



U. S. Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

Montrose  
Dinwiddie County, VA

**5. Classification**

**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 |            |
|--------------|-----------------|------------|
| <u>  2  </u> | <u>  1  </u>    | buildings  |
| <u>  0  </u> | <u>  0  </u>    | sites      |
| <u>  0  </u> | <u>  0  </u>    | structures |
| <u>  0  </u> | <u>  0  </u>    | objects    |
| <u>  2  </u> | <u>  1  </u>    | 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  

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions** (Enter categories from instructions)

|                          |                                 |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Cat: <u>  Domestic  </u> | Sub: <u>  single dwelling  </u> |
| <u>  Domestic  </u>      | <u>  smoke house  </u>          |
| _____                    | _____                           |
| _____                    | _____                           |
| _____                    | _____                           |
| _____                    | _____                           |

**Current Functions** (Enter categories from instructions)

|                          |                                   |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Cat: <u>  Domestic  </u> | Sub: <u>  single dwelling  </u>   |
| <u>  Domestic  </u>      | <u>  tool shed  </u>              |
| <u>  Domestic  </u>      | <u>  woodshed &amp; storage  </u> |
| _____                    | _____                             |
| _____                    | _____                             |
| _____                    | _____                             |

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**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification** (Enter categories from instructions)

Early Republic \_\_\_\_\_  
Federal I-house \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Materials** (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation \_ stone, conc. block \_\_\_\_\_  
roof \_\_\_\_\_ metal, asphalt shingle \_\_\_\_\_  
walls \_\_\_\_\_ wood frame \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ other \_\_\_\_\_ Chimneys: brick and stone \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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

**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.
- 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 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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Period of Significance \_ ca. 1825-1950 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Dates \_\_\_ 1828 \_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)  
\_\_\_ Gen. Roger Atkinson Pryor, CSA \_\_\_

Cultural Affiliation \_\_\_\_\_ N/A \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Architect/Builder \_\_\_\_\_ unknown \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography**

(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 # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary Location of Additional Data**

State Historic Preservation Office

\_\_\_ Other State agency

\_\_\_ Federal agency

\_\_\_ Local government

\_\_\_ University

\_\_\_ Other

Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of Property \_\_\_ 16.5 acres \_\_\_

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

Zone Easting Northing    Zone Easting Northing

1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_

3 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_

See continuation sheet.

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**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**

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name/title: John G. Zehmer, Jr.

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_ date March 15, 2004

street & number: 2001 Monument Avenue telephone 804-358-5913

city or town Richmond state VA zip code 23220

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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 John G. Zehmer, Jr.

street & number 2001 Monument Avenue telephone 804-358-5913

city or town Richmond state VA zip code 23220

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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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Summary Description

The dwelling at Montrose was built as a typical three-bay, dormered, one-and-a-half story, center-hall plan farmhouse. It has been enlarged at least twice to become L-shaped in plan. It retains much of its original fabric from its inception through changes typical of the 1920s—additions of electricity, running water, and comfortable porches. In particular the social and economic changes that followed the Civil War and preceded the Great Depression are reflected in its architectural fabric.

Detailed Description

The original section of the house is a three-bay, story-and-a-half structure with a center-hall plan. The house is frame with double-shouldered end chimneys of stone with brick stacks. There are three pedimented dormers on each side of the gable roof. Originally there was a small one-bay pedimented front porch facing south and a shed-roofed back porch of unknown length. After the Civil War a one-story law office was moved up to the rear porch to provide a kitchen and the rear porch was enclosed into a series of small rooms. The front porch was replaced by a wider one about 1890 and by a full-length porch with a shingled Bungalow type balustrade in the 1920s. Probably early in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, shed-roofed additions were made to the west side of the kitchen and a room added behind it. The house retains all of its original window sash, molded windowsills, and more than half of its original beaded siding.

In the oldest section, the floors in all but the dining room are original quarter-sawn pine. The dining room features an exterior chimney closet beside the Adam mantel that frames its fireplace. The mantel has a large sunburst in low relief on its center panel and smaller ones in panels above the symmetrically molded architraves that frame the fireplace opening. This mantel is representative of the neo-classical style in its rural American application. The original parlor mantel had been replaced by a simple late-19<sup>th</sup>-century one. It was replaced during the recent restoration of the house by a Federal mantel with reeded decoration that was saved from the nearby ruins of Cedar Green, a Rives family house. The missing six-panel door to the parlor was replaced with a federal one salvaged from Darville, a nearby Thompson family house that had been demolished. The first-floor rooms in this section have pedestal wainscot with wide single boards creating a continuous flat dado. There is a beaded picture rail set into the plaster walls about three feet below the ceiling in all three downstairs rooms. The six-panel doors on the first floor have been false grained to simulate mahogany, a finish

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found during the restoration.

