United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
P.O. Box 37127
Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

IN REPLY REFER TO:

H32(2280)

JUL 23 1996

Mr. H. Alexander Wise, Jr.
Director
Department of Historic Resources
221 Governor Street
Richmond, VA 23219

Dear Mr. Wise:

We have reviewed the recent letter by your staff informing us that Mount Ida in Buckingham County, Virginia, will soon be moved to a new location. The letter requests, under National Register regulations 36 CFR 60.14(b), that we review the proposed move and that Mount Ida remain listed in the National Register during and after the move.

The letter (and accompanying documentation) establish that the proposed move has been reviewed and approved by the Virginia State Historic Preservation Review Board, the move is necessary to save the building, the plans for the move will preserve the historic integrity of Mount Ida, it will be moved to an appropriate new location which closely approximates its original setting, and that no important historic or archeological properties will be destroyed on the new site. Based upon this information, Mount Ida will remain listed in the National Register during its move. Once the building is moved please provide us with the following: a letter notifying us when the property was moved, photographs of the property on its new site, revised maps, including a USGS map, acreage, and a new verbal boundary description. Upon our review of this material we will provide a final decision on whether the property will remain listed in the National Register.

We look forward to hearing from you once Mount Ida has been relocated. Please let us know if we may provide further information or assistance.

Sincerely,

Pete Poland

for Carol D. Shull
Keeper of the National Register
or Historic Places
National Register, History and Education

NPS Form 10-900
(3-82)

VLR- 10/14/86 NRHP- 4/27/87 J. O'Dell 12-4-91

OMB No. 1024-0018
Exp. 10-31-84

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received

date entered

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

1. Name

historic Mount Ida (DHL File No. 14-115)

and or common same

2. Location

street & number VA Route 610 N/A not for publication

city, town New Canton X vicinity of

state Virginia code 51 county Buckingham code 029

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
___ district	___ public	___ occupied	X agriculture	___ museum
X building(s)	X private	X unoccupied	___ commercial	___ park
___ structure	___ both	___ work in progress	___ educational	___ private residence
___ site	**Public Acquisition**	**Accessible**	___ entertainment	___ religious
___ object	___ in process	X yes: restricted	___ government	___ scientific
	___ being considered	___ yes: unrestricted	___ industrial	___ transportation
	N/A	___ no	___ military	___ other:

4. Owner of Property

name Mr. and Mrs. A. Burnett Jones; William Jones

street & number Route 1, Box 43

city, town New Canton N/A vicinity of state VA

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Buckingham County Courthouse

street & number N/A

city, town Buckingham state VA

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Division of Historic Landmarks Survey File No. 14-115 has this property been determined eligible? ___ yes X no

date 1973, 1986 ___ federal X state ___ county ___ local

depository for survey records Division of Historic Landmarks, 221 Governor Street

city, town Richmond state Virginia

Mount Ida
Name of Property

Albemarle County, VA
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

private	X
public-local	
public-State	
public-Federal	

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

building(s)	X
district	
site	
structure	
object	

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Non contributing	
0	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
Total		

Name of related multiple property listing MOUNT IDA

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register
1

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)
DOMESTIC: single dwelling

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)
DOMESTIC: single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)
FEDERAL
walls

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)
foundation BRICK
WOOD--weatherboards
roof METAL--standing seam
other

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

8. Statement of Significance

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.

_X_ **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 value, 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

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions)
ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance
1790-1795
1840-1850

Criteria Consideration
(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply)

Property is:

___ **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes

_X_ **B** removed from its original location

___ **C** a birthplace or 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

Significant Dates
1790-1795
1840-1850
1995

Significant Person
(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder
UNKNOWN

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

_X_See continuation sheet

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

Previous documentation of file (NPS):
___preliminary determination of individual listing
___(36 CFR 67) has been requested
_X_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 #

Primary location of additional data:
_X_State historic preservation office
___Other State agency
___Federal agency
___Local government
___University
___Other
Specify repository: Virginia Department of Historic Resources, 221 Governor Street, Richmond, VA 23219

Mount Ida
Name of Property

Albemarle County, VA
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property:
433 acres

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

__x__See continuation sheet

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

__x__See continuation sheet

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

__x__See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title	Lisa Marie Tucker		
organization	Frazier Associates	date	June 1998
street and number	213 N. Augusta Street	telephone	(540) 886-6230
city or town	Staunton	state VA	zip code 24401

Information from the original form written by the Virginia Department of Historic Resources staff is included in this form.

Additional Information

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.)

