

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Mount Stirling

other names/site number VDHR File No. 18-15

2. Location

street & number E side of SR 155, 3200' NNE of jct. with SR 614 not for publication N/A

city or town Providence Forge vicinity

state Virginia code VA county Charles City code 036 zip code 23140

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Wayne C. Miller 23 Dec '92
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Director, Virginia Department of Historic Resources
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain.) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Mount Stirling
Name of Property

Charles City, VA
County and State

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
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2	2	building
1	1	sites
0	1	structure
0	0	objects
3	4	Total

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic / Single Dwelling

Domestic / Secondary Structure

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic / Single Dwelling

Domestic / Secondary Structure

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Greek Revival

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick

walls Brick

roof Metal

other Wood

Narrative Description

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

Mount Stirling
Name of Property

Charles City, VA
County and State

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.)

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- 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.

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 # _____

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance

ca. 1783-1851

Significant Dates

ca. 1783

1851

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Mount Stirling
Name or Property

Charles City, VA
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property approx. 15

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 18 319630 4144200
Zone Easting Northing
2 18 319890 4144000

3 18 319740 414341
Zone Easting Northing
4 18 319640 414345

X See continuation sheet

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.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Bryan L. Townes
organization Virginia Department of Historic Resources date August 17, 1992
street & number 221 Governor Street telephone (804) 786-3143
city or town Richmond state Virginia zip code 23219

Additional Documentation

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 H. Bailey
street & number 5000 Courthouse Road telephone (804) 966-5140
city or town Providence Forge state Virginia zip code 23140

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 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 Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

Mount Stirling
Charles City County, Virginia

Summary Description

Mount Stirling is a Greek Revival plantation house situated on an expansive hill overlooking pastureland and forest that edge the Chickahominy River in Charles City County, Virginia. Monumental in its imposing scale and carefully crafted details, the red brick house is distinguished by a small-scale Greek Ionic portico and stepped gable parapets. The house is notable for its high degree of integrity, including the retention of architectural details and hardware. The 1851 date of construction for Mount Stirling marks it as one of the last great plantation residences to be built in the county before the Civil War; most structures in Charles City County comparable in size and quality to Mount Stirling were built a century before. The dependencies of an eighteenth-century plantation complex once surrounded the house, but the only remaining structure is an altered kitchen building. This simple frame structure gives evidence of the common materials and details of its vanished companion buildings and illustrates how the architectural formality of Mount Stirling was heightened by its contrast to the simple, small-scaled support structures. The grounds of Mount Stirling contain buildings and elements added by recent owners, including a pool with poolhouse, a small garage, and a formal boxwood garden.

Setting

Mount Stirling occupies the level top of a broad hill just off Virginia Route 155 in Charles City County. The house was built as the center of a plantation that covered more than 2,000 acres; though the acreage has been reduced, the house still overlooks a landscape of pasture and woodland that continues the historic land use of the area. The facade of the house faces south toward the arrival drive. This drive begins as a curving lane before it straightens into a formal, tree-lined approach. Wide, level lawns separate the house from the farmland, and these lawns are scattered with numerous shade trees and specimen plants. The lawn to the northeast of the house is ornamented by a formal garden laid out in the 1940s, while the lawn to the north of Mount Stirling is bordered by symmetrically placed plantings that frame a view of pastures and woodland edging the Chickahominy River.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2

Mount Stirling
Charles City County, Virginia

Architectural Analysis

Mount Stirling is a Greek Revival plantation house which stands two and a half stories tall over a raised basement and displays symmetry in its elevations and plan. The house is constructed of red brick made on the site and laid in stretcher bond on the front facade. The side and rear elevations consist of brick laid in mixed garden wall bond. This type of bond utilizes three courses of stretchers followed by a course of alternating headers and stretchers. The house is surmounted by a side-gable roof covered in standing seam metal and ornamented by stepped gable parapets. These parapets connect the two interior end chimneys on each side. The parapets and chimneys are decorated by a simple band of corbelled brick at the top. The basic rectangular box form of the house is supplemented on two sides by small, symmetrically placed, projecting, one-story wings. The front and rear elevations both make use of a five-bay configuration with the central bay as the focus. The windows lighting the two main floors and attic are the original double-hung sash with six-over-six panes; The windows decrease in height from the first floor to the attic. All windows are topped by a plain wooden lintel with end blocks and are flanked by louvered shutters that are most likely original. The windows of the basement level employ the same lintels and shutters, but are wooden casements. They too seem to be original to the house.

