

VLR-9/19/72 NRHP-4/1/73

Form 10-300
(July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: VIRGINIA	
COUNTY: KING GEORGE	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
APR 11 1973	

1. NAME

COMMON:
BELLE GROVE

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
.2 mi. W of Rt. 301

CITY OR TOWN:
Port Conway (William Lloyd Scott, Eighth District Congressman)

STATE Virginia	CODE 51	COUNTY: King George	CODE 099
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3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____ _____

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
Mr. and Mrs. John P. Hooker (deceased)

STREET AND NUMBER:
Rt. 1

CITY OR TOWN: King George	STATE: Virginia	CODE 51
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5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:
King George County Court House

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: King George	STATE: Virginia	CODE 51
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6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
Historic American Buildings Survey

DATE OF SURVEY: 1937, 1941 Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
Library of Congress

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: Washington	STATE: D. C.	CODE 11
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SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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 COUNTY: KING GEORGE
 ENTRY NUMBER: APR 11 1973
 DATE:

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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaltered		<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site	

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Belle Grove is handsomely situated on a bluff overlooking the Rappahannock River, opposite the village of Port Royal. The house is surrounded by spacious, well-tended grounds liberally dotted with large shade trees, boxwood, and other varieties of shrubbery. A tree-lined avenue approaches the land front axially, but this is no longer used as the property's main entrance. The grounds on the river front are laid out in formal gardens.

The house itself has had a complex architectural history. In its original form the exterior was a virtual twin of nearby Nanzatico which has survived without major alteration or additions. It is assumed that the two houses had the same builder-designer. The original form of the Belle Grove's main block (which is still discernable) was a single-pile, 60' X 20' frame rectangle with a 15' X 14' one-story porch chamber projecting from the center of the land front. This main block was (and still is) covered by a shallow hipped roof which was surrounded at its base by a modillion cornice. Like Nanzatico, the seven-bay river front was embellished with a two-story engaged tetrastyle Ionic portico. Unlike Nanzatico, however, Belle Grove originally was built with 19' X 20' one-story wings projecting from either end of the house.

Belle Grove underwent a major alteration and enlargement soon after 1839 when it was purchased by Carolinus Turner (1812-1876), who interestingly was born in and lived at Nanzatico until he moved to Belle Grove. As Turner needed to accommodate his large family, he added a one-story pedimented-end front wing at the extreme ends of the house, making it a classic five-part complex. Turner further embellished the house by adding a projecting two-level pedimented portico onto the river front's engaged portico. Still in place, this portico has superimposed orders, the lower one being Greek Doric and the upper, Roman Ionic. Turner did not have the original two-story fluted Ionic pilasters removed, and they still can be clearly seen behind the present portico. Turner gave the land front a striking - almost Baroque quality by the addition of an undulating two-level Doric colonnade across the entire facade. As part of this scheme, he raised the porch chamber to two full stories and fronted it with a two-level pedimented Doric portico tying into the colonnade. The concave curves of the colonnade were counter-balanced by convex cornered additions to the original one-story wings. These convex corners were accented with three-part doorways decorated with foliated consoles.

Turner had considerable changes made to the interior as well. Nearly all of the presumed Federal-style woodwork in the principal rooms was replaced with restrained Classical Revival work, including stone mantels in place of the former wood ones. The former enclosed stair (located against the interior wall of the present dining room) was removed, and a new open stair, also in a restrained Classical Revival mode, was placed in the formerly uninterrupted hall. However, the original and distinctive elliptical arch between the main portion of the hall and the porch chamber section, was retained.

Belle Grove remains today in essentially the form given it by Carolinus Turner except that the first floor east section of the land front colonnade has been glazed. Also the present owners have added small,

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(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
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COUNTY	
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ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Number all entries)

7.

one-bay sections for bathrooms above the original one-story wings. Additional bathrooms have been added to the extreme ends of both wings. The house retains its original outdoor frame kitchen and brick smokehouse, but no other early outbuildings. Belle Grove is excellently maintained and serves as the principal residence of the present owners. Fortunately the owners retain possession of most of the lands forming the original plantation which serves to keep the house in its historic context.