Property Owner

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

name James Brady Murray, Jr.	
street and number #0 Court Square	telephone (804) 971-8080
city or town Charlotteville	state VA zip code 22902

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 us required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Preservation Act as amended. (16 U.S.C. 470 et. seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this information is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and manufacturing 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, D.C. 20013-7127; and the Office of Management And Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, D.C. 20503.

Summary Description

Mount Ida is a circa 1785-1805 plantation house located near Scottsville, on Route 795 in Albemarle County, Virginia.[1] The two-story, wood-frame dwelling is noteworthy for the extraordinary woodwork found in the west parlor.[2] The fully paneled fireplace wall is a masterpiece of joinery and ornamental woodcarving. It combines monumentality with delicate detail and originality with a basic academic vocabulary. While it is customary for the treatment of parlors to be more elaborate than other rooms, here the contrast is far more pronounced than usual. This underscores the social importance the owner intended the parlor woodwork to declare to visitors.

Architectural Analysis

Mount Ida, a two-story, wood-frame residence, has evolved from a simple to a relatively complex plan. It began circa 1785-1805 as a two-story, single-pile, side-passage-plan house with a large parlor to the west of a stair passage, two smaller rooms in a single-story wing beyond the parlor, and probably another room to the east. (Foundation remains and the presence of reused interior woodwork indicates the existence of an earlier room.) The room was replaced or largely rebuilt in the mid-nineteenth century,

[1]Though the house is now located in Albemarle County, it was built originally in Buckingham County, Virginia.

[2]The original nomination consisted of five contributing buildings: main house, kitchen, tenant house, barn and threshing barn; one non-contributing building, a collapsed tobacco barn; and one contributing structure, a stone bridge. Of these all but the main house were sold and removed or fell into ruin. The last owner offered the main house for sale. The important woodwork was slated for removal, but was saved only through the action of the present owner when he bought the house and meticulously dismantled it, and reassembled it on a remarkably similar site a few miles away. This nomination includes only one contributing building, the Mount Ida house.

when a large, two-story, double-pile-plan addition was constructed to the east of the passage. Furthermore, there was an early porch behind the parlor and passage, as evidenced by exterior flush sheathing on the rear wall. The porch was enclosed as a room in the mid-nineteenth century. The present east porch was added late in the nineteenth century. The front porch began as a small rectangular one-bay porch, which was enlarged in the middle of the 19th century and reworked in 1932 to include a central gable. During the current restoration, structural evidence revealed the original configuration of the porch and it was restored using the original fabric.

The foundation of the original section is executed in Flemish-bond brick with lined mortar joints. The facade of the two-story main block is five bays wide. There is a one-bay wing to the west. Like all elevations, the front is covered with weatherboards attached with wrought nails. The main entrance has paneled double doors and a transom. It is sheltered by a one-story Doric porch featuring pairs of columns supporting a full entablature and hipped roof. Windows consist of nine-over-nine, double-hung-sash in the main block and six-over nine in the west wing. Some original wrought-iron shutter keepers remain. A cornice of undercut modillions embellishes the roofline on all elevations.

The rear (north) elevation is marked by a two-story, one-bay wing as well as a one-story shed-roofed porch along the western end (that had been enclosed at some point in the past, but was restored to its original configuration during the recent restoration). The rear elevation has original nine-over-nine, double-hung-sash in the windows of the main block and six-over-nine in the windows of the west wing.

The west elevation has a one-story wing and a brick semi-exterior end chimney executed in Flemish-bond. The east elevation features a one-story enclosed porch and the shafts of two interior end chimneys, which rise from the end slope of the hip roof.

On the interior, the central passage contains the main stair. It has a turned newel and balusters, a molded handrail, a paneled spandrel, scrolled brackets and ramped rails, and related wainscot caps. To the west of the stairhall is the parlor. It is the most elaborately carved room in the house. The focal point of the room is the fireplace wall. The chimneypiece consists of a rectangular fireplace surrounded by a three-part architrave embellished with a well-executed guilloche. Above the firebox is a frieze with unadorned blocks at each end which frame a robust Greek key band ornamented with an eccentric pattern of diminutive punched holes. Above the frieze is a handsome carved pediment. Its tympanum is unadorned but its architraves are richly embellished with frets and dentils. Above the pediment is a small rectangular overmantel panel set

in a crossetted architrave. Framing this composition is a pair of Doric pilasters that extend from floor to ceiling. The main cornice is set at the same level as the caps of the pilasters and, rather than touching, the cornice ends in a return on either side of the pilasters—a most unusual liberty taken with normal classical design. Below the molded cornice are a corbel table and a Greek key frieze. The doors and windows are topped by entablatures with frets between fluted end blocks. A pediment similar to the one above the fireplace further embellishes the passage door. In addition, the room has a flush-board wainscot with heavily molded baseboard and a chair rail embellished with dentils. The wainscot breaks out to form aprons below the windows, and the corners are finished with beads. The doors are deeply paneled and retain their original hardware.