The front facade of the house is the most formal, as it faces the tree-lined approach. The central bay is ornamented by a three-bay, one-story portico of wood resting on brick piers. The portico is approached by a flight of full-width wooden steps. The paired Greek Ionic columns employ fluting and deeply carved volutes. These four columns, and two pilasters flanking the door, support the porch entablature consisting of a plain architrave and frieze surmounted by a cornice with dentils. The portico is ornamented by a balustrade around the roof with panels set over the columns below and turned balusters filling the spaces between the panels. The central bay is further emphasized by the entrance and tripartite window above. The entrance consists of a wide four-panel door flanked by sidelights and topped by a transom. The door is framed by paneled molding that extends above the height of the door, reducing the transom to a two-light element that extends only the width of the door, while the four-light sidelights rise to a height equal to the top of the transom. Carved panels fill the space below the sidelights, and the entire assembly is surmounted by a wooden lintel with end blocks. The tripartite window above echoes the details of the door but lacks a transom. The center opening is a jib window with double-hung, six-over-six sash and panels beneath that swing inward to allow access to the balustrade-enclosed portico roof. The sidelights contain four lights and rest on paneled aprons below. Originally, full-length louvered shutters flanked the sidelights.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Mount Stirling
Charles City County, Virginia

Section number 7 Page 3

The front and rear elevations of Mount Stirling are surmounted by a carved cornice with dentils that is then topped by a wooden balustrade consisting of alternating panels and groups of turned balusters. The sets of balusters correspond to the width of the bays beneath them. A departure from Greek Revival design, the balustrade is typical of Federal-period buildings in its placement and details and visibly lightens the mass of the structure.

The rear elevation of the house is dominated by a three-bay, two-story wooden porch on brick piers that shelters the central three bays of the house. This structure dates to the 1940s and consists of one-story, paneled, wooden piers and pilasters that support a plain architrave and frieze on both levels. The second level is topped by a cornice with dentils that is placed just below the cornice of the house and is similar in scale and details. The first level is screened, while the second level is open and features a simple balustrade with square-cut balusters connecting square wooden piers. The porch is approached by a flight of wooden steps, and a brick-lined areaway underneath the first level allows for basement access. Two doors, occupying the central bay of both levels of the elevation, provide access to the porch. These doorways are identical to the entry door on the facade.

The side, or east and west, elevations of Mount Stirling are nearly identical, having two bays per floor. These bays are paired near the middle of the elevation. The first-floor levels of the side elevations are punctuated by small projecting wings. The front and rear elevations of the wings are blank, while the wider side elevations contain two windows. The front walls of these wings are laid in stretcher bond, while the sides and rear are laid in mixed garden wall bond. The wings are surmounted by a cornice with dentils that is similar in detail to the main cornice of the house, but is executed in a reduced scale. In addition to the small wing, the east elevation employs a second projection in the form of a one-story, two-bay, wooden porch on a partial brick foundation. This porch is approached by a flight of wooden steps with later railings and consists of two plain wooden piers with caps and bases and two pilasters supporting an entablature with a plain architrave, frieze, and cornice. The porch fills the ell created by the small wing and the main part of the house, and is sited toward the rear facade. This porch shelters a four-panel door that leads into the dining room. The height of the porch falls far short of the height of the small wing. Square-cut balusters form the porch balustrade.

The interior of Mount Stirling reflects the formal symmetry of the exterior, as well as a high degree of craftsmanship and historic integrity. The house makes use of a central-passage, double-pile plan on all levels except the attic. The plan remains as it existed when the house was built except for minor alterations in the second-floor northwest bedroom. The house originally

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 4

Mount Stirling
Charles City County, Virginia

contained ten fireplaces, four per floor and two in the basement; however, this number has been reduced to nine, due to the alterations on the second floor. All fireplaces are built against end walls with their chimney breasts projecting into the room and exhibiting original mantels and hearths. Heart pine floors, interior brick walls with plaster and lath finish, tall baseboards, four-panel doors with original hinges, locks and porcelain knobs, staircases, window surrounds, and plasterwork are present throughout the house and survive intact. The first floor is the most formal of the house and contains the most elaborate mantels, woodwork, and plasterwork. Details found throughout the four first-floor rooms include fluted door surrounds with bulls-eye corner blocks, paneled window reveals, marble mantels and hearths, firebacks, closets, and thirteen-foot-high ceilings. The major reception rooms flank the central passage and are located toward the front of the house; the drawing room on the west side and the library on the east side. These spaces have plaster cornices, and the library and drawing room contain Italian marble mantels executed in a simple Greek Revival design.