Upstairs two simple late Georgian mantels survive in the two bedrooms. They appear to be based on Plate G. of *Palladio Londonensis*. These rooms are reached by a small winding open-string stair that has flat scrolled end brackets and a railing with balusters that are square in section. All the second-floor rooms have a beaded board for a chair rail above a plastered dado and wooden baseboard. During the restoration evidence of geometric stenciling in cobalt blue on white plaster was found. A complete repeat of the pattern was saved and is preserved.

The back porch and part of the rooms added to the west side were combined to create a modern kitchen-sitting room. In the course of these changes more information was gleaned about the buildings' original form and evolution. Within the walls were found corner posts, sills and plates that revealed that a square room had occupied the corner where the back porch and the range of rooms along the attached kitchen met. The next space to the north was an open porch recessed in the building under which is a well. (This well had to be filled in during the renovation in order to pass a termite inspection.) The well hook still hangs in the ceiling of the kitchen. Behind this is the law office that was moved up for use as an attached kitchen soon after the Civil War. None of the walls of this room are plumb and both interior and exterior walls show great wear and typical exterior finishes to cornice and gable details. Now the master bedroom, it has a flat wainscot composed of two wide horizontal boards and a mantel with a cornice shelf. The style appears to be earlier than the main house and may indicate its use before the building of the present house. Behind this a small room has been converted to a bathroom and a modern utility room built to house necessary appliances. The three fireplaces on the first floor were all put in working order during the recent restoration.

To the west of the house stands a smokehouse of vertical board-and-batten construction. Circular saw marks and nails indicate that it was probably built soon after the Civil War. Next to it a small pile of stones marks the site of a larger two-story frame kitchen. This was a ruin when the house was restored in the 1990s, but it was photographed and its site has been left undisturbed. Beyond the smokehouse is a non-contributing 20<sup>th</sup>-century cattle shed. It is now used as a woodshed and for storage.

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## 8. Statement of Significance

### Summary Statement of Significance

Montrose is a typical example of a small Virginia farmhouse that has evolved over time to meet changing conditions. In particular the social and economic changes that followed the Civil War and preceded the Great Depression are reflected in its architectural fabric. The end of slavery is reflected in the creation of a kitchen attached to the house. The advent of electricity and running water is evident by the creation of two bathrooms and the placing of a well under the post-bellum rear wing of the house. In its 175 years, Montrose has changed with the times, yet retains much of its original form and fabric. It was the birthplace of the colorful and controversial Confederate General, Roger Atkinson Pryor and long the home of the locally prominent Baskerville family. For its architectural significance Montrose is nominated under Criterion C. As the birthplace of General Pryor it is nominated Criterion B and under Criteria Consideration C.

### Criteria Consideration C

Criteria Consideration C is noted because of the fact that Montrose was the birthplace on July 19, 1828 of Roger Atkinson Pryor, attorney, newspaperman, Confederate general, and in the last half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century a prominent jurist in New York City. His mother died when he was three and his family left Montrose, soon thereafter. They lived in various places during his childhood. Educated at Hampden-Sydney College and the University of Virginia, he practiced law, was a newspaper editor in Petersburg, Richmond, and served in the U.S. Congress. He married Sarah Rice. During their early marriage the Pryors lived in a series of rented dwellings, most if not all of which no longer stand. At the outbreak of the Civil War, he joined the Confederate army and rose to the rank of brigadier general. He was captured and put in a Union prison until shortly before the surrender. In September 1865 he went to New York City and eventually passed the New York Bar and practiced law. For many years he sat on the New York Supreme Court. He died in New York City in 1919. His New York residence has been demolished, his homes near Petersburg and in Richmond (most were rented) no longer exist or are unknown. Public buildings he would have known exist in Richmond, Washington, and New York, but his birthplace is the only extant house that his family owned.

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Context Statement

In 1970 a survey of pre-Greek Revival buildings in Dinwiddie County was undertaken and 86 structures were identified. At least 38 of these no longer stand. Of the remaining 48, it is likely that 5 in inaccessible locations no longer exist. It is reasonable to conclude that at least half of the surveyed subjects have been lost. Montrose, therefore, is a rare and important resource in the architectural history of Dinwiddie County.

