cote
Albemarle, Virginia

Major Bibliographical References

Albemarle County deed, tax and will records. Albemarle County Courthouse, Charlottesville.

O'dell, Jeff. Excerpt from memo to Richard Gibbons about Summer Hill (Westcote), VDHR file no. 02-0098, Jan., 1989.

Rideout, Orlando. "An Architectural Survey of Howardsville, Va," paper, U. Va. School of Architecture, Charlottesville, April, 1976.

Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission File no. 02-934 (replaced by VDHR file no.02-0098), Summer Hill Corncrib, undated (probably 1983).

Geographical Data

UTM References, continued

	Zone	Easting	Northing
5	17	706620	4178650
6	17	706710	4178930

Verbal Boundary Description

The property known as West Cote is identified as parcel # 13900000002000 on the tax parcel maps for Albemarle County, Virginia.

Boundary Justification

The boundary for West Cote includes the main house and associated outbuildings that have historically been part of the property.

HOWARDSVILLE QUADRANGLE
 VIRGINIA
 7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)
 NW/4 BUCKINGHAM 15' QUADRANGLE

5259 1 SE
 (ESMONT)

259 1 SW (HUYLER) 704 705 40' 706 707 1960 000 FEET 9 MI. TO VA. 6 709 78° 37' 30" 37° 45'



	<u>Easting</u>	<u>Northing</u>
1.	706860	4178990
2.	707240	4178680
3.	707210	4178540
4.	706790	4178410
5.	706620	4178650
6.	706110	4178930

GLENMORE 8 M