The long central passage is dominated by a straight-run, open-string staircase that rises from the front of the hall along the right side. The stair balustrade is said to be constructed of native black walnut and consists of a heavy turned newel post and a round-cut handrail supported by square-cut balusters that are spaced two per tread. The woodwork of the stair is stained and polished, except for the vertical paneling that fills the space under the stringer and encloses a stair to the basement. The ceiling in the front half of the hall is ornamented by a plaster medallion of a radiating acanthus design. The drawing room is accented by an intricate plaster ceiling medallion that is centered in the room. From this detail hangs an oil light fixture, converted to electrical use, that is original to the house. Marbelized baseboards in this room match the Italian marble mantel, and it is believed that all major rooms originally had this treatment. The door to this room, as well as all interior doors on the two main floors, uses interior locks. Exterior doors are secured by box-type locks. Elaborately molded window valances in the drawing room are also original to the house. The library is located across the central passage from the drawing room, on the east side of the house. An original built-in cabinet with glazed doors fills the space to the right of the chimney breast, while to the left a door leads into a windowed closet that occupies half of the small east wing. The two back rooms on the main level are connected by doors to their front counterparts. These rooms lack cornices and have mantels of Georgia marble identical in design to the mantels in the front rooms. The dining room, north of the library, has a molded chair rail and a closet that occupies the other half of the small east wing. A door on the left side of the chimney breast leads to a small porch on the east side. Across the central passage, a bedroom contains a built-in closet on the right side of the chimney breast and a door that leads to a bathroom in the small west wing. This door provides the only access

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 5

Mount Stirling
Charles City County, Virginia

between the main block and the west wing. This room also contains a marbelized baseboard. This treatment is not executed to match the light color of the room's Georgia marble mantel, but is done to suggest the tone and pattern of the Italian marble in the library and drawing room.

The second floor of the house was built to follow the floor plan of the main level; however, it was altered in the mid-twentieth century when the northwest corner bedroom was divided to form a bathroom and small sitting room. In the course of this renovation, a mantel was removed and the fireplace was sealed. The remaining rooms follow the dimensions of the corresponding rooms below. Details and materials are simplified on this floor and the rooms have a ceiling height of twelve feet, one foot lower than the ceiling height of the first floor. Certain elements of design and construction remain consistent between the first and second floors, including the presence of heart pine floors, tall baseboards, four-panel doors, and interior brick walls finished with plaster and lath. The doors on the second level are framed in simple architrave molding and the wooden mantels with slate hearths employ a plain Greek Revival design similar to the first-floor marble mantels. The three surviving bedrooms are identical in their use of moldings and details, and in the placement of a built-in closet placed flush with the chimney breast and occupying the space between the chimney and the outside wall. In each bedroom a window flanks the chimney on the opposite side of the built-in closet. The central passage that extends from the front to the back of the second floor has an opening at each end; the tripartite window that ornaments the facade and the door with sidelights and a transom that leads to the covered second level of the rear porch. The stair that rises to the attic level is placed directly above the stair from the first floor and is a slightly smaller version of it, but with a simpler newel post. The area below the stringer of the stair is partially enclosed with vertical tongue-and-groove boards to form a small closet.

The attic level of the house is divided into three rooms that open off of a small central space. All rooms on this level are finished in plaster and lath, and batten doors provide access to the rooms. Nails visible in the doors are cut with wrought heads. Four windows light the attic spaces, two in each gable end.

Service and storage areas were historically located in the basement of Mount Stirling. The central passage is balanced by two former food storage rooms on the west side and two rooms on the east side: the kitchen and a room that is said to have been the family dining room, now a den. The central passage, along with the old dining room, has flooring of heart pine. A casement window is located at the south end of the passage, under the front portico, and a batten door on the north end opens to the areaway under the rear porch. The stair to this level descends directly below the main staircase and can be

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetMount Stirling
Charles City County, VirginiaSection number 7 Page 6

closed off from the first floor at the top of the stairs by a four-panel door with a box-type lock. Sections of walls in the basement central passage are covered with tongue-and-groove boards laid horizontally. The windows in the old dining room are wooden casements set in deep reveals, typical of the original windows on the basement level. This room also contains one of two basement fireplaces, consisting of a large brick-faced opening surrounded by a plain wooden mantel and a brick hearth. The overmantel is covered with wide wood planks set vertically and two glass-fronted cabinets flank the chimney. The cabinet to the right is said to be original; the one to the left, legend has it, was built during the Civil War to conceal the entrance to a closet where family valuables were hidden. This closet occupies the basement level of the small east wing. The walls of the old dining room are covered in drywall. The historic kitchen has been modernized; floor covering and new windows were part of this renovation. The basement's second fireplace is located in this room, as well as the entrance to the closet under the east wing. The two storage rooms across the hall originally may have had dirt floors; however, the floor of the front room was raised to the level of the central passage in the mid-twentieth century and surfaced in modern hardwood flooring. The floor of the rear room remains a step below the central passage and is now covered in cement. The walls of these rooms are exposed brick in three-course American bond. The high, small casement windows in the storage rooms are fronted on the exterior by iron bars that are laid horizontally. The floor joists and cross bridging of the main floor are visible in these rooms. The front storage room provides access to the basement level of the small west wing.