Historical Background

Montrose was a part of the Annsville plantation first owned by the locally prominent Pryor family. The earliest known occupant of Montrose was Theodorick Bland Pryor, a noted Presbyterian preacher. It is likely that Montrose was built for him at the time of his first marriage, though family lore has held that it was an overseer's house originally. In any case, Theodorick Pryor's son, Roger Atkinson Pryor, was born at Montrose in 1828. His mother died when he was three and his father, a Presbyterian minister remarried a few years later. The family lived in various places during his childhood. He attended Hampden-Sydney College in the 1840s and studied law at the University of Virginia. He practiced law, was a newspaper editor in Petersburg and Richmond, and served in the U.S. Congress. He was involved in several duels. His wife was a popular Washington hostess and the couple was very much a part of the Washington social and intellectual scene. Throughout their early marriage the Pryors lived in a series of rented dwellings. He resigned from congress in 1861 and began a military career. He is said to have declined to fire the first shot on Ft. Sumter. During the war he rose from a colonel to brigadier general, but was not given active command after the spring of 1863. He chose to serve without rank as a courier to the cavalry and was captured and confined by the Union until shortly before the surrender. In September 1865 he went to New York and spent months in seclusion studying law, which he had not practiced in many years. He passed the New York Bar and began to practice law again. He became a judge of the court of common pleas, and sat on the New York Supreme Court. His home was a rallying place for old soldiers (both Union and Confederate) as well as visitors and New Yorkers of many stripes. He died in New York City on March 14, 1919

In the 1830s the Pryors sold Annsville, including what is now Montrose, to the Ferguson family. Two sisters, Elizabeth and Virginia Ferguson eventually inherited Annsville. Elizabeth, married

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Joseph L. White in 1854. When Virginia married George D. Baskerville in 1859, the Annsville property was divided and Virginia received Montrose as her half of her father's estate. Life at the two houses in the years just before and during the Civil War is documented in Elizabeth White's diaries and in a memoir of Virginia and Elizabeth's half sister, Margaret (White) Rives. The original house at Annsville burned in 1863 and a new one was quickly constructed.

The descendants of George and Virginia Baskerville were prominent Dinwiddie citizens including millers, farmers, educators, bankers, and entrepreneurs. They were among the founders in 1894 of the nearby Church of the Good Shepherd where the Baskervilles are buried. The Whites are buried in the old Pryor cemetery at Annsville. Members of the Baskerville family still own most of the Montrose land, but John G. Zehmer, Jr., their cousin and a descendant of Elizabeth (Ferguson) White, purchased the Montrose house and a 16.5-acre curtilage in 1995. He and his sons restored the long vacant house and use it as a weekend home. King Baskerville Talley, a descendant of Virginia Ferguson Baskerville now lives at Annsville, so the ownership of each property has switched branches of the Ferguson descendants.

### Bibliography

Works Progress Administration, Survey of Dinwiddie County, file no. 222.

Ivan Butterworth, "Roger Atkinson Pryor, 1828-1919," *Progress Index* (Petersburg, Va.)  
Feb. 17 & 24, 1963.

Dinwiddie County, *Deed Book I*, p.5.

Holzman, Robert, *Adapt or Perish: The Life of General Roger A. Pryor, CSA*. Archon Books, 1975.

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**UTM References**

|    | Zone | Easting | Northing |
|----|------|---------|----------|
| 1) | 18   | 253000  | 4099230  |
| 2) | 18   | 252990  | 4098980  |
| 3) | 18   | 252710  | 4098920  |
| 4) | 18   | 252740  | 4099230  |
| 5) | 18   | 252820  | 4099490  |

**Verbal Boundary Description**

The 16.5 acres that comprise the Montrose property are identified as Tax Parcel Number 15605 in the Dinwiddie County Tax Assessor's Office.

**Boundary Justification**

This boundary includes the house and all other resources that are historically associated with the nominated property.

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**Photo List**

The following information is common to all photographs:

Property Name: Montrose

Location: Dinwiddie County, Virginia

Photographer: John G. Zehmer

Negatives Filed: Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Richmond, VA

1 of 7: View of front from southwest. VDHR neg. # 18070.

2 of 7: View of west side. VDHR neg. #18070.