CCL

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

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

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

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

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Belle Grove stands as one of the major eighteenth century plantation houses of lower Rappahannock Valley. Its original owner and exact construction date have not been positively established, although it appears most likely that it was built after 1790 for John Hipkins, a merchant from the town of Port Royal, across the river. Hipkins purchased the 700 acre Belle Grove tract from Francis Conway III in 1790, and several years later he conveyed it with the existing house to his son-in-law, William Bernard. That the house was built in this period is supported by the fact that the property's fair market price increased from 2,000 pounds in 1790 to 5,000 pounds in 1798. Since William Bernard took out a fire insurance policy on the present house with the Mutual Assurance Company in 1796, it seems evident that the house was erected between 1790 and 1796.

For many years it was thought that Belle Grove was built for Francis Conway II, who is known to have owned and lived at Belle Grove in the mid-eighteenth century. Indeed the present Belle Grove house has been claimed as the birthplace of the fourth President, James Madison, whose mother, Eleanor Rose Conway (Madison), was a sister of Francis Conway, II. Mrs. Madison is known to have been visiting her mother at Belle Grove in 1751 on the day Madison was born. Further research has indicated that the Conway house in which Madison probably was born was an earlier structure that stood just to the south of the present Belle Grove House. In any case, the present house's indirect association with the fourth President and his family adds to its historic interest.

Belle Grove is significant architecturally for belonging to an important group of late-eighteenth century frame houses in the area that on a stylistic basis can be attributed either to a single builder or a school of builders. Included in this group are Gay Mont, in Caroline County; Nanzatico, King George County; and two houses in Port Royal: the Gray house and the Brockenbrough house. In their original form all these houses had similar exterior dimension, similar plans, and similar richly carved interior woodwork. Two distinctive features common to all are a broad elliptical arch spanning the central hall, and an enclosed stair between the walls of the hall and the adjoining room. It might be noted that two brick plantation houses: Brooke's Bank and Elmwood in adjacent Essex County, have elliptical arches and woodwork details quite similar to those in the houses noted above. Belle Grove's presumed original owner, John Hipkins, also had Gay Mont (originally called Rose Hill) built for himself, and the Hipkins papers note that 982 pounds was paid to Richard and Yelverton Stern "for building a new house at Rose Hill". It is thus conceivable that the other houses in this distinctive group were built by the Sterns, however no documentation has come to light to support this assumption.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Eubank, H. Ragland. Historic Northern Neck of Virginia. Richmond, 1934.

Unpublished mms. in archives of Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE			LATITUDE		LONGITUDE
	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	38°	12'	08"	77°	11'	37"
NE	38°	12'	08"	77°	10'	50"
SE	38°	10'	35"	77°	10'	50"
SW	38°	10'	35"	77°	11'	37"

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **380 acres**

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

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

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Staff

ORGANIZATION: Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission DATE: August, 1972

STREET AND NUMBER:
Room 1116, Ninth Street State Office Building

CITY OR TOWN: Richmond STATE: Virginia CODE: 51

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

<p>As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:</p> <p>National <input type="checkbox"/> State <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Local <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Name _____</p> <p><u>J. R. Fishburne, Executive Director</u></p> <p>Title <u>Va. Historic Landmarks Commission</u></p> <p>Date _____</p>	<p>I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.</p> <p>_____ <i>Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation</i></p> <p>Date _____</p> <p>ATTEST:</p> <p>_____ <i>Keeper of The National Register</i></p> <p>Date _____</p>
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SEE INSTRUCTIONS

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY MAP FORM

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with map)

STATE	VIRGINIA	
COUNTY	KING GEORGE	
FOR NPS USE ONLY		
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE	

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME			
COMMON: BELLE GROVE			
AND/OR HISTORIC:			
2. LOCATION			
STREET AND NUMBER: .2 mi. W of Rt. 301			
CITY OR TOWN: Port Conway			
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
Virginia	51	King George	099
3. MAP REFERENCE			
SOURCE: U.S.G.S. 7 1/2' quadrangle Port Royal, Virginia			
SCALE: 1:24000			
DATE: 1950			
4. REQUIREMENTS			
TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS			
1. Property boundaries where required.			
2. North arrow.			
3. Latitude and longitude reference.			

