

JLR-4/15/80 NRHP-7/30/80

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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DATE ENTERED

8/30/80

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORMSEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS**1** NAME

HISTORIC

Bon Aire

AND/OR COMMON

**2** LOCATION

STREET &amp; NUMBER

State Route 626

\_\_ NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Wingina

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Seventh (J. Kenneth Robinson)

STATE

Virginia

 VICINITY OF

CODE

51

COUNTY

Nelson

CODE

125

**3** CLASSIFICATION

## CATEGORY

 DISTRICT BUILDING(S) STRUCTURE SITE OBJECT

## OWNERSHIP

 PUBLIC PRIVATE BOTH

## PUBLIC ACQUISITION

 IN PROCESS BEING CONSIDERED

## STATUS

 OCCUPIED UNOCCUPIED WORK IN PROGRESS

## ACCESSIBLE

 YES: RESTRICTED YES: UNRESTRICTED NO

## PRESENT USE

 AGRICULTURE COMMERCIAL EDUCATIONAL ENTERTAINMENT GOVERNMENT INDUSTRIAL MILITARY MUSEUM PARK PRIVATE RESIDENCE RELIGIOUS SCIENTIFIC TRANSPORTATION OTHER:**4** OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Mr. &amp; Mrs. Ormonde B. M. Wilcox

STREET &amp; NUMBER

Bon Aire

CITY, TOWN

Wingina

STATE

Virginia 24599

**5** LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTIONCOURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Nelson County Courthouse

STREET &amp; NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Lovington

STATE

Virginia

**6** REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Survey

DATE

1979, 1980

 FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR

SURVEY RECORDS Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission - 221 Governor Street

CITY, TOWN

Richmond

STATE

Virginia 23219

## 7 DESCRIPTION

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

### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Bon Aire is a Federal-style dwelling dramatically sited on a hill overlooking the James River. Built ca. 1812 the original three-part scheme remains strongly articulated, although the house has sustained significant alterations. In plan and detail Bon Aire is linked to a number of tripartite houses, such as Point of Honor in Lynchburg, built for a cousin of Bon Aire's builder.

Palladian in plan, Bon Aire is composed of a two-story, three-bay center section flanked by 1-1/2-story, two-bay wings. The brick walls of the original house and the small western addition are laid in Flemish bond. Glazing is still visible on many headers. Treated as a classical temple motif, the pedimented center block of this three-part ensemble is capped by a pedimented gable roof covered with slate. The tympanum contains a lunette, and the pediment cornices are ornamented with thin, round-butt modillions. Tall windows, 9/9 on the first story, 6/9 on the second story, light the first- and second-story hallways. Crudely pointed jack arches over the first-floor windows indicate that they were stuccoed and resembled the corresponding windows of the rear (north) elevation, which have stuccoed arches. The recessed double-door openings at each level are flanked by pilasters. Several courses of patched brickwork above each door reveal that the center bay openings have been altered. It is probable that the openings were originally round topped, similar to those at Point of Honor. The entire main block is sheltered by an over-scaled portico which was added during the 1940s. This portico is set upon a brick podium and visually dominates the entire facade. A plan drawing on the 1812 insurance policy shows that originally a three-story portico was attached to the central block, although it probably bore little resemblance to the present one. A single interior end chimney is located in the north wall. With the exception of the north elevation, Bon Aire's cornice modillions are similar to those in the pediment.

The wings are covered by low-pitched gable roofs sheathed with slate. A single, two-window pedimented dormer projects from the southern slope of each wing; a single gabled dormer with returns is positioned at the northern slope of each. Added in the 1940s, the dormers have slate roofs, cheeks, and tympanums. The modillions in the dormers were copied from the original ones. The gable ends are marked by molded raking boards. Decorative end boards terminate the modillioned entablature of both the north and south elevations. New window and door openings have been cut into the basement level of the wings and main block to provide entry and light to this floor. The original pegged window frames and grills remain in the wings' basement openings.

The small brick addition attached to the west wing was probably constructed soon after Bon Aire was completed. The room is now used as a bath. A large brick kitchen addition was attached to the east wing in the 1950s. A stair with access to the basement was added to the rear of the kitchen wing at the same time.

Bon Aire's spacial organization is identical to a number of three-part dwellings located in both the Tidewater and Piedmont. With the exception of the basement, which has been finished for use as a family room, the interior floor plan has not been altered. The central block contains an entrance hall and parlor on the first floor and a bedroom on the second floor; the dining room is located in the east wing, while the west wing functions as a living room. With the exception of the picture rails which are a recent application, all interior trim is original. This trim is conservative in design and competently executed. Well scaled, the entrance hall is an especially dignified space. Two arched openings, one marking the entry to the enclosed stair, the other framing the short barrel-vaulted entry to the parlor, impart a formality to the space. Arches with molded keystones spring from

(See Continuation Sheet #1)

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

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

SPECIFIC DATES ca. 1812 BUILDER/ARCHITECT \_\_\_\_\_

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Bon Aire, built ca. 1812 for George Cabell, Jr., is a distinctive Federal dwelling inspired by Palladian forms published in mid-18th-century English pattern books. During the latter part of the century, there developed in Virginia a strong tradition of three- and five-part houses in a Palladian vein. Generally, the forms consisted of a narrow, two-story center section, covered either by a hipped or pedimented roof, and low one-story wings. Five-part houses had two-story wings attached to the lower ones. The prototypes of these schemes are found primarily in William Morris's Select Architecture, 1755. Credit for popularizing the schemes is often given to Thomas Jefferson, as he owned a copy of Morris's book and used it in the design of the first form of Monticello. However, the phenomenon yet remains largely undocumented as do many of the houses themselves.

With Morris's designs providing a point of reference, Virginia builders manipulated scale, plan, details, and materials to conform to local vernacular traditions. Constructed in the native materials of red brick and whitewashed wood trim, Bon Aire exemplifies this process. The house is diminutive, yet imposing, and accommodates the needs of a Virginia planter. Its builder has not been identified, but the tripartite organization of the plan and many details relate the house to Point of Honor in Lynchburg, another Cabell family house. Other more purely Palladian Piedmont houses include Mountain Grove, Albemarle County, and River Bluff, Nelson County. More famous and more formal manifestations of Virginia's Palladian tradition are Brandon, Prince George County, the Randolph-Semple House in Williamsburg, and Battersea in Petersburg.

Bon Aire is dramatically sited in southern Nelson County and commands panoramic views of the James River and its bottom lands, property all once held by the Cabells. Settling in the county in the mid-18th-century, this prominent family was responsible for building a number of architecturally significant dwellings of which Bon Aire, Soldier's Joy, and Montezuma are among the few remaining examples.

The Bon Aire property was issued by patent to Dr. William Cabell in the second quarter of the 18th century. Dr. Cabell, who emigrated from Warminster, England, ca. 1724-25, settled successively in Henrico, Goochland, and finally in part of Amherst County that became Nelson. Dr. Cabell figured prominently in Virginia's 18th-century political and social affairs, and before his death in 1774, he had amassed substantial acreage in the area of his first patent. In his will Dr. Cabell deeded a large tract of this land to his son Nicholas Cabell. In 1799 Nicholas Cabell and his wife, Hannah Carrington Cabell, "for natural love and affection for (our) son" gave George Cabell, Jr., 940 acres on the Fluvanna River (now James River), the tract on which Bon Aire was built.

George Cabell, Jr., trained for the medical profession in Lynchburg with his cousin, George Cabell, Sr., and completed his medical studies at the University of Pennsylvania. Cabell, Jr., was studying with his cousin about the time the latter was building his new house, Point of Honor in Lynchburg. As the similarities between Point of Honor and Bon Aire

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Amherst County Deed Book H, p. 575 (1799).

Land Tax Books, 1782-1808.

Brown, Alexander. Cabells and Their Kin. Richmond, Va. 1939.

Hening, William W. The Statutes at Large... Vol. 12 (1785-1788). Richmond, Va., 1823.  
Vol. 13 (1789-1792). Philadelphia, 1823.

Martin, Joseph, ed. A New and Comprehensive Gazetteer of Virginia... Charlottesville, Va., 1835.  
(See Continuation Sheet #2)

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 9 acres

QUADRANGLE NAME Howardsville, Va.

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24000

UTM REFERENCES

A 1,7 7,0,1 0,6,0 4,1 7,2 6,6,0  
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B                    
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C                  

D                  

E                  

F                  

G                  

H                  

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION Beginning at a point on NW side of Route 626, about 5200' SW of the intersection of route 626 and 604; thence extending about 600' SW along said side; thence extending about 600' NW to 480' contour; thence extending about 600' NE; thence extending about 650' SE to north side of Route 626, point of origin.