The single remaining dependency at Mount Stirling stands to the east of the main house. This structure, part of the eighteenth-century complex that served the house, is an altered building that is believed to have housed the kitchen and laundry. The frame building is rectangular in shape, one and a half stories tall, and is topped by a side-gable roof covered in wood shingles. The walls are clad in beaded weatherboard, and details consist of beaded cornerboards, a box cornice, and a raking cornice board. The two-bay east elevation is punctuated by an original door opening and a modern garage-style door opening. The north elevation displays a large kitchen chimney featuring brick laid in five-course American bond, stepped shoulders, and a modern chimney stack. The upper level of this elevation contains two four-light casement windows, one on each side of the chimney stack. The south elevation may have had an identical chimney, but no evidence of one remains. A double-hung, nine-over-six window is located off-center on the elevation, and the west elevation contains two windows identical to the window on the south side. The interior of the structure is divided into two non-connecting spaces: the kitchen to the north and the laundry to the south. The floors have been removed in these spaces, and the

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetMount Stirling
Charles City County, VirginiaSection number 7 Page 7

framing members display evidence of being hewn or cut with a circular saw. A closed stair ascends to the upper level of the building from the southwest corner of the kitchen. The large fireplace opening in this space is supported by a squared wooden lintel. A ruin located further east of the house and parallel with the kitchen building is probably the remains of a slave house, one of seven that lined the hill. Foundation walls and a chimney, distinguished by fine brickwork, mark the spot where the building stood. The pale, oversized brick is laid in Flemish bond on the chimney and part of the foundation. The tall chimney features a stack with a corbelled top and sloped shoulders, and the fireplace opening is faced with modern brick. A small brick stoop projects from the right side of the west foundation wall. The top of the stoop and its steps are covered with modern brick, but the base of the stoop is composed of the same brickwork as the foundation. The foundation walls are laid in Flemish bond on the north and west sides, while the east and south sides are laid in stretcher bond.

Mount Stirling and its surrounding structures are sited in a landscape significantly more ornamental than the grounds associated historically with the house. The Jerdone family, residents of the house from its construction in 1851 until about 1940, probably limited planting on the grounds to materials necessary for support of the plantation, such as orchards and vegetable gardens. This landscape, together with the usual shade trees, composed the early setting of the house. In the 1940s an ambitious landscaping scheme was undertaken, and what surrounds Mount Stirling today is the maturation of that design. A wide, level lawn surrounds the house and is ornamented by grouped plantings of boxwood and holly. The lawn to the north of the house is bordered by twin lines of tall boxwood interspaced with symmetrically planted trees. To the east of the house, and east of the north lawn, the grounds are composed of a formal boxwood garden laid out in a design of four rectangles. Boxwood edges each rectangle and is planted around the perimeter of the entire composition. This garden is contrasted by the surrounding naturalized landscape, an arrangement of magnolias, wisteria, mock orange, holly, and cedar. Large yew shrubs line a narrow path that descends the slope to a curved brick retaining wall and bench overlooking the ruins of a small oval fishpond built of brick. An inground swimming pool was placed near the eastern edge of the grounds adjacent to the ruins of the eighteenth-century dependency. The pool, a nearby frame poolhouse, and a small frame garage to the west of the house date from the mid-twentieth century. Mature shade trees, including oaks, pecans, walnuts, and tulip poplars, are arranged around the house in formal and natural groups, and serve to mark the transition from landscaped yard to utilitarian field or natural woodland.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 8Mount Stirling
Charles City County, VirginiaStatement of Significance

Mount Stirling is an outstanding and well-preserved example of Greek Revival architecture expressed in an eastern Virginia plantation house. William Jerdone, one of Charles City County's wealthiest planters, began construction of the house in 1851. Constructed at a time when few major residences were built on plantations in the county, the house displays the monumentality of its style through the use of classical orders and simple geometric forms. The interior is ornamented by bold, heavy details typical of Greek Revival architecture in the 1850s. The architectural formality of the house reinforced its importance as the center of a major plantation and was highlighted, as it is now, by its contrast with utilitarian service buildings. A frame kitchen building, dating from a preceding eighteenth-century plantation complex, is the only remaining dependency. The plantation was the scene of significant activity during the Civil War, as Federal soldiers occupied the house in 1862 and again in 1864. Mount Stirling has been altered very little in its history, and therefore maintains a high degree of architectural integrity. The house's original hardware, mantels, and interior and exterior woodwork survive to illustrate the skill and craftsmanship employed by its builders.

