

VLR-11/21/72 NRHP-4/2/73

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: BEDFORD	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

1. NAME

COMMON:
ELK HILL

AND/OR HISTORIC:
ELK HILL

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
.2 mi. W of Rt. 663, 3.9 mi. NW of intersection with Rt. 460.

CITY OR TOWN:
Forest vicinity (Sixth District Congressman Richard H. Poff)

STATE VIRGINIA	CODE 51	COUNTY: BEDFORD	CODE 019
-------------------	------------	--------------------	-------------

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agricultural	<input type="checkbox"/> Government	<input type="checkbox"/> Park	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/> Comments
<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> Industrial	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Educational	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Religious		
<input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Scientific		

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
Mr. and Mrs. James Barnett Hodges

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:
Forest

STATE:
Virginia

CODE:
51

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
Clerk's Office, Bedford County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:
Bedford

STATE:
Virginia

CODE:
51

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
Historic American Buildings Survey Inventory

DATE OF SURVEY: April 5, 1958 Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
Library of Congress

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:
Washington

STATE:
D. C.

CODE:
11

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: VIRGINIA

COUNTY: BEDFORD

ENTRY NUMBER

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

7. DESCRIPTION

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

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Elk Hill, named for Elk Creek which runs through the property, was built circa 1797 by Waddy Cobb who married Margaret Gualkins. The north wing, with its more elaborate architectural treatment, appears to have been constructed somewhat later than the central block. The south-wing kitchen and service area was added still later by the Nelson family, presumably in the late nineteenth or early twentieth century. Originally frame, this wing was bricked in 1928 when the Hodges family had Elk Hill restored by the architect Preston Craighill. It was also at that time that the porches were redone, in a style reminiscent of Baltimore's Homewood, and dormers were added to the wings.

Brick for the central section and north wing is said to have been fired on the place with clay taken from the front field. The brick was then laid in Flemish bond. Twin brick exterior chimneys on the south end service the main block. These two chimneys are shouldered only at the second story flue level while the north wing chimney is shouldered at both the first and attic levels. Above all of the doors and windows are flat arches which have been plastered and painted white. In addition, the jack arches of the north wing have keystones with a rectilinear beaded edging surrounding a flattened, stylized sunburst. The original, shuttered windows are six-over-six with the pane size diminishing somewhat on the second story and still further in the gable-end attic windows. A fine scroll modillion cornice lies beneath the slate roofs of the wing and center block.

The eastern entrance has a six-light transom supported by slender pilasters which flank five-pane sidelights and a six-panel door. The western entrance has a two-light transom and double two-panel doors which have a wooden bar on the interior. The entrance hall occupies the northern third of the main block. Its stairway ascends in two flights with a rather long landing between the ascents. Somewhat breaking the simplicity of the stairway's colonette newel, plain posts, and curved handrail, are the curvilinear step ends with their scroll motif. The second floor enclosed stairway, which leads to the attic, has an enclosed storage area beneath it.

Like the halls, the dining room and the library of the main block have unpaneled wainscoting with molded handrails and baseboards. The library (southeast room of the main block) has a fine mantel with reeded pilasters above which are small urns repeating a similar motif found in the central panel. In the frieze on either side of the panel are gouged triglyphs and metopes with raised carvings. Although the glazed doors of the library's press were removed about 1960, the shelves, as well as the under-cabinet, remain. The mantelpiece in the dining room (southwest room of the main block) is very similar to the one in the library except that it has a plain frieze and no central panel.

The mantel of the north-wing parlor is somewhat different from the two other downstairs mantels. Its pilasters have a punch-and-gouge motif with acanthus leaves above and its central panel has a handled urn. Its frieze, bedecked with bowed festoons, is a particularly handsome one. Originally, only in this room was there a broken pediment or an ogee pulvinated frieze above the crossette doorway, but in 1928 others were added above the doorways of the central section. At the same time, the Wall-of-Troy interior cornice of the north wing was copied and added to the other main downstairs rooms. During this extensive remodeling, the ceiling of the living room was also lowered to make the above bedroom area more spacious.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
VIRGINIA	
COUNTY	
BEDFORD	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Number all entries)

7.

New wide-board oak flooring was also put over the old pine floors and very extensive changes were made in the upstairs rooms.

