

VLR - 2/15/77 (expanded: 3/10/94) NRHP- 5/31/79

Form No. 10-300 (Rev. 10-74)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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DATE ENTERED **May 31 1979**

**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 **Blenheim**

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER **2.4 miles SW of Spring Mills; .5 mile W of Falling River; .3 mile E of State Route 648. 1.1 miles SE of intersection of State Routes 648 and 604.**

CITY, TOWN **Spring Mills** VICINITY OF **Fifth (W. G. Daniel)**
STATE **Virginia** CODE **51** COUNTY **Campbell** CODE **031**

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
			<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
			<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
			<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME **Mr. and Mrs. Douglas A. Crowther**

STREET & NUMBER **Blenheim Farm, Route 1**

CITY, TOWN **Concord** VICINITY OF STATE **Virginia 24538**

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. **Campbell County Courthouse**

STREET & NUMBER
CITY, TOWN **Rustburg** STATE **Virginia**

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE **Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Survey**

DATE **1975** FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS **Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission, 221 Governor Street**
CITY, TOWN **Richmond** STATE **Virginia 23219**

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Blenheim is a large farm situated in the rolling Campbell County Piedmont. The small early nineteenth-century frame house is set well back from the road and is approached by a long winding drive.

The house is a long, five-bay, single-pile, story-and-a-half structure with small wings at either end and is set on a basement built of brick laid in four-course American bond. It is sheathed with beaded weatherboards and covered with a standing-seam sheet metal roof broken by three pedimented dormers with six-over-six sash. The main block is lit by nine-over-nine windows with louvred blinds, and there are six-over-six sash and louvred blinds in the wings. Brick exterior end chimneys mark the ends of the main block; the west chimney is rebuilt.

The distinctive feature of Blenheim is its delicate woodwork. The box cornice is decorated with dentils, cable moldings, and stylized machicolations, which are returned around the ends of the box. An elaborate doorway marks the front entrance. Fluted pilasters of undetermined order are set on high pedestals and embellished with a broad necking with gouged swags and a guilloche band on their caps. This band is carried across the door head and recessed to form the impost for the semicircular fanlight and, recessed still further, to form the bottom rail of the fanlight, which protrudes into the tympanum of a shallow pediment supported on entablature blocks with reeded architraves and friezes composed of stylized leaves. Both the front and rear entrances are sheltered by pedimented porches with chamfered posts and dentil cornices.

As in many other houses of the Piedmont area, the basement at Blenheim is an important living space. The house is thus, in reality, a two-and-one-half-story, central-passage "I" house.

The basement rooms are decorated plainly, with a simple Federal mantel in the west room. This consists of a mantel shelf supported on unadorned entablature and frieze blocks which in turn rest upon the architrave enframing of the opening. This design is similar to Plate XXI of Owen Biddle's The Young Carpenter's Assistant (1810).

The first floor contains a wealth of fine woodwork. The open-well stair has a closed string decorated with moldings and applied sawn brackets, to suggest an open string, and with an elaborate arrangement of rectilinear and triangular molded panels in the spandrel. At the landing, the frieze is decorated with alternating reeded panels and gouged six-pointed stars. The simple turned balusters that rest on the string course in each of the stairs's flights are supported at the landing on a baseboard decorated with a guilloche band enriched with six-pointed applied flowers. The elliptical banister is ramped and eased at the newels, which are turned to bulbous profiles. A molded-panel dado is carried up the stairs, with a chair rail and highly attenuated pilasters echoing the banister and newel posts.

The ~~east~~^{west} room (parlor) is the most elaborately decorated chamber in the house. The mantel, which is loosely based upon another model in Plate XXI of Biddle's work, consists of slender, fluted pilasters supporting recessed-panel entablature blocks and central tablet; there is a molded shelf above. Flanking the mantel are doors leading to a closet and to one of the wings. Their architrave frames are surmounted by complex, naively conceived but masterfully executed entablatures, each with a central molded panel which has no lower edge but which terminates at the door head. These panels are framed by symmetrically molded entablature blocks supporting a flat cornice broken out in an exaggerated manner over the blocks and with a machicolated fascia. An intervening band of molding at the top of the frieze consists of strips of fluting separated by gouged eight-pointed stars. Recessed-panel wainscoting with the fluting-and-star design of

(See Continuation Sheet #1)

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BLLENHEIM, Campbell County, Virginia

CONTINUATION SHEET 1

ITEM NUMBER #7 PAGE 1

DESCRIPTION

(7)

the door heads used on the chair rail, is carried around the room. The windows have aedicule frames similar to, but less elaborate than, the door frames. Slender reeded pilasters without bases or capitals decorate the jambs and support a plain frieze and flat machicolated cornice. The pilasters are supported on out-sized fluted pedestals in the dado.

The dining ^(East)~~(West)~~ room is a plainer version of the parlor. The mantel resembles the parlor mantel, but the pilasters have recessed panels; the entablature blocks and tablet are undecorated. Doors to a closet and to the wing, with plain architrave frames, flank the mantel, and recessed-panel wainscoting with a beaded chair rail is carried around the room.

A frame stable, probably dating from the late nineteenth century, survives to the ~~east~~ of the house.

west

DTU

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The Register bounds are rectangular and are bounded on the southwest by the drive and on the other three sides by imaginary lines. These boundaries enclose the house and early stable.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD		AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)		
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION				

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Blenheim, situated in the rolling Piedmont hills of Campbell County, is notable for its elaborate, provincially conceived but skillfully executed, woodwork. While generally rare, decoration so profusely applied is characteristic of the best quality houses in Piedmont Virginia. Normally it would not be found in a dwelling with so modest an exterior as Blenheim. Probably built by the Jones family sometime after 1810, Blenheim is a monument to the rural craftsman's art.

In 1809 John Reid sold 345 acres of land on the Falling River to William Jones, the son of his neighbor Major Jones. This land included the present Blenheim. The house may have been erected soon after Jones's purchase of the land; it seems likely, at any rate, that he lived there from the time he acquired the property, for no other land is charged to him in the county tax books. It is more likely, however, that the present house was erected as late as 1828, when the tax assessment for Blenheim's improvements was raised from \$600 to \$2000, with the cryptic notation "altered."

The decoration at Blenheim, while highly original as a whole, does show a debt to Owen Biddle's The Young Carpenter's Assistant (Philadelphia, Richmond, and Lexington, Ky., 1810), a book which was used in the design of Point of Honor, an elegant house in nearby Lynchburg. In particular, the basement mantel at Blenheim adheres quite closely to a design illustrated in Plate XXI of Biddle's book. Other aspects of the woodwork show a more general debt to the book and are illustrative of the very free manner in which the best provincial craftsmen used the published resources available to them.

Jones died in 1858, and the property passed to his wife. In 1869 William Jones's son Lamech sold Blenheim to E. C. Randolph, who quickly conveyed it to John Devereux. Devereux gave the property its present name.

After passing through several subsequent owners, Blenheim has been renovated by its present owners, Mr. and Mrs. Douglas Crowther.

DTU/MTP

37g

GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

DIVISION OF T
JAMES L. CALVI

79°00' 678000m E. 679 680 1.5 MI. TO VA 646 57'30" 682 (APPOM.)

4124000m N.

4123

4122

4121

4120

12'30"

U.S.G.S. 7.5' quadrangle (scale:1:24,000)
 Mike, Va. 1966

BLENHEIM, Campbell County, Virginia
 UTM References:
 17/681710/4121120