Historical Background

The land that eventually became the plantation of Mount Stirling is located in northern Charles City County, Virginia. First recorded in 1662 as a tract of land on both sides of the Chickahominy River, this property was patented by Henry Soane, a wealthy planter and member of the House of Burgesses.¹ In 1768 or 1769 the property left the possession of the Soane family when it was sold to become part of the Providence Forge holdings of William Holt, of Williamsburg, and the Rev. Charles Jeffrey Smith, of New York.² At Smith's death in 1771, Francis Jerdone purchased his interest in the property. Jerdone was a Scottish merchant who came to Virginia in the 1740s and settled in Yorktown. Soon afterwards he began purchasing plantations in eastern and central Virginia, eventually making his estate in Louisa County his primary residence. Jerdone appointed his nephew William Douglas to manage his Providence Forge property. Francis Jerdone died in 1771, shortly after purchasing the plantation, and his New Kent and Charles City County lands passed to his son, Francis Jerdone II. The younger Jerdone resided in what had been his father's house in Louisa County, while William Douglas remained at Providence Forge. In letters to Jerdone in 1783, Douglas mentioned "building and repairing upon the hill" and framing the kitchen, and reminded Jerdone of his promise to send hands from Louisa to help make bricks. This correspondence may concern the construction of the original plantation and dependencies on the hill where Mount Stirling now stands.³ The Mount Stirling plantation tract

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetMount Stirling
Charles City County, VirginiaSection number 8 Page 9

was created by an agreement drawn up on September 24, 1835, between two sons of Francis Jerdone II, William and Francis III. The agreement concerned the division of the Providence Forge property, which lay in New Kent County and Charles City County on the north and south sides of the Chickahominy River. In drawing lots to determine the recipient of each half of the land, William Jerdone received the property lying to the south of the river in Charles City County.⁴ That "tract of land on Chickahominy River in Charles City County, containing 2,108 acres (more or less) and a detached tract of 40 acres" was transferred from Francis Jerdone to his son William Jerdone, as well as an assortment of slaves and livestock.⁵ In 1838, the property is listed in the county land tax book as altered from Francis Jerdone to his son William Jerdone, and consisted of 2,283 acres and \$600 worth of buildings. The value of buildings on the plantation increases to \$1,000 in 1840, probably due to the construction of new farm buildings. In the land tax records for 1851, the value of buildings on the property increases to \$8,500 and the property is listed as Mount Stirling for the first time. The increase in assessed value apparently indicates the construction of the substantial Greek Revival plantation house. The house replaced the eighteenth-century plantation dwelling that was torn down at the time of the new construction. The old dependencies, however, were retained. The house was built at the top of a broad hill overlooking fields that slope down to the banks of the Chickahominy River. Standing two and a half stories tall over a raised basement, the house's clean lines and classical details make it a focal point in the surrounding landscape, a suitable centerpiece for the large plantation. The lack of landscaping elements noted by later owners indicates that the grounds of the house were probably used solely for the production of food for the plantation. Orchards and vegetable gardens probably surrounded the house in the absence of ornamental plants. The spacious interiors of Mount Stirling were necessary to house the Jerdone family, which in 1860 included William Jerdone and his wife Anna Burford Jerdone, their six children, and a relative, Martha M. Burford. According to the census of 1860, the property of William Jerdone then was worth \$22,500. In 1861, the plantation of Mount Stirling consisted of 2,289 acres worked by approximately 100 slaves.⁶

The Civil War brought an end to much of William Jerdone's fortune. Confederate and Union troops repeatedly passed through Charles City County and took food and supplies from the plantations and farms. A major point of crossing over the Chickahominy River was at the Forge Bridge, also called Jones' Bridge, and this was accessible only by passing through the plantation lands. In May 1862, as Confederate General Joseph E. Johnston's troops were retreating from Yorktown to Richmond, General James Longstreet's rearguard division of thirteen thousand encamped in the "Middle Field" of the plantation. In June of that same year, General J.E.B. Stuart approached the house with two hundred of his men as he and four thousand of his cavalry passed through Mount Stirling and crossed the bridge on his three-day ride around McClellan. On June 29, 1862, a body of Union cavalry and infantry appeared at Mount Stirling and set up their