The social importance of the parlor's treatment is underscored by the relative absence of such elaboration elsewhere. The west wing and second floor-chambers contain more conventional Federal-era trim; the most distinguishing features in all rooms are the mantels. The first-floor rooms to the east of the passage contain Greek Revival-style woodwork. The door and window openings in the front (south) room have frets that were undoubtedly inspired by Asher Benjamin's Practical House Carpenter, plate 28. The door openings are topped with shallow pediments.

Reasons for Move

Mount Ida was moved to save it from demolition by deterioration or sale for its materials. The house was constructed originally in the northwestern corner of Buckingham County on the James River. A 1933 real estate site plan revealed that eighteen outbuildings surrounded the main house. In 1959, the Jones family purchased the property. They rented the house to tenants until the mid-1970s when the dwelling was vacated. During this time, most of the farm buildings on the property and the main house received little maintenance. As a result, many outbuildings collapsed or were sold and removed from the farm. When the staff of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources wrote the nomination in 1986, only five outbuildings remained, one of which had collapsed and was noncontributing. In 1995, only three of the five were left: the threshing barn (though still standing, had been sold and was slated to be moved to another county), the kitchen building located behind the house was in a state of advanced deterioration, and a single tobacco barn which was being used for hay storage. When the current owner, James Murray, purchased Mount Ida, the front and side porches were collapsing and the roof on the west side of the addition was leaking. Several panes of glass were missing from the windows and a gate had to be installed on the front porch to prevent cows from roaming freely in the house.

The house had been for sale since the mid-1980s to anyone willing to move it from the property. In 1991, Lewis Ramsey, acting as Mr. Jones's agent, nearly sold the parlor

woodwork to the Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts (MESDA). The sale was not completed and many individuals and the Virginia Department of Historic Resources raised the concern that one of Virginia's premier architectural landmarks would be lost to a museum in another state. VDHR Senior Architectural Historian, Calder Loth recorded the concerns of the state on June 14, 1991. At this time, there was also a possibility that the house might be moved in its entirety to Goochland County.

In the summer of 1995, James Brady Murray agreed to purchase the house and move it, in its entirety, to a similar site located along the Hardware River in Albemarle County. The new location consists of a site of 422.65 acres, with an elevated knoll located along a bend in the Hardware River. This site provided a new location for Mount Ida that offers many similarities to its old one. Originally the manor house of a large tract of land, Mount Ida once again sits on a large undisturbed bucolic site overlooking a river. Like the original site, the new site consists of rolling hills with a line of hardwoods along the river in the distance.

The knoll upon which the house rests was formerly the location of a late eighteenth century house which had been demolished in the 1960s by the lumber company that owned the property at the time. Prior to placing Mount Ida on the new site, Mr. Murray contracted with the Department of Anthropology at the College of William and Mary to

conduct archaeological investigations to discover information about the former house. Led by Don Linebaugh, the archaeological team concluded that the modest house originally on the site was a hall-parlor plan dwelling built in the late eighteenth century. It was later expanded into a central-passage plan in the mid-nineteenth century. The team's most significant discovery was that builder trenches were located along the foundation walls of the former house. The William and Mary staff also oversaw the excavation for the new foundation for Mount Ida to ensure that any additional artifacts or discoveries were properly recorded. Many extant similar dwellings from this same time period are located along the Hardware River.

Procedures for Move

Because of Mt. Ida's important place in Virginia's architectural legacy, James Murray expended substantial effort to move the mansion as carefully as possible and to maintain all historic materials that were not severely deteriorated and beyond repair. Brick by brick and board by board, Mount Ida was carefully labeled and then disassembled to facilitate moving the entire house to the new location. The entire process was photographically documented with both black and white 35-mm film and color slides as well as large-format, HABS-level photography. Complete floor plans and elevations were drawn based upon the measurements of the house prior to commencement of work. The contractor, Lewis Ramsey, worked within the dismantling

specifications provided by Frazier Associates, the historical architecture firm that supervised the project.

