

VLR- 3/17/87 NR+HP- 9/10/87

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Virginia Manor (VDHL file #81-295)

and or common N/A

2. Location

street & number State Route 130

N/A not for publication

city, town Natural Bridge

vicinity of

state Virginia

code 51

county Rockbridge

code 163

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes; restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes; unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<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:

4. Owner of Property

name Dr. and Mrs. Louis A. Skidmore

street & number 8903 River Road

city, town Richmond

N/A vicinity of

state Virginia

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Rockbridge County Courthouse

street & number N/A

city, town Lexington

state Virginia

6. Representation in Existing Surveys (2) see Continuation Sheet #1

(1) Virginia Division of Historic Landmarks Survey
title (file #81-295) has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1979 federal state county local

depository for survey records Virginia Division of Historic Landmarks
221 Governor Street

city, town Richmond

state Virginia 23219

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date <u>N/A</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

SUMMARY DESCRIPTION

Virginia Manor is located off State Route 130, near Natural Bridge Station in Rock-bridge County. The main house is frame, having a two-story center block with a one-story wing on each side and a two-story rear ell. The front facade of the main block has a projecting center bay and a one-story porch. There have been several major interior and exterior alterations, most in the nineteenth century, which give the house its present formal and symmetrical appearance. Also on the property are a two-story playhouse, a tenants' house, a stable, a spring house, a brick storage building, a smoke-house, and a barn. These plus the main house make a total of eight contributing buildings. There are also three contributing structures: a railroad waiting station, a dam, and a boat-lock. There are no non-contributing buildings or structures.

ARCHITECTURAL ANALYSIS

Virginia Manor began in 1800 as a two-story center passage log structure. In 1856 a cross-axial plan two-story, five-bay frame house eclipsed the log structure, which was turned into a rear wing. Probably at the same time an early nineteenth century kitchen was moved to adjoin the rear ell on the north. During the ownership of the George W. Stevens' between 1897 and 1920, two one-story, one-room wings with bay windows were added to the east and west sides of the 1850s house. In the early twentieth century, a small one-story section was added to the east of the rear ell and porches (later screened) were added on the north, east, and west ends of the house.

The front (south) facade of the house consists of three symmetrical bays on each floor. The windows in each side bay are six-over-six with louvered shutters. The central bay on the second floor has a tripartite window, four-over-four in the middle and two-over-two on the sides. The first-floor center bay contains the doorway, which, although altered, retains its original rectangular transom and sidelights. The door itself is late-nineteenth century. A five-bay, one-story porch spans the front; the porch has six tapering wooden octagonal columns, a simple wide cornice, and a low hipped roof. Four wide shallow granite steps lead up to the center of the porch. The late-nineteenth century east and west wings are distinguished by projecting bays, each with a pair of one-over-one windows on the front and one-over-one windows on each slanting side.

The house is covered in clapboards painted white. Windows are six-over-six for the most part, with a few two-over-two windows in the rear ell. About half of all the windows retain louvered shutters. The hipped roofs of the structure are standing-seam metal. The front section of the house has a simple exterior painted brick chimney on the north side and two brick chimneys (now encompassed by the bay-windowed wings). These wings also have a smaller interior brick chimney in each. There are two interior chimneys in the rear wing. A brick foundation supports the house.

The plan of the 1850s section of Virginia Manor is a Greek cross in outline, with a center section two rooms deep and flanking sections of one room each. Upon entering the house, one finds a large square stair hall. The open-string stair with heavy carved newel in the Eastlake manner is late-nineteenth century, but is probably in the location of the original. Each tread of the stair has two tapering, elaborately turned balusters.

To the west from the stair hall is the parlor; the opening between the rooms is

(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 type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" 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 c.1800; alterations **Builder/Architect** unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Virginia Manor, originally known as Glengyle, is architecturally significant as one of a select group of Rockbridge County estates that evolved from a simple vernacular structure into a high-style country manor. In this regard the house is unusual in that the earlier portions were not removed, but were incorporated as subsequent additions were made. Thus, the house is illustrative of changing tastes in Rockbridge County architecture, representing vernacular building as well as Greek Revival and Eastlake styles. Virginia Manor's collection of outbuildings represent a complete assemblage of necessary support structures found in a late-nineteenth-century estate.