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetMount Stirling
Charles City County, VirginiaSection number 8 Page 10

artillery about one hundred yards from the house. The next day, while the Federals were rebuilding the bridge that Stuart had burned, they were engaged by Confederate artillery on the opposite side of the Chickahominy River. For more than four hours, the shells from Confederate and Union guns, some of which were on the Federal gunboats at Windsor Shades, passed over Mount Stirling. William Jerdone wrote to his brother Francis at Bloomsbury in Orange County that at the beginning of July the Battle of Malvern Hill took place, and the cannon fire was so close that "some of the reports seemed to jar the house to the foundations." In the middle of August 1862, McClellan retreated from Harrison's Landing on the James River toward Norfolk. Thirty-five to forty thousand Federal troops marched through Mount Stirling. Generals Philip Kearney, Samuel Heintzelman, and David Birney established their headquarters in the house. The generals acceded to William Jerdone's request that he be allowed to continue to occupy enough of the house for his family. During that time, the army stripped the plantation of crops and livestock to supply the troops. Miles of fences were burned and horses were turned loose to forage in the fields, ruining what was not carried off.⁷ The plantation was again crossed by Federal forces, this time under General Philip H. Sheridan, in late June 1864. Sheridan was on his way to join Grant, and crossed the Chickahominy by way of the bridge at Mount Stirling on June 22.⁸ According to local tradition, Sheridan pitched his tent on the lawn next to the house and used the drawing room as his office.

Mount Stirling survived the war intact, but the hardships had undermined William Jerdone's health. He died in 1867 and left the plantation to his wife, Anna Burford Jerdone. Apparently the grounds were repaired and Mount Stirling again became a successful farm. The property remained in the possession of Jerdone family members until 1940, but during their ownership all original outbuildings disappeared except for the kitchen and another small structure. Mr. and Mrs. Hunter C. Sledd purchased the house and acreage in 1940. During their ownership, various changes were made to the house; the two-story north porch was built, the basement kitchen was modernized, and a second-floor bedroom was partitioned to form a sitting room and a bathroom. The Sledds also began an ambitious plan for the landscaping of Mount Stirling. Large shade trees around the house were retained and complemented by grouped plantings of boxwood and holly. A formal boxwood garden was established adjacent to the kitchen building, and the other original outbuilding was stripped down to its frame and rebuilt. This building was then used to serve the pool that was built next to it. A poolhouse and a garage were also built during the Sledd family's ownership. The house was purchased in the late 1960s by the Kent family who used the house as a weekend retreat. The current owners of Mount Stirling since 1977 are James H. and Judith Bailey, who continue to operate the historic property as a working plantation.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 11

Mount Stirling
Charles City County, Virginia

Endnotes

1. Dabney N. McLean, Henry Soane, Progenitor of Thomas Jefferson
Providence Forge Heritage Library
2. David G. Null, The Library of Francis Jerdone (Thesis, College of
William and Mary in Virginia)
3. Jerdone Family Papers, Special Collections, Earl Gregg Swem Library,
College of William and Mary in Virginia
4. Ibid
5. Charles City County, Virginia, Deed Book 8: 1832-1838
Archives, Virginia State Library, Richmond, Virginia
6. Charles City County, Virginia, Land Tax Books: 1851-1863
Archives, Virginia State Library, Richmond, Virginia
7. Jerdone Family Papers
8. The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the
Union and Confederate Armies. Prepared Under the Direction of the Secretary
of War by Robert N. Scott. Series 1. Volumes 11,36,51

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Mount Stirling
Charles City County, Virginia

Section number 9 Page 12

Bibliography

Deed Book 8: Charles City County. 1832-1838. Virginia State Library and Archives. Richmond, Virginia

Jerdone Family Papers, Special Collections, Earl Gregg Swem Library. College of William and Mary in Virginia, Williamsburg, Virginia

Land Tax Books. Charles City County. 1831-1850, 1851-1863. Virginia State Library and Archives. Richmond, Virginia

McLean, Dabney N. Henry Soane, Progenitor of Thomas Jefferson. Providence Forge Heritage Library, Providence Forge, Virginia

Null, David G. The Library of Francis Jerdone. Thesis, Earl Gregg Swem Library. College of William and Mary in Virginia, Williamsburg, Virginia

Virginia Department of Historic Resources. Architectural Survey File 18-15 (Mount Stirling). Richmond, Virginia

The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies. Prepared Under the Direction of the Secretary of War by Robert N. Scott. Series 1. Volumes 11,36,51

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 13

Mount Stirling
Charles City County, Virginia

10. UTM Reference - continued

5. 18/319570/4143330
6. 18/319380/4143360

Verbal Boundary Description

Beginning at UTM reference point 1 18 | 319630 | 4144200, thence along the south bank of the Chickahominy River in a southeasterly direction to UTM reference point 2 18 | 319890 | 4144000, thence southsouthwest to UTM reference point 3 18 | 319740 | 4143410, thence westnorthwest to UTM reference point 4 18 | 319640 | 4143450, thence southsouthwest to UTM reference point 5 18 | 319570 | 4143330, thence westnorthwest to UTM reference point 6 18 | 319380 | 4143360, thence along the east side of State Route 155 in a northnortheasterly direction to the point of beginning.

