

VLR-4/17/79 NRHP-6/22/79

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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DATE ENTERED

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

The Fendall House

AND/OR COMMON

Lee-Fendall House (Preferred)

2 LOCATION

SE corner Washington and Oronoco streets (614 Oronoco Street)

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Alexandria

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

VICINITY OF

Eighth (Herbert E. Harris, II)

STATE

Virginia

CODE

51

COUNTY

(in city)

CODE

510

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
- MUSEUM
- COMMERCIAL
- PARK
- EDUCATIONAL
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- ENTERTAINMENT
- RELIGIOUS
- GOVERNMENT
- SCIENTIFIC
- INDUSTRIAL
- TRANSPORTATION
- MILITARY
- OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Virginia Trust for Historic Preservation (Clement E. Conger, President)

STREET & NUMBER

614 Oronoco Street

CITY, TOWN

Alexandria

VICINITY OF

STATE

Virginia

22314

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Registry of Deeds, City Hall

STREET & NUMBER

125 North Royal Street

CITY, TOWN

Alexandria

STATE

Virginia

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS (3) (See Continuation Sheet #1)

TITLE

(1) "Alexandria Historic District" - National Register of Historic Places Inventory
Nomination Form

DATE

1969

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

National Register of Historic Places, Department of the Interior

CITY, TOWN

Washington

STATE

D.C.

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

The Lee-Fendall House is a three-bay, two-story town house erected in 1785 and remodeled in the Greek Revival style in 1850-52. Fendall's 1796 Mutual Assurance Society declaration describes the house as follows: "Dwelling house/the Walls built of Wood/32 feet in front 40 feet deep/ 2 Stories high/(with) the walls filled in with Bricks." It describes the kitchen wing as 42 feet by 20 feet by 20 feet, two stories high and covered by a wooden roof. Attached to the kitchen was a servants' hall, 20 feet by 15 feet, also built of wood and covered with wooden roof. The policy also shows six framed outbuildings on the property, including an office, a dwelling, a "pidgeon" house, a rabbit house, a "building", and a stable. All of these disappeared prior to 1877, as they are not shown in the city atlas of that year.

The dwelling's first and second stories consist of a side hall with two principal chambers opening onto the hall--a common town house plan for the period. The main variation from the norm is the location of the service ell perpendicular to the hall rather than behind it. The house was probably covered by a gable roof; perhaps with dormers.

In 1850 the property was purchased by Louis A. Cazenove who between 1850 and 1852 had it remodeled in the Greek Revival style. This remodeling involved the changing of the roof to a shallow hip and raising the cornice level to accommodate a full third story lighted by thin "eyebrow" windows with diamond panes. The windows are just beneath the cornice in an area which reads as a wide frieze. Other changes probably included the lengthening of the first-story windows, the addition of the window cornices, and decoration of the corners with pilasters. The Oronoco Street porch and the iron railing inserts on the windows are also mid-19th century. The present siding on the main house and the north elevation of the ell probably was part of the remodeling; the date of the flush-board siding on the south wall of the ell is uncertain but may be 18th century.

The interior retains basically its 1852 appearance, although the dentiled cornices in the first-floor reception rooms may be original. In the hall an elliptical arch supported on pilasters is also original. The 1850-52 work which predominates is consistent and well executed. It includes the majority of window and door cases, hall wainscot, mantel and fireplace surrounds, and all visible hardware. The windows and doors are treated with symmetrically molded trim with corner blocks. The drawing room mantel is of marble and is in the form of a shallow Tudor arch. The present stair, which ascends to the third floor at the south end of the hall, replaces the original which was at the opposite end. The only relatively modern alteration of significance is the glazing of the one-story, mid-19th-century rear porch to make a sun room.

The house retains its original lot size, now treated as a pleasant informal garden. The sites of most of the outbuildings appear undisturbed, giving the yard unique potential for archaeological investigation of an 18th-century urban domestic complex.

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 checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL
<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) Labor
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1785

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Lee-Fendall House is the earliest of several neighboring houses with Lee family connections. It lies within Old Town Alexandria, an urban historic district including a large concentration of late 18th- and early 19th-century urban structures. Built in 1785 as the residence of Philip Richard Fendall, a friend and attorney for George Washington, the Lee-Fendall House was purchased from John L. Lewis, Jr., in 1972 by the Virginia Trust for Historic Preservation. It was the home of labor leader John L. Lewis from 1937 until his death in 1969.