The house is associated with two especially illustrious occupants, General Fitzhugh Lee and George W. Stevens. Lee, who lived in the house in the early 1890s, used it as headquarters for the Rockbridge Land Company, a speculative land development company centered on the Virginia Manor property. The house is especially noteworthy as the country house of George Stevens, President of the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad from 1900 until his death in 1920. Under Stevens' management, the railroad experienced a time of tremendous expansion and prosperity, making it one of the most important railroads in Virginia and in the country. It was Stevens who made Virginia Manor into the country estate it is today. The small concrete waiting station still stands as a reminder of Stevens' management of the C & O Railroad from Virginia Manor.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The first owner of record of the property was Benjamin Blackburn, who in 1781 sold it to James McChesney, who subsequently sold it to John Flemming in 1800. It was probably during Flemming's ownership that the first dwelling was built, a two-story house facing west on the top of the hill overlooking the James River and the valley. This structure is now the rear wing of the house. The property was a large tract of land, including all the area now called Greenlee and Glasgow. Called "Glengyle" at the time, this estate was part of the property known as the Flemming-Greenlee Plantation.¹

Although the estate was purchased by Richard H. Burks in 1850, the deed was not recorded until April, 1856, when two of Burks' heirs became the owners. In September of 1856, Thomas C. Burke became the owner of a 340-acre portion of the property which included the main house. It was during the ownership of Thomas Burke that the house was enlarged by the building of the Greek Revival wing facing south and perpendicular to the original house. This period was a time of great prosperity for Lexington and Rockbridge County, brought about largely by the opening of the Kanawha Canal system in 1850-1. Many houses, like Virginia Manor, were enlarged at this time, although the retention of the earlier vernacular log section at Virginia Manor is unusual.

The property was passed by Burke's heirs to Martha Stoner in 1868; in 1890 she

(See Continuation Sheet #2)

9. Major Bibliographical References

"Century Homes: Virginia Manor". Buena Vista News. 31 March 1977.
 McClung, James W. Historical Significance of Rockbridge County. Staunton, VA: McClure Co., 1968.
 Turner, Charles W. Chessie's Road. Richmond, VA: Garrett and Massie, Inc., 1956.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property approx. 33 acres

Quadrangle name Snowden, VA

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	7	0	3	3	0	0	0	4	1	6	4	5	2	0
Zone	Easting						Northing							

B

1	7	6	3	3	6	9	0	4	1	6	4	5	2	0
Zone	Easting						Northing							

C

1	7	0	3	3	3	6	0	4	1	6	4	0	7	0
Zone	Easting						Northing							

D

1	7	6	3	3	2	4	0	4	1	6	4	5	0	0
Zone	Easting						Northing							

E

Zone	Easting						Northing							

F

Zone	Easting						Northing							

G

Zone	Easting						Northing							

H

Zone	Easting						Northing							

Verbal boundary description and justification

(See Continuation Sheet #4)

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code county N/A code

state N/A code county N/A code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Dianne Pierce, Consultant

organization N/A

date December, 1986

street & number 4329 Southampton Road

telephone (804) 272-5502

city or town Richmond

state Virginia

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state 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 H. Bryan Mitchell, Director
Virginia Division of Historic Landmarks

date August 5, 1987

For NPS use only

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

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

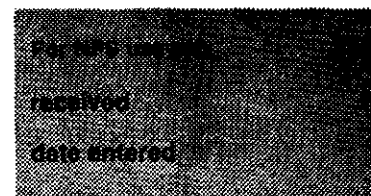
date

Chief of Registration

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

VIRGINIA MANOR, ROCKBRIDGE COUNTY, VA



Continuation sheet #1

Item number 6, 7

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6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

- (2) Works Progress Administration Historical Inventory
date unknown, federal survey
depository: Virginia Division of Historic Landmarks
221 Governor Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219

7. DESCRIPTION--Architectural Analysis

supported by two full-round fluted Ionic columns. Behind the stair hall is the dining room, entered by multi-light doors. To the east of the stair hall and entered by a small hall under the stair is another room, probably a study or library originally. The second-floor plan of this section is similar to the first-floor plan.

The easternmost and westernmost rooms are entered through the library or parlor. Behind the library is the original structure. Although this early portion may have had a central passage plan originally, the interior has now been all but obliterated in a recent remodeling to create a modern kitchen.