Boundary Justification

The boundaries were drawn to include the acreage that has historically been associated with Mount Stirling and that maintains historic integrity.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number Photos Page 14

Mount Stirling
Charles City County, Virginia

Photographs

The following information applies to each of the photographs submitted with the National Register Registration Form:

1. Name of Property: Mount Stirling
DHR File No. 18-15
2. Location: Charles City County, Virginia
4. Date of Photograph: July/August 1992
5. Location of Original Negative: Virginia State Library and Archives,
Richmond, Virginia

Photo 1 (DHR Neg. No. 12212)

1. Facade of Mount Stirling
3. David A. Edwards
6. View looking north
7. Photo 1 of 16

Photo 2 (DHR Neg. No. 12212)

1. Facade and east side
3. Bryan L. Townes
6. View looking northwest
7. Photo 2 of 16

Photo 3 (DHR Neg. No. 12212)

1. East side and rear elevation
3. Bryan L. Townes
6. View looking southwest
7. Photo 3 of 16

Photo 4 (DHR Neg. No. 12211)

1. Second level of rear porch detail
3. David A. Edwards
6. View looking southwest
7. Photo 4 of 16

Photo 5 (DHR Neg. No. 12211)

1. First floor central passage
3. David A. Edwards
6. View looking north
7. Photo 5 of 16

Photo 6 (DHR Neg. No. 12211)

1. Drawing room
3. David A. Edwards
6. View looking west
7. Photo 6 of 16

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number Photos Page 15

Mount Stirling
Charles City County, Virginia

Photo 7 (DHR Neg. No. 12211)

1. Library
3. David A. Edwards
6. View looking east
7. Photo 7 of 16

Photo 8 (DHR Neg. No. 12211)

1. Dining room
3. David A. Edwards
6. View looking southeast
7. Photo 8 of 16

Photo 9 (DHR Neg. No. 12211)

1. Bedroom (first floor)
3. David A. Edwards
6. View looking west
7. Photo 9 of 16

Photo 10 (DHR Neg. No. 12211)

1. Second floor central passage
3. David A. Edwards
6. View looking south
7. Photo 10 of 16

Photo 11 (DHR Neg. No. 12211)

1. Bedroom (second floor)
3. David A. Edwards
6. View looking northeast
7. Photo 11 of 16

Photo 12 (DHR Neg. No. 12211)

1. Basement central passage
3. David A. Edwards
6. View looking north
7. Photo 12 of 16

Photo 13 (DHR Neg. No. 12211)

1. Possible old dining room
3. David A. Edwards
6. View looking east
7. Photo 13 of 16

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number Photos Page 16

Mount Stirling
Charles City County, Virginia

Photo 14 (DHR Neg. No. 12212)

1. Kitchen/laundry outbuilding
3. David A. Edwards
6. View looking northwest
7. Photo 14 of 16

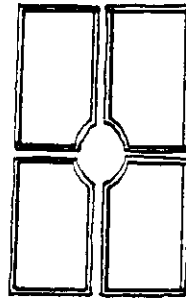
Photo 15 (DHR Neg. No. 12212)

1. Ruins of possible slave house
3. Bryan L. Townes
6. View looking east
7. Photo 15 of 16

Photo 16 (DHR Neg. No. 12212)

1. 1940s poolhouse
3. Bryan L. Townes
6. View looking northeast
7. Photo 16 of 16