Philip Richard Fendall was a director of Washington's Potomac Canal Company and a founder and first president of the Bank of Alexandria. He built this house on a large town lot bought for and transferred to him in the late autumn of 1784 by Henry (Light Horse Harry) Lee. Fendall was twice related to Henry Lee by marriage. He first married Elizabeth Steptoe Lee, widow of Philip Ludwell Lee of Stratford (mother of Henry's wife, Matilda Lee). Two years after her death, Fendall married Mary Lee, Henry's sister.

Because of Mrs. Fendall's failing health, Henry and Matilda Lee spent much of the winter of 1788-89 at the Fendall home. It was here, according to tradition, that Henry Lee wrote the farewell address to President-elect Washington from his fellow citizens of Alexandria. The house remained in the Lee family, through various branches, for almost a century following Fendall's death in 1805. Notable owners during this period include Edmund Jennings Lee (d. 1843) and Louis A. Cazenove. The latter, during his brief tenure (1850-1852) made major alterations to the building, the only ones from the time of construction to the present. Mrs. Cazenove continued to live here with her small son except for a short period when the house was seized for use by the Federal government during the Civil War.

In 1903 the property was purchased by Robert F. Downham from Mrs. Robert Fleming, a granddaughter of Richard Bland Lee and the last representative of the family to own the Lee-Fendall House. The property passed from Downham's ownership to that of John L. and Myrta (Mrs. John L.) Lewis in 1937, introducing several years of colorful history.

For many conservative Americans, John L. Lewis, long-time President of the United Mine Workers of America and founder of the Congress of Industrial Organizations, personified extreme radicalism during the New Deal era. Although a champion of the working classes, Lewis was interested in society. He and his wife spent huge sums refurbishing their Alexandria home. Neither this nor Mrs. Lewis's claim that she was descended from early Virginia aristocrats gained them acceptance by Old Alexandria families. Their house did become a fashionable gathering place for prominent members of the Federal government, including Senators, cabinet members, diplomats, Supreme Court Justices, and military leaders. Of more lasting significance, the Lewises preserved the Lee-Fendall House during a crucial era of depression, war, and post-war development. Myrta Lewis introduced a level of care and concern for the house and garden which her husband continued following her death in 1942.

(See Continuation Sheet #1)

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

The Fendall House - Lee-Fendall (Preferred), Alexandria, Virginia

CONTINUATION SHEET #1

ITEM NUMBER 6 & 8 PAGE 1

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

- (2) Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Survey
1968 State
Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission
221 Governor Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219
- (3) Historic American Buildings Survey Inventory
Federal
Library of Congress
Washington, D.C.

8. SIGNIFICANCE

Lewis's son and heir, Dr. John L. Lewis, Jr. had no personal interest in the property but he did enhance its future by selling it to the Virginia Trust for Historic Preservation in 1972. The Virginia Trust renovated the place, furnishing it with Lee memorabilia and other period pieces. It was opened to the public as an historic house museum on March 25th, 1974.

In addition to its historical associations, the Lee-Fendall House survives as a fine example of Alexandria's early domestic architecture. The site is important in that it is one of the few 18th-century building sites in the community to retain its original, fairly generous lot size, permitting the opportunity to recall the urban fabric of the city before 20th-century densities were reached. Although the original outbuildings have disappeared, their sites remain undisturbed, making it possible to study through archaeological investigation a well-documented 18th-century, urban domestic complex.

HPP

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Boyd, Thomas. Light Horse Harry Lee. New York, 1931.
 Dubofsky, Melvyn. John L. Lewis: A Biography. New York, 1977, (n.b. bibliographical references to Lewis family and Alexandria society therein).
 Fitzpatrick, John C. The Diaries of George Washington. New York, 1925.
 . The Writings of George Washington. Washington, D.C.: GPO, n.d.
 Lee, E. J. Lee of Virginia. Philadelphia, 1895.
 Mutual Assurance Society Policy R1 V1 N14.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 0.4412 acres

QUADRANGLE NAME Alexandria, Va.

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24000

UTM REFERENCES

A 18 322340 4297380
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C

D

E

F

G

H

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION Map 139, Block 1, Lots 501 and 502, Land Records of Alexandria. Lot 501 has a frontage on Oronoco St. of 124.97 feet by a depth on Washington St. of 63.15 feet and a depth of 55.15 feet on the east boundary, improved with a two- and three-story frame house. Lot 502 has a frontage on North Washington St. of 91.34 feet by a depth on the

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES south boundary of 123.4 feet, 99.35 feet on the east boundary and a depth of 124.97 feet on the north boundary. (Plat enclosed)

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Staff

ORGANIZATION

Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission

DATE

April 1979

STREET & NUMBER

221 Governor Street

TELEPHONE

(804) 786-3144

CITY OR TOWN

Richmond

STATE

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 17 1979

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

Dronoco St.