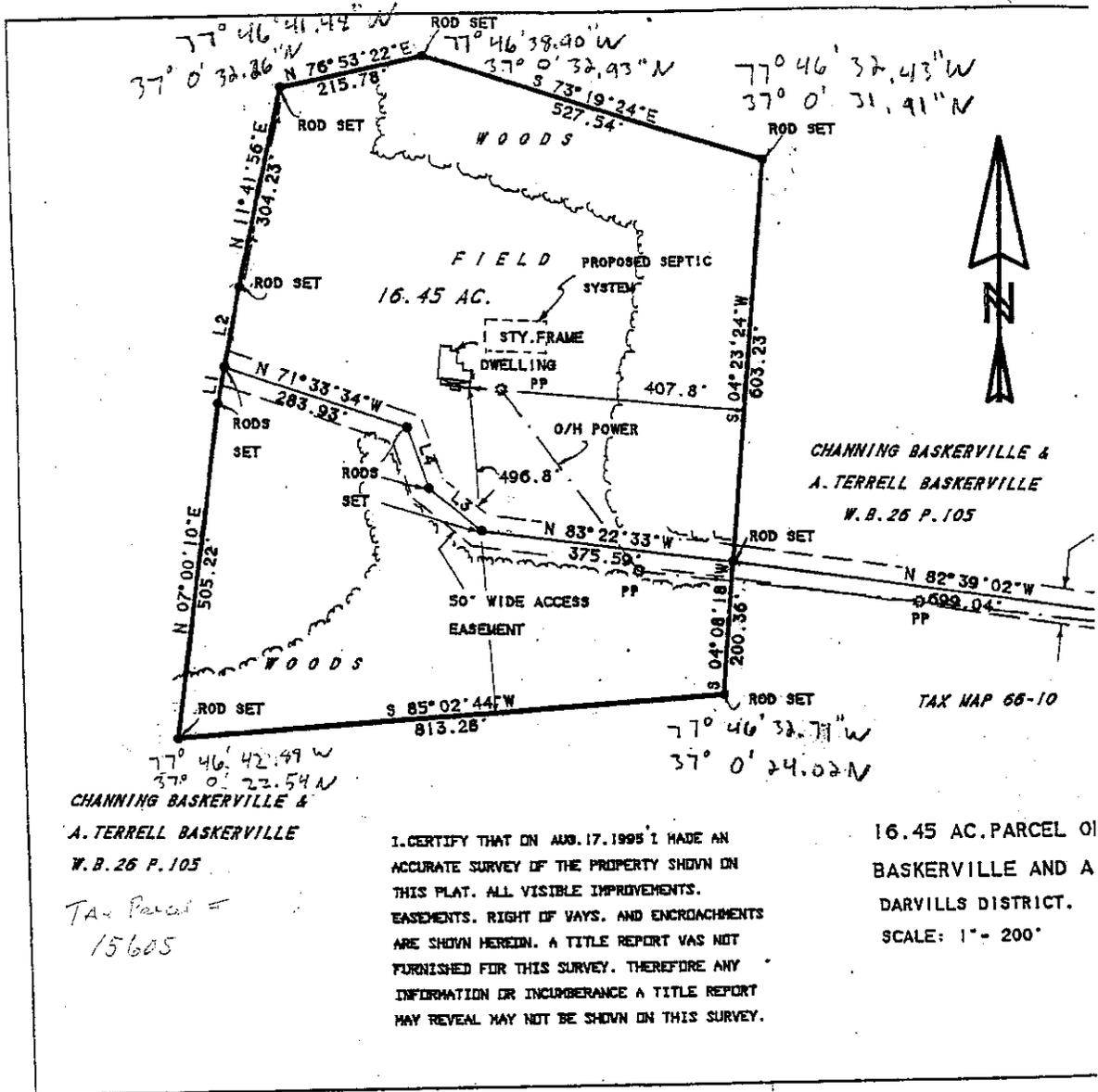
3 of 7: Stair in front hall. VDHR neg. # 18100.

4 of 7: Dining room mantel. VDHR neg. #18100.

5 of 7: Mantel in bedroom (originally kitchen). VDHR neg. # 18100.

6 of 7: Mantel in east bedroom, second floor. VDHR neg. #18100.

7 of 7: Smokehouse. VDHR neg. #18100.



I CERTIFY THAT ON AUG. 17, 1995 I MADE AN ACCURATE SURVEY OF THE PROPERTY SHOWN ON THIS PLAT. ALL VISIBLE IMPROVEMENTS, EASEMENTS, RIGHT OF VAYS, AND ENCROACHMENTS ARE SHOWN HEREON. A TITLE REPORT WAS NOT FURNISHED FOR THIS SURVEY. THEREFORE ANY INFORMATION OR INCUMBERANCE A TITLE REPORT MAY REVEAL MAY NOT BE SHOWN ON THIS SURVEY.