Garden
non-contributing



Ruins of Possible Slave House



Garage
non-contributing

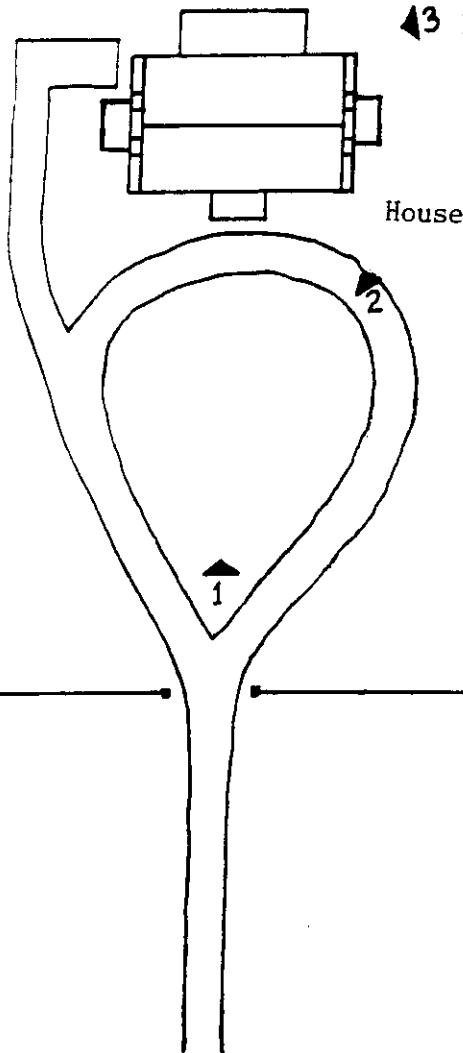


3 Kitchen/Laundry



14

Pool
non-contributing



House

Poolhouse
non-contributing



16

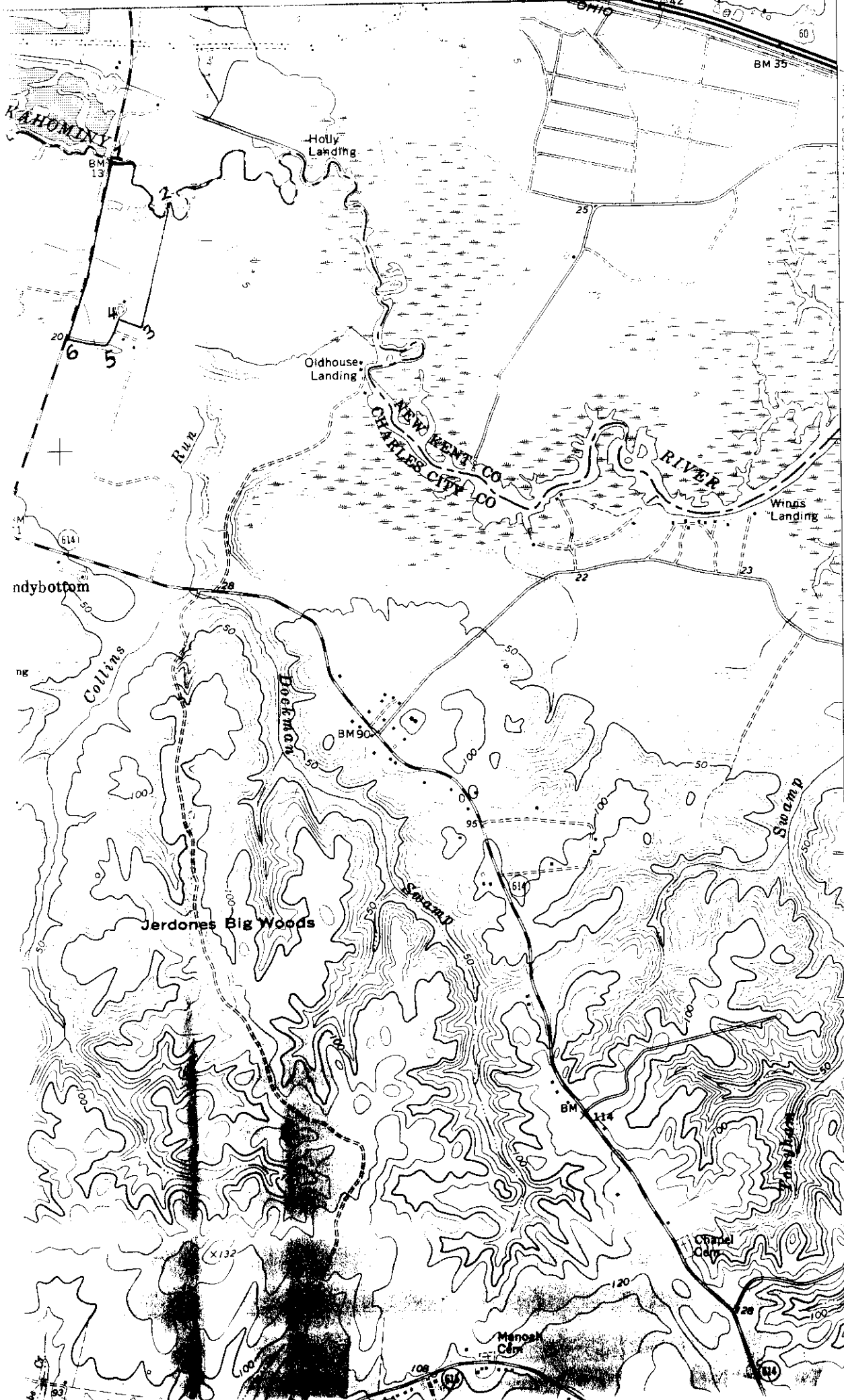
wood plank fence

MOUNT STIRLING

SITE PLAN not to scale

Photo Key 7





MOUNT
STIRLING
CHARLES CITY CO. VA
UTM

- 4143 1. 18 | 319 630 |
4144 200
- 25' 2. 18 | 319 890 |
4144 000
- 3. 18 | 319 740 |
4143 410
- 4142 4. 18 | 319 640 |
4143 450
- 5. 18 | 319 570 |
4143 330
- 4141 6. 18 | 319 380 |
4143 360

4139000m.N.