North of the house stands a small, handsome brick office building laid in Flemish bond. It was in this office that one of the Dr. Nelsons dropped dead while attempting to extract an obstreperous tooth. Not far from the office stands stone from the old mounting block. Behind the office once stood a row of nine log cabins for the slaves, but none of these cabins remains. To the south of the house are several important outbuildings. The weatherboarded cook's house and storeroom still has openings painted blue to ward off ghosts. Its west wall has one glazed opening flanked by two openings with stationary louvers. On the interior of the east door of the north facade, there remains an old wooden and iron lock on a batten door with rat-tail strap hinges. Next to the cook's house is a rebuilt version of the old kitchen which was razed and reconstructed in 1940. This new building, used as a guesthouse, retains the general shape of the old kitchen (except for the addition of a wing), similar board-and-batten sheathing, louvered ventilation slits in the gables, and the original chimney. Near the old chimney once stood a wooden cistern which has since been moved to a working area of the orchard. It is now lidded and the supports have been considerably lowered. To the southeast stands the old lattice wellhouse; however, the dug well, which is said to have had fine stonework, was filled in about 1934. Still further to the southeast stands an icehouse with vertical board walls, only a few feet high, supporting a gable roof with wooden shingles. Fortunately, this icehouse has not been filled in except for a small amount of debris. Its dug-out area is lined with vertical logs while other logs set against them diagonally provide some support. The old trap door with its iron lifting ring is also still in place.

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian 16th Century 18th Century 20th Century
 15th Century 17th Century 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) circa 1797, with later additions

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 type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <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

Elk Hill is a fine piedmont Federal plantation house with many remaining outbuildings of interest. Along with nearby Fancy Farm and Three Otters, Elk Hill stands as evidence of the high degree of architectural sophistication achieved in the early years of Bedford County's history. The house is especially noted for its fine interior woodwork, the handsome proportions of its original section, and its unusual carved keystones. Although the house has evolved to its present appearance, with handsome additions made by various owners, the main section is notable for the large amount of original fabric it retains. In addition, it is an important part of the scenic and architecturally rich St. Stephen's Road community, a rural community with an especially handsome backdrop formed by the Blue Ridge mountains.

Elk Hill's ties to St. Stephen's Church are historic as well as geographic, for the plantation house was built about 1797 by Waddy Cobb, a brother of the first rector of St. Stephen's. In 1836 Waddy Cobb conveyed to his daughter Sarah Lewis Cobb and her husband John Alexander, the plantation of Elk Hill along with household and kitchen furniture, stock and plantation tools, a phaeton, five negro men slaves and one woman with a family of children.

Later the Nelsons lived for three generations at Elk Hill and supplied the area with prominent physicians - Dr. Hugh Nelson, three sons and a grandson. Dr. Thomas Hugh Nelson was the great-grandson of Brigadier General Thomas Nelson, Jr., Governor of Virginia during the siege of Yorktown and a signer of the Declaration of Independence. Thomas Nelson Page and Mrs. C. J. M. Jordan wrote poems and short southern stories while visiting at Elk Hill. In the 1930's Robert Frost spent a week at the farm with the Hodges family which had acquired the property in 1928 after it had been owned about fifteen years by Mr. James Owen Watts. Elk Hill is still owned by Mr. and Mrs. James Barnett Hodges.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Adams, William H., Jr.: University of Virginia Record Extension Series: "An Economic and Social Survey of Bedford County," A Laboratory in the School of Rural Social Economics of the University of Virginia, Vol. XVIII, no. 2, November, 1933.

Bedford Historical Society, "Bedford County Historic Pilgrimage," Bedford, Virginia, May 20, 1972.

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	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	37° 24' 43"	79° 21' 31"		°	'	"
NE	37° 24' 43"	79° 20' 21"				
SE	37° 24' 06"	79° 20' 21"				
SW	37° 24' 06"	79° 21' 31"				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 400 acres

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: ANNE CARTER LEE

ORGANIZATION: VIRGINIA HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION DATE: October, 1972

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

CITY OR TOWN: Richmond STATE: Virginia CODE: 51

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

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:

National State Local

Name J. R. Fishburne
J. R. Fishburne, Director
 Title Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission

Date NOV 21 1972

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

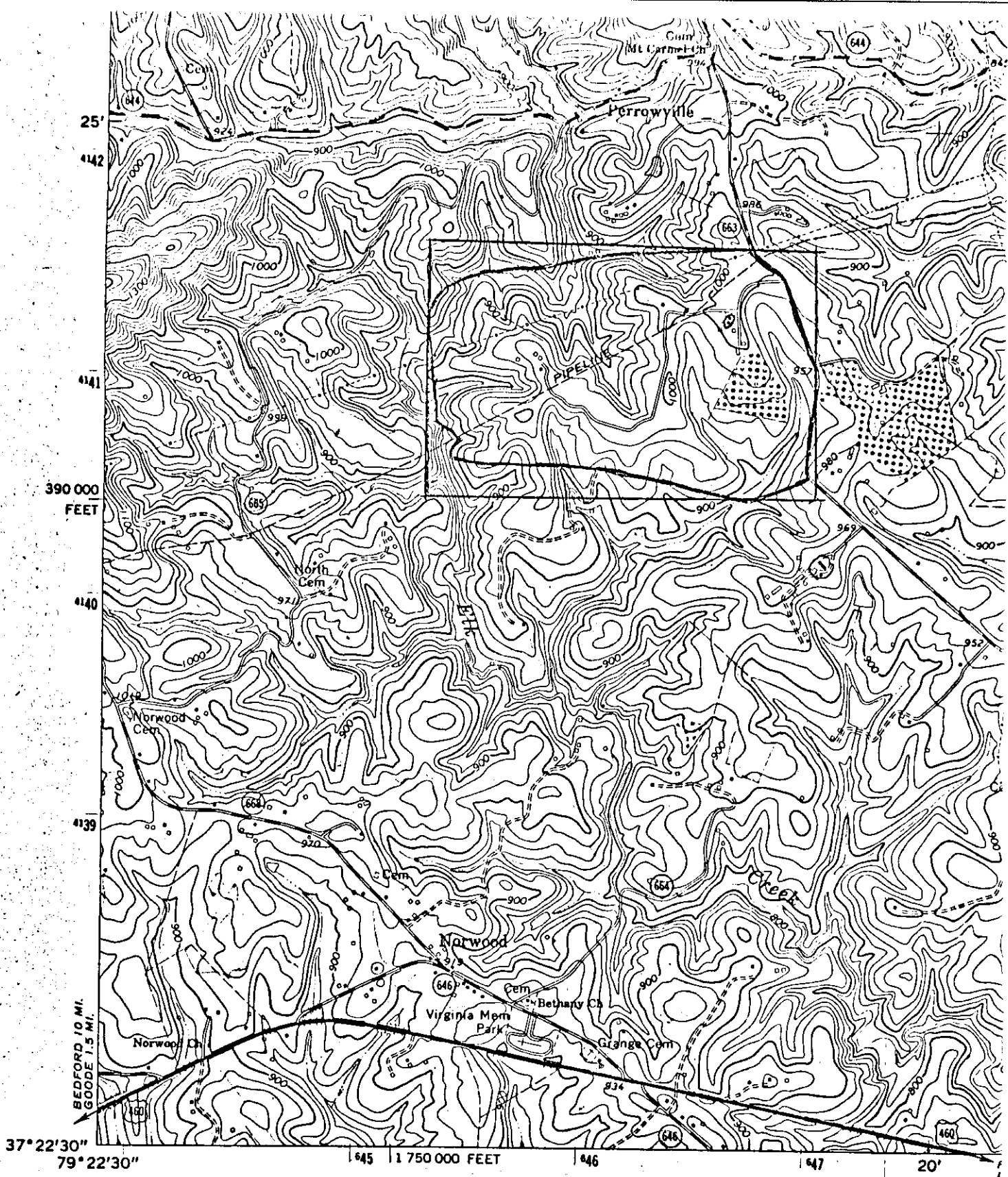
Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date _____

ATTEST: _____
Keeper of The National Register

Date _____

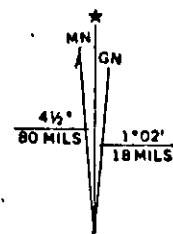
SEE INSTRUCTIONS



(5000E)
51.58 IV SW

U.S.G.S. 7½' quadrangle (scale:1:24,000)
Boonsboro, Va. 1965

ELK HILL	
latitude	longitude
NW37°24'43"	79°21'31"
NE37°24'43"	79°20'21"
SE37°24'06"	79°20'21"
SW37°24'06"	79°21'31"



UTM GRID AND 1965 MAGNETIC NORTH DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET