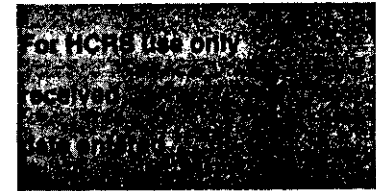


VLR- 9/15/81
 NRHP- 9/16/81

**United States Department of the Interior
 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**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 J. C. M. MERRILLAT HOUSE (PREFERRED)
 and/or common HUNTER HOUSE

2. Location

street & number 521 East Beverley Street N/A not for publication
 city, town Staunton N/A vicinity of 6th congressional district (M. Caldwell Butler)
 state Virginia code 51 county (in city) code 790

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Stanley G. and Jean M. Cline
 street & number 521 East Beverley Street
 city, town Staunton N/A vicinity of state Virginia 24401

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. City Hall; Office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court
 street & number 109-113 East Beverley Street
 city, town Staunton state Virginia

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Historic Staunton Foundation / Architectural Inventory
 has this property been determined eligible? yes no
 date April 1976 federal state county local
 depository for survey records Historic Staunton Foundation Office
 city, town Staunton state Virginia

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input 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

The J.C.M. Merrilat House, located at #521, on the north side of East Beverley Street in Staunton, Virginia, is one of the few remaining examples of the Gothic Revival-style cottage in the area. This four-bay, two-story, board-and-batten residence is situated on a hilltop surrounded by a large landscaped garden. The building rests on a brick foundation and has a metal gable roof interrupted by a large central gable with a finial. Dormer windows, containing diamond panes and decorated with elaborate bargeboards and finials, adorn the facade.

Recessed under the central gable is a one-story porch with four undecorated columns; the porch roof is supported by huge carved brackets attached to the wall of the house. The main entrance has a four-paneled door with transom and sidelights. Two 1/1 windows are located to the left of the door. Above the porch roof in the central gable is a double window with diamond panes, topped by a hood with scrolled bargeboards.

The central bay contains the original part of the house which consists of a side hall and two rooms on each floor. The vertical boards of this original section end in points, while those in the later additions are squared off.

The east bay consists of a two-story wing and a small porch which was enclosed in 1958. Along the roof line of this wing are two of the diamond-paned dormer windows, below which are two sets of three-part windows, also with diamond panes. This section appears to have been added to the original four-room house about ten years after it was built to connect it to the detached kitchen. The rear of this bay has two enclosed porches with large supporting brackets.

The kitchen, on the far right, has a gable roof with a central chimney and diamond-paned windows. The lower window is shuttered, while the smaller upper window is identical to the dormers in the rest of the house. Off the kitchen is a small screened porch with horizontal weatherboards.

The west bay appears to be a more recent addition. On the first level are two 1/1 windows with louvred shutters. The second story has two dormer windows similar to those in the east bay. Iron cresting runs along the roof line in front of these dormers and continues along the top of the entry porch. Around the corner to the left is an entrance topped by a hood; this door has four panels, the top two of which are pointed.

In the rear of the house is a bedroom wing added in the 1930s. This wing extends off the second story of the central bay and opens onto the rear gardens through another doorway. Fortunately, great pains have been taken to have the numerous later additions harmonize with the original architectural character of the house.

(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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1851 **Builder/Architect** Unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Picturesquely sited atop a heavily landscaped hillside, the J. C. M. Merrilat House presents an ideal image of a mid-19th-century Gothic Revival cottage. Its steep gables, scrolled bargeboards, board-and-batten siding, and diamond-paned windows combine to form the type of dwelling described by Andrew Jackson Downing, the noted promoter of the style, as "the perfect gem of a country residence." Although the Gothic cottage was a very popular house form throughout the country, the Merrilat House is one of the few examples in the Staunton area and certainly the finest. Dating from 1851, its first owner was Dr. J. C. M. Merrilat, a prominent early administrator at the nearby Virginia School for the Deaf and Blind.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

J. C. M. Merrilat was a native of Bordeaux, France, who served as the first principal of the blind department when the Virginia School for the Deaf and Blind (VSDB) was founded in 1839. Merrilat remained in this position until 1852 when, after the death of a colleague, he became superintendent of both the deaf and Blind departments. The year before, Merrilat erected his stylish house on a ridge overlooking the entrance to the school. During the Civil War, VSDB was used as a military hospital and Merrilat served there as a surgeon. Merrilat sold his house to Michael G. Harman when he decided to return to military duty. Harman kept the house only until 1863, when he sold it to Aaron S. Lara. The property remained in the Lara family until 1925 when it was sold to Charles S. Hunter, a local banker. The Hunters sold the house to the present owners in 1973.

CL and Elizabeth Bray

9. Major Bibliographical References (See Continuation Sheet #1)

Brown, Bill. "First Bank in Staunton Was Started in 1847." The Staunton Leader (Area Bicentennial Edition), July 2, 1976.
 Cline, Jean (present owner). Interviews on several occasions.
 Bass, R. A. History of the Education of the Deaf in Virginia, Staunton, Virginia, 1949.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property Irregular lot averages 230' x 400'

Quadrangle name Staunton, Virginia

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

 Zone Easting Northing

B

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

 Zone Easting Northing

C

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

D

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

E

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

F

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

G

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

H

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Verbal boundary description and justification The register bounds coincide with those of the city lot on which the Merrilat House is situated, recorded on Staunton City Assessor's map #343, Lot D-11. Beginning on the NW side of E. Beverley St., about 110'NE of the NE corner of the inte section of E. Beverley and the access road to the Va. School for the (See Continuation Sheets

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries # 1,2)

state	N/A	code	county	N/A	code
-------	-----	------	--------	-----	------

state	N/A	code	county	N/A	code
-------	-----	------	--------	-----	------

11. Form Prepared By

(1) Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission, 221 Governor Street, Richmond, Va. 23219
 name/title (2) Elizabeth A. Bray Administrative Assistant (804)786-3144

organization Historic Staunton Foundation date June 1981

street & number P. O. Box 2534 telephone (703) 885-7676

city or town Staunton state Virginia 24401

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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature H. Bryan Mitchell
 title H. Bryan Mitchell, Executive Director Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission date MAY 10 1982

For HCRS use only	
Thereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.	date
Keeper of the National Register	date
Attest:	date
Chief of Registration	

United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

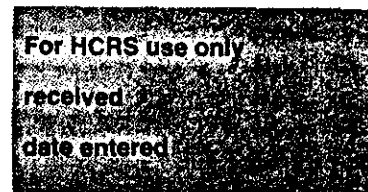
National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

J.C.M. MERRILLAT HOUSE, Staunton, Virginia

Continuation sheet #1

Item number 7, 9, 10

Page 1



7. DESCRIPTION

The original floor plan consists of a narrow hallway on the right with two rooms over two on the left. Two Gothic arches define the hall. The arch on the right has been filled in with a curved plaster wall, but the left one is still open and leads back into the hall toward the staircase. The baseboard molding in the enclosed arch and around the stair is different from that in the rest of the hall, indicating the possibility that the stair was moved.

Identical woodwork, trim, and wide pine flooring are found in the two original rooms off the hall. The detailing is the same as that in the kitchen, indicating that they were all built at the same time. The front room is a parlor with a mantel with Adamesque motifs; this mantel is probably a later addition but taken from an earlier house. The back room, now a den but possibly the original dining room, has a large window seat flanked by bookcases recessed into round-headed niches which are also probably later alterations.

The present dining room and butler's pantry are located in the east bay. Fronting this room is an enclosed sun room, originally an open porch containing a mantel with a five-sided arched opening; this mantel's style indicates that it was probably original to the house. The present library and living room are located in the west bay.

To the west of the main house, at the end of the long, curved drive, is a carport with an apartment above. Originally a stable or carriage house, it appears to date from the late 19th century. The two dormer windows, with their carved bargeboards, pendants, and finials, carry out the same decorative elements as in the main house. The rear garden was designed in 1935-36 by landscape architect A. A. Farnham, who designed many Staunton gardens about this time.

Elizabeth Bray

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Staunton Tax and Deed Records. City Hall; Office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court, Staunton.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Verbal Boundary Description

Deaf and Blind; thence extending about 100' SW, then about 210' SSW, then about 35'W, all along the NW side of E. Beverley; thence about 190' NNW; thence about 160' SW; thence about 200' NNW; thence about 125' NE, then about 65' ENE, then about 30' SE, then about 130' NNE to NE property line; thence about 410' SE to NW side of E. Beverley, the point of origin.