The house has been carefully reassembled atop a new foundation that replicates the variations in brick pattern and color of the original. As with its original site, Mount Ida faces south and is approached from the southwest corner. The new foundation was constructed of a concrete block core faced with the historic bricks from Mount Ida's original foundation walls. The wall framing was reassembled, roof structure put back together and the floorboards were put back down in exactly the same positions (an action that adds much to the feeling of the old building). Of course, all of the doors, windows, paneling, stairs, and hearths have been meticulously reassembled. The subtle wear and weathering that occur over time on the floors of old houses is still quite evident when one walks through Mt. Ida's rooms.

All work on the existing house as well as on the design of the new addition to the north (rear) elevation closely adhered to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards. Frazier Associates worked closely with the Virginia Department of Historic Resources to ensure that the integrity of the historic house was retained and that all new work was sensitive to the character historic building. The exterior beaded weatherboards were reused, as were the historic bricks from the foundation and chimneys. The three different periods

of brickwork were carefully separated during the disassembly and were reused in the appropriate locations when the house was reassembled.

The new addition was designed to be reversible and was located on the north elevation of the house in such a manner that it cannot be seen when approaching the house. The proportions and scale echo that of the main house as do the size and shape of the window openings. Though elements of the new section relate to those in the historic structure, they were abstracted and simplified to clearly distinguish the new work and massing from the old.

At the house's new site, the integrity of setting, materials, craftsmanship, and design of the original structure have been preserved. While the location itself has been altered, this new site replicated Mt. Ida's original Piedmont setting amidst bucolic woods on an elevated knoll overlooking a river. By placing the facilities needed for a gracious modern lifestyle in the new addition, the original house was left virtually unaltered. It survives as a subject of prime importance to the study of Virginia architecture and craftsmanship.

Archaeological Investigation of the Receiving Site

In accordance with National Register Bulletin 16A "How to Complete the National Register Registration Form," Section VI "Amending National Register Forms," under the "Approval for a Move" instructions, James Brady Murray, Jr. contracted with the Center for Archaeology at the College of William and Mary to conduct an archaeological investigation of the receiving site. The purpose of the survey work was to investigate and evaluate the site to determine boundaries and assess the historical significance of the site. The fieldwork included both archaeological fieldwork and historical research. A total of 283 shovel tests were conducted, each approximately twelve inches in diameter, at regular intervals across the hilltop site all around the former house. The Management Summary of the fieldwork stated the following:

> Although it has experienced significant impacts from previous logging and clearing activities, Site 44AB436 is considered eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A and D. Excavation of systematic shovel tests and test units indicates that the features related to all phases of the site's occupation are preserved beneath this plowzone layer. Therefore, the site has significant research potential for addressing issues related to the lives of the area settlers, both white and black, during a significant period of the Commonwealth's history. It is recommended that

the site be preserved or that areas of possible impact be mitigated through additional excavation. This additional work would include stripping the plowzone or overburden, identification of features, i.e. building foundations or postholes, trash pits, fencelines, etc., and recording and excavation of these features. It is felt that the archaeological and architectural investigation of the house ruin has exhausted the research potential of this feature, although monitoring of its removal has the potential to answer some remaining questions about the building's construction and evolution.

With the concurrence of the Department of Historic Resources, the removal of the former house remains and the excavation of the new foundation for Mount Ida were carefully monitored by the College of William and Mary research team in conformity with the team's own management recommendation. The artifacts from both investigations are in the collections of the College of William and Mary.

Statement of Significance

Mount Ida, located on a commanding site above the Hardware River in Albemarle County, is architecturally significant for its parlor, one of the most formal and sophisticated late-eighteenth century rooms yet recorded in Virginia. The circa 1785-1805 residence was built by William Cannon, a captain in the Buckingham militia during the American Revolution who became one of the largest landowners in the county.[3] Most probably, at the height of his economic prosperity, Cannon allowed his unknown builder to lavish considerable attention to his parlor, the architectural elements of which are derived from English builder's guides of the late eighteenth century. The parlor woodwork at Mount Ida, while unique, seems to be related to that at Woodlands, an Amelia County house, and several other houses built around the same time and most probably by the same hand.

Criterion C: It is the outstanding quality and rarity of Mt. Ida's woodwork that makes it and the structure that evolved around it eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C.

[3] The house was originally built in Buckingham County and is now located in Albemarle County.