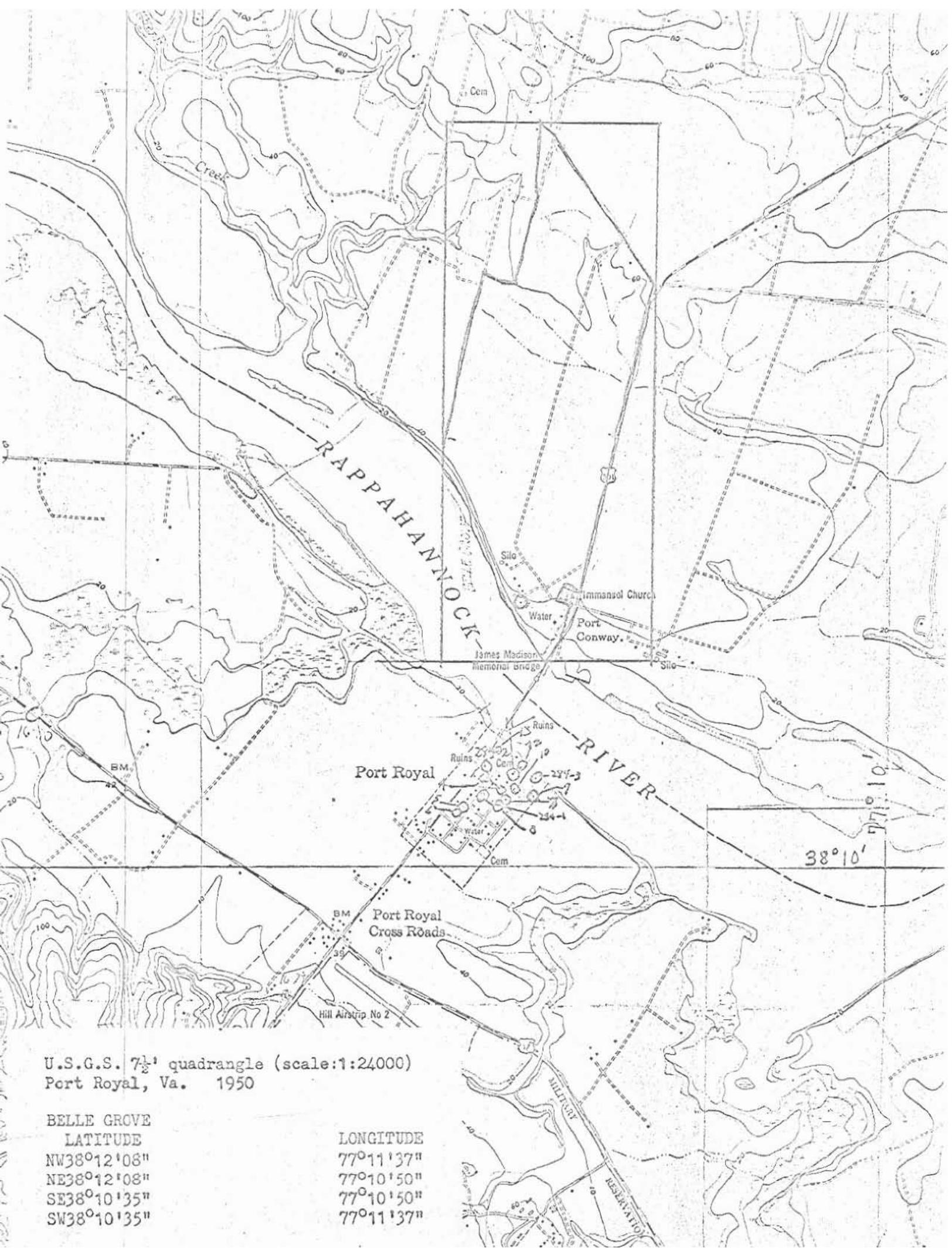
SEE INSTRUCTIONS

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with photograph)

STATE	VIRGINIA	
COUNTY	KING GEORGE	
FOR NPS USE ONLY		
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE	

1. NAME			
COMMON: BELLE GROVE			
AND/OR HISTORIC:			
2. LOCATION			
STREET AND NUMBER: .2 mi. W of Rt. 301			
CITY OR TOWN: Port Conway			
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
Virginia	51	King George	099
3. PHOTO REFERENCE			
PHOTO CREDIT: Phil Flournoy			
DATE OF PHOTO: 1968			
NEGATIVE FILED AT: Virginia State Chamber of Commerce; Richmond, Virginia			
4. IDENTIFICATION			
DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.			
VIEW OF LAND FRONT FROM NORTH.			



U.S.G.S. 7½' quadrangle (scale:1:24,000)
 Port Royal, Va. 1950

BELLE GROVE
 LATITUDE
 NW 38°12'08"
 NE 38°12'08"
 SE 38°10'35"
 SW 38°10'35"

LONGITUDE
 77°11'37"
 77°10'50"
 77°10'50"
 77°11'37"