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

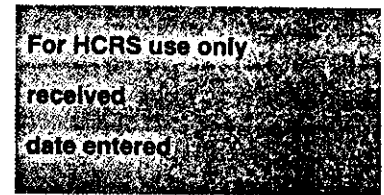
**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

J.C.M. MERRILLAT HOUSE, Staunton, Virginia

Continuation sheet #2

Item number 10

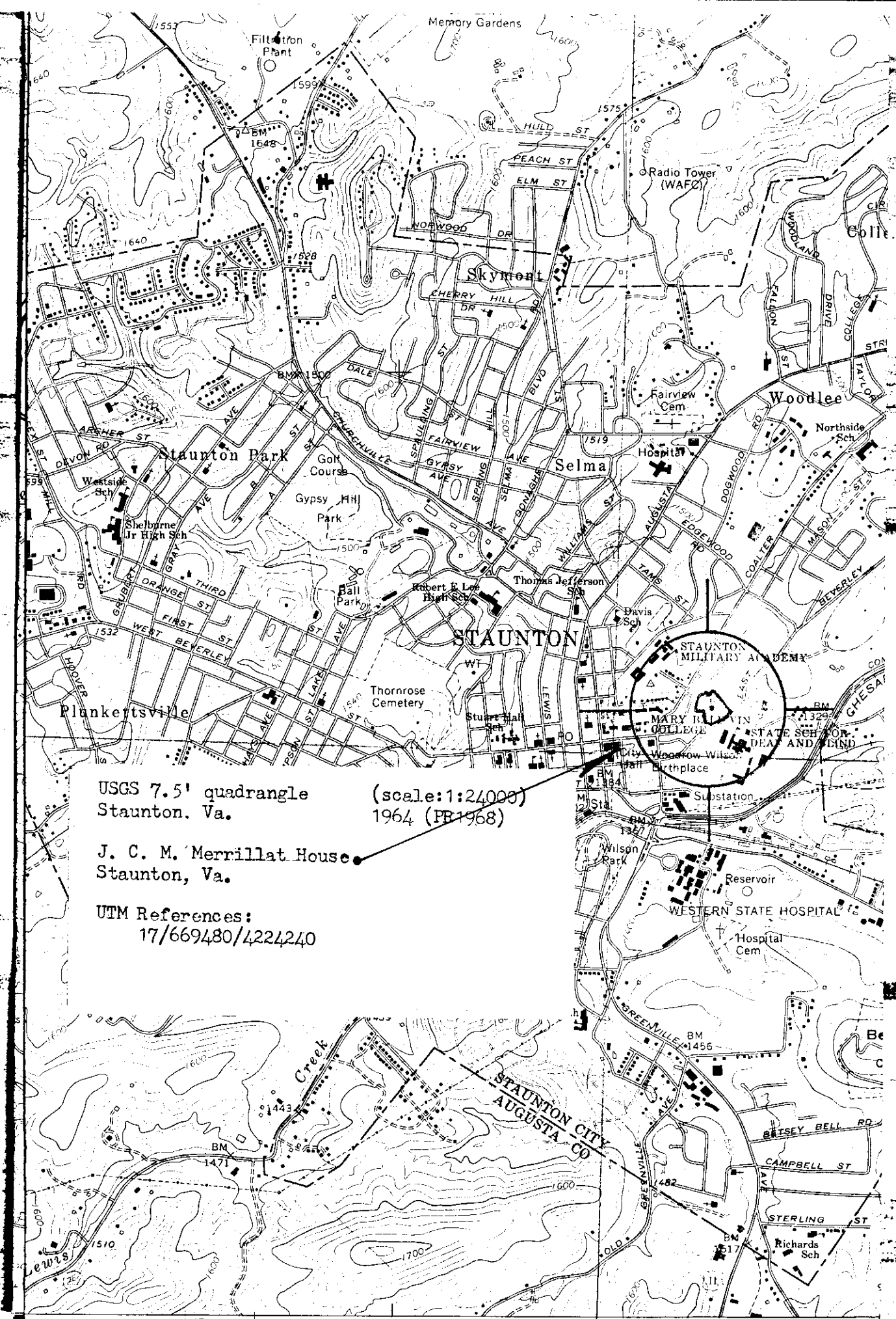
Page 1,



10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Boundary Justification

The nomination boundaries have been drawn to follow those of Lot D-11, Staunton City Assessor's Map #343, and this acreage includes the main house, the carport west of the house, and the surrounding gardens.



USGS 7.5' quadrangle
 Staunton, Va. (scale: 1:24,000)
 1964 (PB 1968)

J. C. M. Merrillat House
 Staunton, Va.

UTM References:
 17/669480/4224240