Criteria Consideration B: Despite its move to another location, Mount Ida retains its architectural significance thanks to the painstaking scholarly approach to the dismantling and reassembling of all its pieces (outlined in Section 7). Few reconstructed houses have had such acute attention paid to minor details and finishes. The archaeological investigations of its original and present sites contributed not only to our knowledge of Mt. Ida, but also to the cultural history of Piedmont Virginia. Happily the new site is remarkably similar to the original one. The house does not sit as an alien artifact on display, but rather as the centerpiece of an estate set in rolling fenced fields, with views across a small river to forested foothills. In the end, the mansion's rescue by relocation proved to be the laudable and inevitable solution to its preservation.

Historical Background

Originally situated on the James River five miles from New Canton, Buckingham County, Mount Ida stood on what was once part of the Cannon family land. The Cannons held land in the area as early as 1730, when William Cannon acquired 300 acres north of the Fluvanna (James) River in what was then Goochland County. In 1733 he added 1,700 acres on the south bank, Willis River. In addition, he gained an additional 374 acres on the James River from the Cocke family.

William Cannon died in 1749, and at least a portion of his estate passed to his son, John who already owned land in the area and continued to add to his holdings. During his lifetime, John Cannon deeded 1,200 acres to his son, William. The remainder of the estate passed to William on his father's death in 1788. In addition William purchased 143 acres from the Lovell family (date unknown), and in 1794-1795 acquired a 500-acre Bear Garden tract from the Cocke family and an additional 150 acres from the Loving family. It is unclear exactly which of the Cannon land purchases in the Fluvanna/Bear Garden area became the Mount Ida tract.

It seems likely that the second William Cannon was the builder of Mount Ida sometime between 1785 and 1805. He is also the most notable figure associated with the property. At various times he served as vestryman for Tillotson Parish, recorder of the county list of tithables, and county sheriff. A ferry was established in the county in 1776 on Cannon's land later served as a boundary point in a 1778 transfer of land from Buckingham County to Cumberland County. During the Revolution, Cannon was a captain in the Buckingham County militia. Records of claims for impressed property show his authority to requisition goods and transportation for the militia, as well as his own contribution of stores to the Continental Army. His requisition activities were associated with the movement of the Buckingham Militia to aid General Nathaniel Green in the North Carolina campaign of 1781.

The Buckingham County personal property tax lists indicate that William Cannon's greatest prosperity came during the period 1785-1787, when he owned as many as 50 slaves, 70 head of cattle, and 22 horses. On June 24, 1790, Cannon married his second wife, Martha Cocke, fourth child of James Cocke of Amelia County. Presumably, Cannon constructed Mount Ida in the years after this marriage. A reflection of Cannon's prosperity, the parlor woodwork at Mount Ida ranks among the most elaborate found in Virginia from the turn of the eighteenth century. Derived in part from English builder's guides, the woodwork demonstrates deft workmanship and knowledge of architecture on the part of its unidentified builder. No clue has been found to the builder's name; however, his work may survive in several other houses in central Virginia. One of them, Woodlands, now moved to Goochland County, was originally built 1789-1794 in Amelia County by Stephen Cocke, the brother of Martha (Cocke) Cannon, William Cannon's second wife. Hence, through kinship, there is more than just an architectural connection between the two houses. Like the parlor at Mount Ida, the ballroom at Woodlands is elaborately ornamented with a pedimented overmantel flanked by pilasters, pedimented doorcases, and details similar to, but more academic than, those found at Mount Ida.

William Cannon's enjoyment of Mount Ida was short-lived. His wealth declined after 1790 and he lost Mount Ida by 1805. Cannon and his family moved to Tennessee and eventually settled in Kentucky, where he died in 1820.

The next owner was David Ross one of the founders of the milling and mining industries in Richmond. Under Ross' ownership, Mount Ida formed part of a trust established by David Ross in 1815 to settle his son David's debts. A series of letters from David Ross, Sr., then living in Richmond, to a Mr. LaFontaine, his attorney and business agent in Buckingham, provide an interesting glimpse into a father and son relationship under strained circumstances. It was probably during Ross family ownership that a threshing mill, stone bridge, and log tenant house were built.

In 1833 William Leitch left his merchandising business at Buckingham Court House and purchased Mount Ida presumably from the Ross family. Since the Buckingham County records burned in the courthouse fire of 1869, the chain of title for the property is incomplete. From the Leitchs the property passed to the Coles family in 1909, to the Percie family in 1934, and to the Jones family in 1959. In 1995, James Brady Murray, Jr., of Albemarle County, purchased the Mount Ida house, dismantled it, and reassembled it in nearby Albemarle County, as the centerpiece of a farm located along the Hardware River.