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Staff

ORGANIZATION

DATE

Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission

April 1980

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

221 Governor Street

(804) 786-3144

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Richmond

Virginia 23219

# 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL   

STATE X

LOCAL   

As the designated State Historic Preservation 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.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

TITLE Tucker Hill, Executive Director  
Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission

DATE APR 15 1980

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

ATTEST: KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

(11/78)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

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## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

Bon Aire, Nelson County, Virginia

CONTINUATION SHEET #1

ITEM NUMBER 7,8

PAGE 1

### 7. DESCRIPTION

stop-reeced fluted pilasters. A large opening whose original use cannot be determined is found between the two arches. The enclosed stair rises steeply between the walls. Similar molded baseboards and pedestal-cap chair rails encircle the six original rooms. The four main rooms feature their original late-Federal mantels. The mantels of the parlors and the bedroom directly above are identical, except that the shelf of the parlor mantel has been rebuilt. The mantels are embellished only by the gougework dentils and the cable molding which describes the interior of the pilasters, entablature blocks, and central tablet. It is likely that the mantel in the living room was once identical to the one found in the dining room. The living room mantel has been rebuilt using the same moldings found on the rebuilt parlor mantel shelf. The dining room mantel appears stretched because of its tall, deeply molded cornice. Except for the gougework dentils, it is undecorated.

Three 20th-century outbuildings, a garage, guest quarters, and storage shed, are positioned to the rear of the main house. The 1812 insurance policy discloses that two large offices, a meat house, well, and dairy were located on the property. No trace of any of these original dependencies remains.

### BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

MH

The register bounds have been drawn to include the house and three outbuildings. The total nominated acreage is nine acres.

### 8. SIGNIFICANCE

are too numerous to be coincidental, it is probable that Cabell, Jr., was so impressed by his cousin's house that he engaged the same builder a few years later to construct Bon Aire.

In 1798 Cabell, Jr., married Susannah Wyatt, possibly prompting the gift of land from his father the following year. In the early 1800s he was practicing medicine with his brother-in-law, William Hare. Both were charged with houses in the small town of Warminster. While the deed for the gift of land was recorded in 1799, Cabell, Jr., did not pay taxes on it until 1812. In that same year the Mutual Assurance Society issued Cabell a fire policy on Bon Aire. The replacement value and the insured value are identical, indicating that the house was completed shortly before 1812. The policy shows a three-part house, built of brick with a wood roof and a three-story portico. Two of the dependencies are listed as "offices", indicating that Cabell carried on his medical practice from his home. Cabell lived at Bon Aire only until 1817, the year his wife died. The house was well furnished with mahogany furniture, a number of framed pictures, mirrors, and bookcases and was valued at \$5,000, which was extremely high for Nelson County at that time. Following his wife's death, Cabell moved to Richmond and became very active in Masonic affairs. In 1826 he and his second wife, Elizabeth Fitzhugh May, deeded Bon Aire to Zachariah Neville for \$7,500, a very substantial sum in the 1820s.

(See Continuation Sheet #2)

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HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

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## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

Bon Aire, Nelson County, Virginia

CONTINUATION SHEET #2

ITEM NUMBER 8 & 9 PAGE 2,1

### 8. SIGNIFICANCE

Neville owned Bon Aire until his death in 1832. It was sold by his heirs, Lafayette, Louisa, and Jefferson Neville, in 1839 to James T. Smith of Buckingham County for \$10,000. The following year Smith sold the 926½ acres to William Robinson for \$11,000. Robinson died in 1851, and his youngest son sold the property to Daniel Hartsock in 1868. The Hartsock family owned it until 1884 when it was acquired by the Piedmont and Arlington Life Insurance Company, who in turn sold it in 1892 to Nannie L. Lewis. The present owners, Mr. and Mrs. Ormonde B. M. Wilcox, acquired the property in 1972. Mrs. Wilcox is a Cabell descendant.