The interior of the house has some fine Greek Revival moldings around the windows and doors on the first floor. On the second floor the casings have square corner blocks. In the front first-floor center space, a built-in corner cabinet from the mid-nineteenth century retains its elaborate glass doors. The trim in the late-nineteenth century additions is typically Victorian, narrower than the Greek Revival casings, and mitred at the corners. The walnut mantels are elaborately carved, with full-round turned columns at each side and gadrooning across the top. During the late nineteenth century the heavy paneled wainscot was added in the two center rooms and two rooms to the east, as well as up the stairs. This wainscot has two rows of indented square panels with chamfered corners. All the earlier mantels in the house were replaced in the late nineteenth century with a variety of Victorian mantels, ranging from very elaborate on the first floor to rather simple on the second floor. If there were any overmantels, none have survived.

Most of the interior doors were replaced in the late nineteenth century with simple four-panel doors. A new front door was installed having indented L-shaped panels below a single pane of glass. The new doorway was embellished on the interior with applied carved moldings, and the design of the transom was altered.

In the early years of the twentieth century, the mantel in the front parlor was removed and a heavy corbelled brick mantel installed.

Since the early twentieth-century modifications, few alterations have occurred to the house, despite several changes of ownership.

In the period of the Stevens' ownership, several of the important outbuildings on the property were added. The two-story playhouse just to the north of the main house was built in the first decade of the twentieth century for Stevens' two young daughters. The building has one room on the first floor and two rooms on the second floor, each originally reached by its own exterior stair (recently removed). The playhouse is clad in wood shingles, and has six-over-six windows, louvered shutters, and a hipped roof.

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Continuation sheet #2

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7. DESCRIPTION--Architectural Analysis

Down the hill from the main house, the stable and tenant house also date from the ownership of the Stevens'. The two-story tenants' house is covered in square and scalloped shingles. The windows are six-over-six. There is a four-bay, one-story front porch. The interior of the house is simple, with a few embellishments such as the carved square newels and turned balusters on the stair, and door- and window-casings with bullseye corner blocks. The stable, which is sophisticated and stoutly built, has two full stories plus a basement. The interior fittings, including horse stalls, hay chutes, and hay loft, are all still intact. The framing of the stable is made of huge square timbers and some steel members. The exterior, covered in red-painted German siding, is graced by six-over-six windows. The original diagonal-board double front doors are found inside the recess formed by a projecting gabled entrance bay. The roof is of patterned slate and has two small gable-roofed cupolas along the ridge.

Since George Stevens was the president of the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad, he had a small spur built off the railroad line running below the house. He also built a small concrete waiting station with a Spanish tile roof and "Virginia Manor" inscribed on the side facing the track.

Down the hill to the east of the main house, in addition to the stable and tenant house, there are a spring house, a storage building, and a barn. The spring house, probably dating from the third quarter of the nineteenth century, is of stone with a pitched wood-shingle roof, and is built next to a small creek. The brick storage building dating from the last years of the nineteenth century has a pitched roof, decorative outriggers, and stone lintels. The north facade has three wooden doors. The simple mid-nineteenth-century barn is frame, with a pitched roof and a storage shed to the south.

Behind the main house there is an early nineteenth-century frame storage building with attached shed, both with metal -covered pitched roofs.

On the southeast side of the property, near the river, is an unusually large stone boat-lock, once part of the Kanawha canal network, dating from the 1850s.

The main house is set on a hill with sweeping views of the valley and the James River. A walkway and steps on axis with the front door lead down the hill. Legend reports that during Stevens' occupancy, a canopied walkway connected the railroad waiting station and the steps up to the house. Plantings are few around the house, with the exception of a row of boxwoods paralleling the front walk.

8. SIGNIFICANCE--Historical Background

sold it to the Rockbridge Land Company. This newly formed development company intended to partition the Glengyle property into small parcels, hoping to sell them in an anticipated Glasgow area land boom. This was part of a larger county-wide land boom that

(See Continuation Sheet #3)

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Continuation sheet #3

Item number 8

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8. SIGNIFICANCE--Historical Background

began in 1889 and ended abruptly in 1892.² As with Buena Vista and Goshen, Glasgow was laid out in a series of town and villa lots, along with industrial sites, since the focus of the proposed community was to be manufacturing.³ General Fitzhugh Lee, a nephew of Robert E. Lee, and himself a distinguished Civil War veteran, was president of the Rockbridge Land Company and resided in the Glengyle main house. The name "George Mason Lee" and the date "1895" are scratched into the lower pane of the front door's right sidelight, undoubtedly the work of one of the Lee children.⁴ Despite extensive advertising and very high hopes, the projected Glasgow land boom was a failure, and in 1897 the house that had been the focal point of the scheme, Glengyle, was sold to Mrs. Virginia Stevens.