The Present Site of Mt. Ida

The site in Albemarle County on which the Mt. Ida house was moved had been the site of a dwelling known as the Dawson or Brockenbrough house that had been razed in the 1960s. The earliest section of the Dawson house, a hall-parlor plan dwelling, was built between 1799 and 1815 and was enlarged twice: first prior to 1840 and later between 1840 and 1860. The hall-parlor plan type is represented by eight other extant homesteads in the Scottsville area of Albemarle County, located along or near the Hardware River.

Mount Ida's new site may have been part of a 6,500-acre parcel granted to Colonel Francis Epes in 1730. While the earliest title to the property is unclear, Pleasant Dawson is known to have obtained the property in 1794 and built the earliest part of the house shortly after acquiring the property. From Pleasant Dawson the property passed to Martin, his brother. Martin Dawson, a bachelor, left the house and land equally to a nephew, also named Pleasant Dawson, and his heirs. During this time the Dawson home was known as Bell Mount. In 1855, Isaac and Jane Forbes purchased the three hundred-acre tract upon which Bell Mount stood. Upon moving to Tennessee, the Forbeses sold the property to local banker, John O. Lewis, who apparently never actually lived in the house, experienced financial difficulties which caused the property to revert back to the Forbeses following the Civil War. The family appointed John S.

Moon to find a buyer for the property, which he did in 1871. Casper Schmidt and family moved into Bell Mount in 1876, which was again reclaimed by the Forbes family in 1878. The Forbes family finally relinquished ownership of the property to Thomas Brockenbrough in 1881. Brockenbrough willed the house to Josephine Long who, in turn, sold the property to Robert Gough in 1925. Gough, filing for bankruptcy in 1935, lost the property. P. H. Faulconer bought it at auction in 1937. Five years later, Faulconer sold the property to the Guthrie family, the last family to own the house. In 1956, Barnes Lumber Company obtained the property and sold it to Continental Can Company who transferred it to KMI Continental Woodlands. Sometime during the Continental Can ownership, the house was demolished. Continental Woodlands sold the land to Bear Island Timberlands in 1986. James Brady Murray, Jr. and son purchased the property from Bear Island Timberlands in 1994.[4]

[4]William and Mary Center for Archaeological Research, "Archaeological and Architectural Investigations at Site 44AB436, the Dawson House, Albemarle County, Virginia," February 6, 1996, Draft Report.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Benjamin, Asher. The Practical House Carpenter. Boston: Published by the Author, R. P. and C. Williams, and Annin and Smith, 1830.

Harrison Papers, Virginia Historical Society, Richmond, VA

Lorraine, G.B. "Joint Stock Land Book," Virginia State Library Folder on Mount Ida.

Pain, William. The Practical Builder. London: I. & J. Taylor, 1793.

Patent and Grant Index. Archives, Virginia State Library, Richmond, VA.

Pennington, Margaret, and Scott, Lorna S. The Courthouse Burned. Waynesboro: Charles McClung, 1977.

Reed, H.S.T. "Woodlands, A Virginia Plantation House." Antiques. January, pp. 228-232.

Virginia Department of Historic Resources File Number 14-115.

Whitley, Edythe R. Genealogical Records of Buckingham County, Virginia. Berryville: Virginia Book Co., 1984.

William and Mary Center for Archaeological Research. "Archaeological and Architectural Investigation at Site 44AB436, The Dawson House, Albemarle County, Virginia." Draft Report, February 6, 1996.

GEOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

UTM References

	Easting	Northing
A.	7201410	4192680
B.	720640	4192560
C.	721180	4192580
D.	721580	4192200
E.	721720	4192200
F.	721760	4192180
G.	721760	4192040
H.	721820	4192000
I.	721820	4191940
J.	721600	4191880
K.	721480	4191600
L.	721610	4191470
M.	721630	4191160
N.	721580	4191140
O.	721590	4191160
P.	721440	4191220
Q.	721300	4191210
R.	721200	4191080
S.	720360	4191400
T.	720110	4191400
U.	720160	4191650
V.	720130	4191750
W.	720180	4191850
X.	720280	4191970
Y.	720270	4191260
Z.	720440	4191270
AA.	720420	4191340
BB.	720300	4191560

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundaries of the Mount Ida property correspond to the above mentioned UTMs.