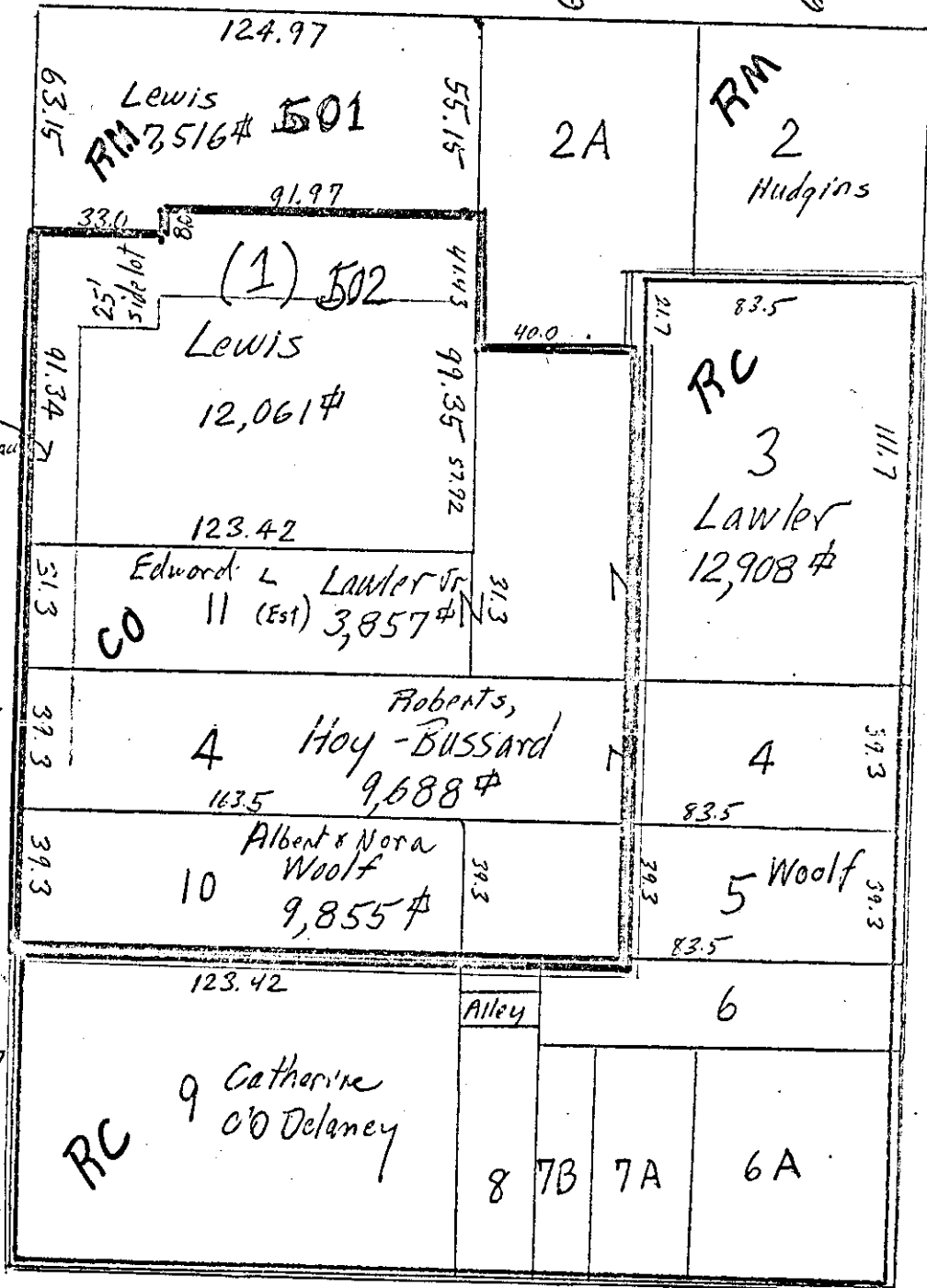
614

809

609

N. Washington St.

St. Asaph St.



Princess St.

Map 139

Block 1

Zoned CO =
 Zoned RC =

Alexandria, Va.