Mrs. Stevens lived in the house with her husband, George W. Stevens, who was president of the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad from 1900 to 1920. Stevens' career with the railroad began in 1864, in Utica, New York. After working his way up through almost every aspect of railroading, Stevens became president of the C & O at a critical time in its history. His presidency was characterized by tremendous expansion of the holdings of the company, including a significant increase in track mileage from 1900 to 1920.⁵ Stevens was also known for his pursuit of excellent officer-employee relations, one proof of which was his founding of the Railroad Young Men's Christian Association in Richmond for the benefit of C & O workers. Stevens' foresight in acquiring three major West Virginia coal fields meant the financial salvation of the railroad.

Although the Stevens' primary residence was in Richmond, the Rockbridge County house was used by them as a retreat and summer residence until George Stevens' death in 1920. The Stevens' were responsible for several interior and exterior additions and modifications to the main house. The tenant house was added at this time, as was the stable, reflecting Stevens' love of horses.⁶ The two-story playhouse behind the manor house was built for the Stevens' daughters. The two bay-windowed wings were added to the house by the Stevens', the interior stair was replaced, and distinctive paneled wainscot was installed on the first floor. The Stevens changed the name of the property to "Virginia Manor".

George Stevens' position as president of the railroad meant that he had to have communication with the outside world while he was in residence at Virginia Manor. To this end, he had a small spur line built off the railraod line running between the house and the river for his own railroad car. He had the small concrete waiting station built on axis with the front door of the house; it is said that during his occupancy a canopy-covered walkway connected the two. One room on the first floor of the house was outfitted with telegraphic equipment to allow Stevens to direct railroad operations.⁷

In 1920 VIrginia Manor passed to the Stevens' daughter Helen and thence through a series of owners to the present owners, Dr. and Mrs. Louis A. Skidmore.

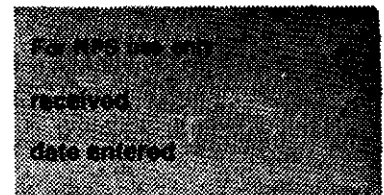
ENDNOTES

1. McClung, James W., Historical Significance of Rockbridge County (Staunton, VA: McClure Co., Inc., 1939), pp. 222-3.

(See Continuation Sheet #4)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form



VIRGINIA MANOR, ROCKBRIDGE COUNTY, VA

Continuation sheet #4

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8. SIGNIFICANCE--Historical Background--Endnotes

2. Lyle, Royster, Jr., and Pamela Hemenway Simpson, The Architecture of Historic Lexington (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 1977), 39.
3. "Prospectus of the Rockbridge Company", 1889, p. 3.
4. "Century Homes: Virginia Manor", Buena Vista News, 31 March 1977.
5. Turner, Charles W., Chessie's Road (Richmond, VA: Garrett & Massie, Inc., 1956), p. 17.
6. "Century Homes".
7. Works Progress Administration Survey, undated.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