Boundary Justification

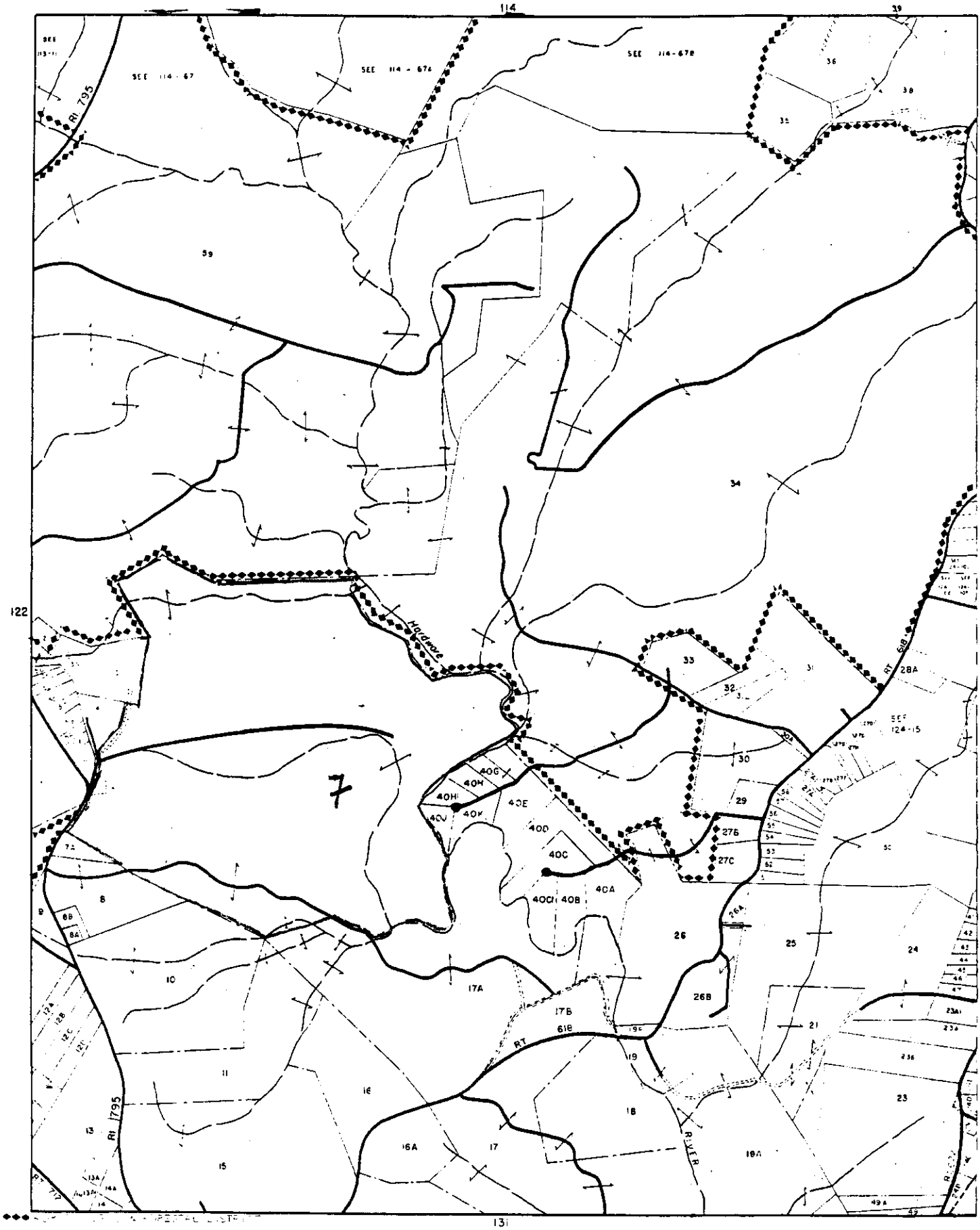
The property included as a part of the Mount Ida National Register Nomination includes the entire 422.65-acre tract owned by James Murray and son along the Hardware River. The property consists of the entire knoll situated at the bend in the Hardware River upon which the house sits as well as the acreage that follows the long drive back to the house site from the state road. The property boundaries protect the views in all directions from the main house and follow along the edge of hardwoods lining the Hardware River.