MH/MTP

### 9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

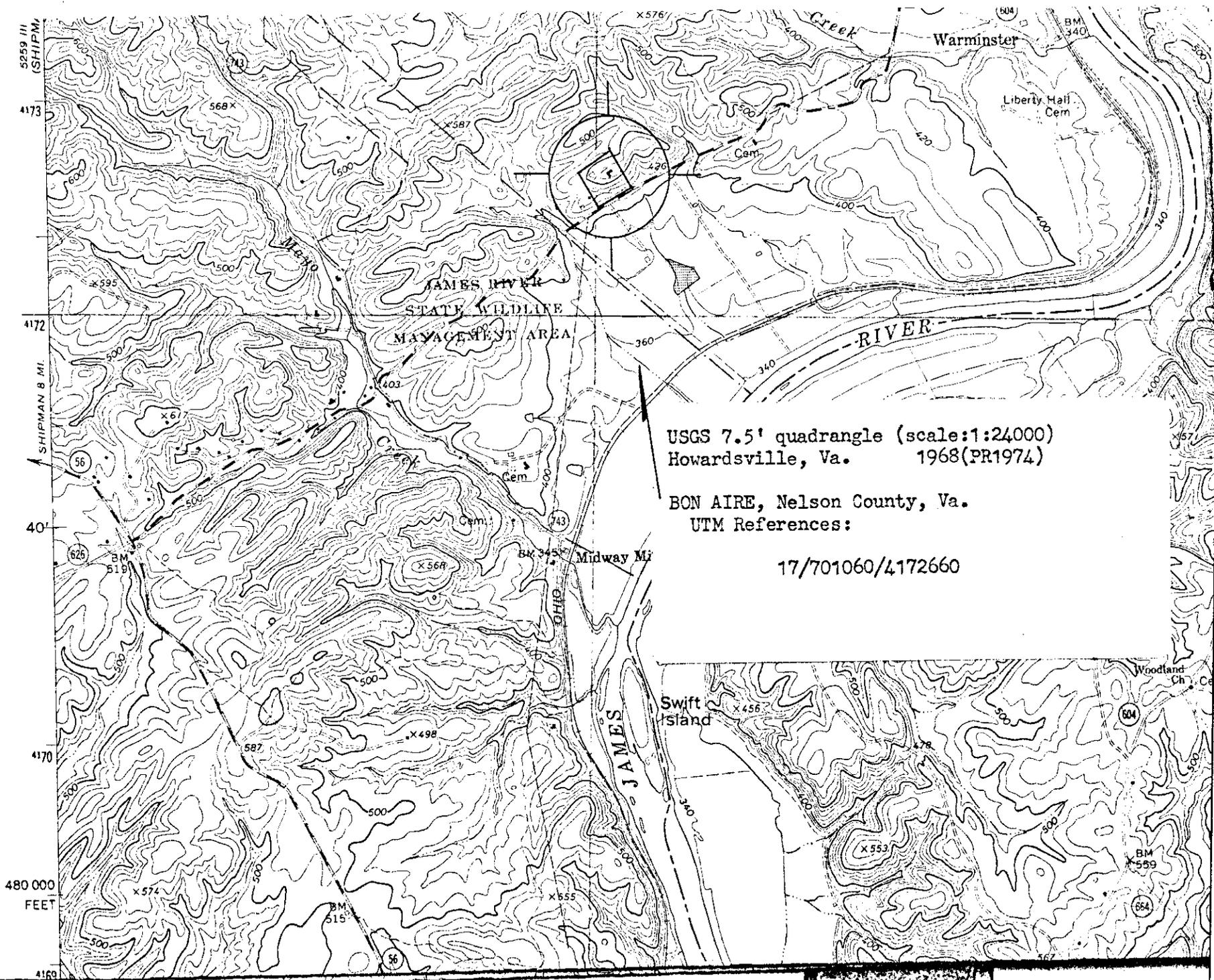
Nelson County Deed Books 6, 8, 9, 17, 18, 22, 25, 30.

Land Tax Books, 1809-1857.

Personal Property Tax Books, 1815.

Richmond, Va. Virginia State Library. WPA Records, "Bon Aire, Nelson County," 1938.

United States Census. Nelson County, Va., 1850.



USGS 7.5' quadrangle (scale:1:24000)  
Howardsville, Va. 1968(PR1974)

BON AIRE, Nelson County, Va.  
UTM References:

17/701060/4172660

5259 III  
(SHIPM)  
4173  
4172  
40'  
4170  
480 000  
FEET  
4169

SHIPMAN 8 MI.