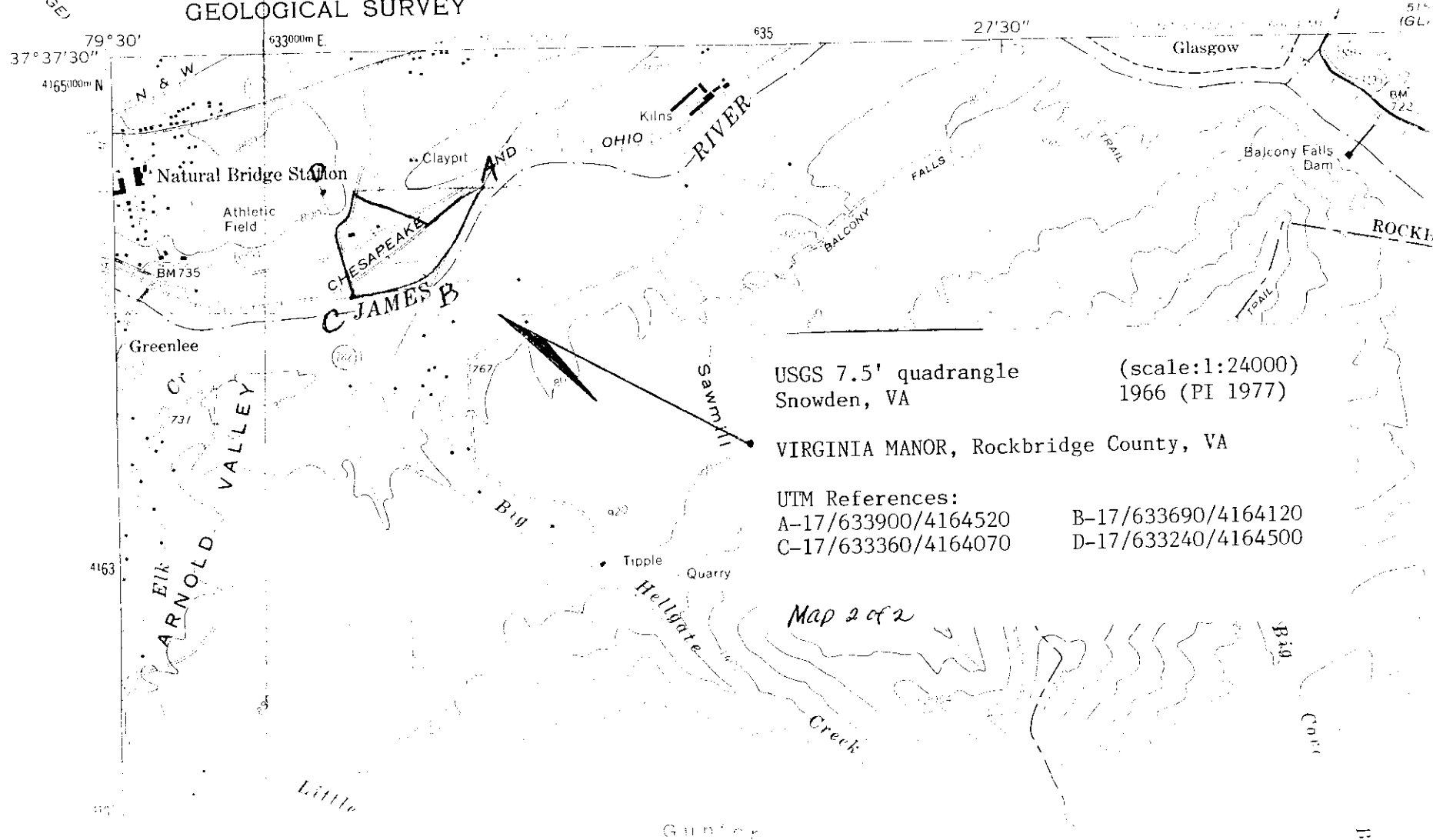
JUSTIFICATION: The Virginia Manor nomination consists of approx. 33 acres which encompasses all contributing structures and buildings, including the dam and boat-lock. It is roughly triangular in shape, bounded on the west by an unimproved road and on the south by the James River.

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION: Beginning at a point on the west side of an unimproved road approx. 1000' south-southeast of its intersection with State Route 130, which point is approx. 6200 feet west of the intersection of State Route 130 and State Route 685; thence S-SE along the west side of said unimproved road approx. 1000 feet; thence S approx. 500 feet to the James River; thence approx. 2300 feet E-NE along the shore of the James River; thence approx. 700 feet W-SW along the Chesapeake and Ohio railroad line; thence W-NW approx. 1000 feet to the point of origin.

5059 1/4 NE
(NATURAL BRIDGE)

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

COMMONWEALTH
DIVISION OF MINES



USGS 7.5' quadrangle
Snowden, VA

(scale:1:24000)
1966 (PI 1977)

VIRGINIA MANOR, Rockbridge County, VA

UTM References:
A-17/633900/4164520
C-17/633360/4164070

B-17/633690/4164120
D-17/633240/4164500

Map 2 of 2