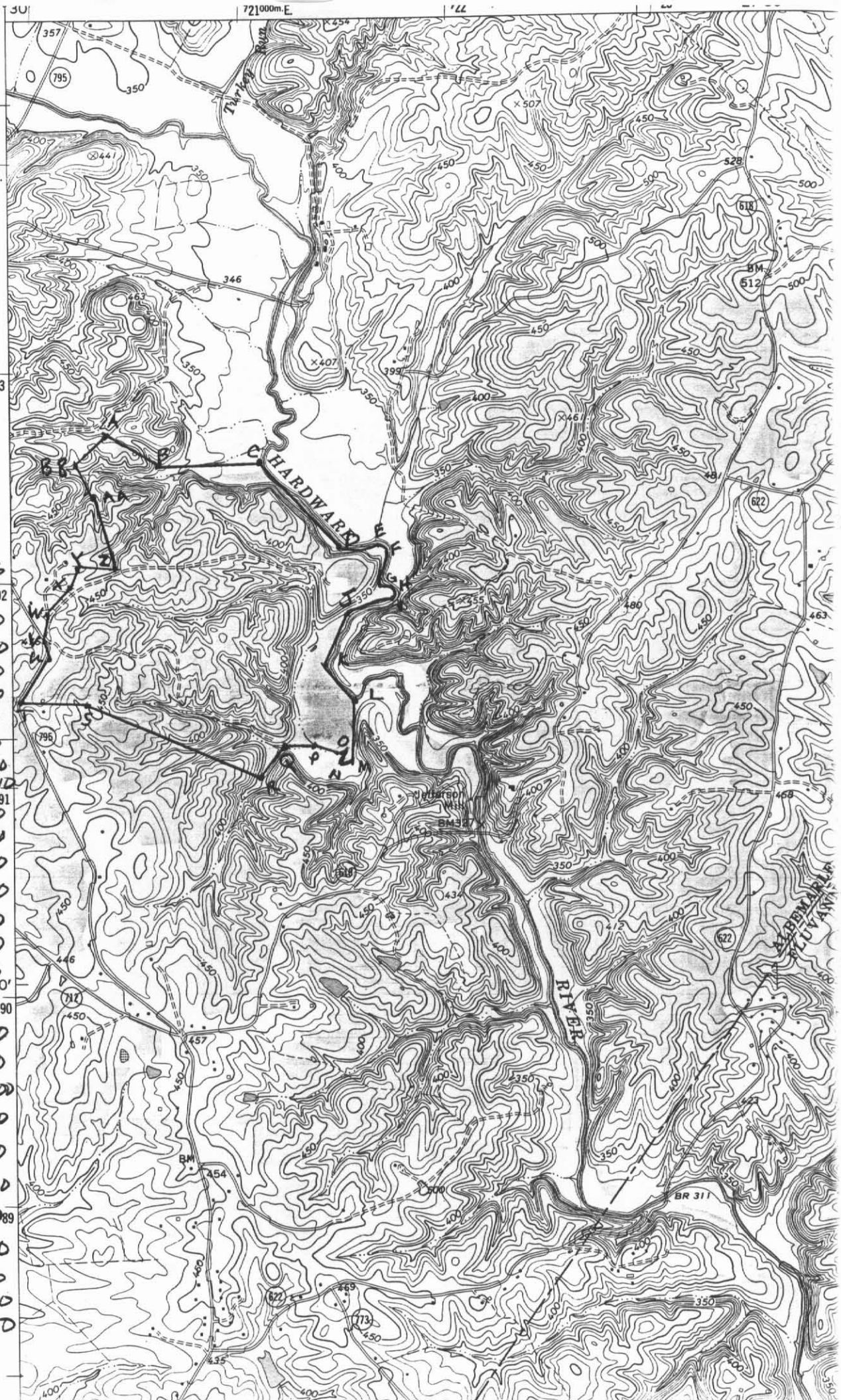
The legal boundary is defined on the attached Albemarle County Tax Parcel Map # 123, as parcel #7, in the Scottsville District.

PLAT OF MOUNT IDA

TAX MAP 123, PARCEL #7

ALBEMARLE COUNTY





MOUNT IDA
Scottsville Quadrangle
Albemarle Co. VA
VDHR # 002-5001
UTM References

	EASTING	NORTHING
A.	720410	4192680
B.	720640	4192560
C.	721180	4192580
D.	721580	4192200
E.	721720	4192200
F.	721760	4192180
G	721760	4192400
H.	721820	4192000
I.	721820	4191940
J.	721600	4191880
K.	721480	4191600
L.	721610	4191470
M	721630	4191160
N.	721580	4191140
O.	721590	4191160
P.	721440	4191220
Q.	721300	4191210
R.	721200	4191080
S.	720360	4191400
T.	720110	4191400
U.	720160	4191650
V.	720130	4191750
W	720180	4191850
X	720180	4191970
Y	720270	4191260
Z	720440	4191270
AA	720420	4191340
BB	720300	4191560