

VLR-1/17/84 NRHP-2/23/84

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only  
received  
date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*

Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Steephill (VHLC File No. 132-31)

and/or common Same

2. Location

street & number 20Q Park Boulevard N/A not for publication

city, town Staunton N/A vicinity of congressional district

state Virginia code 51 county (in city) code 790

3. Classification

<b>Category</b>	<b>Ownership</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Present Use</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	educational	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site.	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<b>object</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Fred T. McCann and Charles F. Domiter

street & number Steephill, 200 Park Boulevard

city, town Staunton N/A vicinity of state Virginia

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. City Hall

street & number 109-113 E. Beverley Street

city, town Staunton state Virginia

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

File No. 132-31

title Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1983 federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records 221 Governor St.

city, town Richmond state Virginia 23219

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<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
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		date <u>N/A</u>

**Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance**

### SUMMARY DESCRIPTION

Originally built in 1877-78 in the Gothic style, Steephill is a brick, 2½-story Georgian Revival-style house that was remodeled in 1926-27 by Staunton architect Sam Collins. During this 1926-27 remodeling, the interior was dramatically altered with the addition of a large entrance hall that extends the entire width of the original house. A wing was added to each side of the original three-bay building and changes were also made at the rear of the building. Classical Georgian Revival motifs are used throughout the first floor. The house sits on a steep, terraced hill near the City's Gypsy Hill Park. While the original Steephill property encompassed 90 acres, the house now sits on slightly more than 3 acres.

### ARCHITECTURAL ANALYSIS

Steephill was originally constructed in 1877-78 as a brick, 2½-story, three bay Gothic house. The building had a steeply pitched gable roof, with a central gable over the entrance. Large, carved brackets decorated the eaves. A two-story rear wing covered with a gable roof extended from the back of the main house. A one-story, wooden porch with a simple balustrade extended across the entire facade. Both one-over-one light and two-over-two light windows were used in the original house. Three-light Gothic-style windows (still existing) were used in the attic. The original plan was that of a two-over-two, central hall house. Steephill sat on 90 acres, and the land surrounding the house was filled with trees, bushes, a small lake, and several out-buildings.

The present structure is the result of an extensive 1926-27 remodeling and expansion in the Georgian Revival style by local architect Sam Collins. Changes were made to the house and the two new wings were added to the sides of the original structure. The central portion of the house (i.e., the "original" house) is three bays wide and 2½-stories high and is slightly recessed from the wings. A metal standing-seam gabled roof covers this central section. Three gabled dormers with multi-paned windows extend from the roof, as do twin brick chimneys. A wide, simple cornice extends the entire length of the central block. The second-floor windows are six-over-six light, while 18 light floor-to-ceiling windows exist on the first floor. Stone lintels with keystones top these first-floor windows. The fanlight central doorway is surrounded by a columned entranceway with denticulated cornice.

Flanking the central block are two, two-story wings. Both are brick with gabled, standing-seam roofs, two dormers, one brick chimney, and floor-to-ceiling windows that match those of the first floor on the central section. A frame porch is added to the side of the smaller library wing which is on the right of the original house.

On the rear walls, evidences of the original structure remain. Most of the windows are two-over-two lights, with arched lintels. Large brackets are used in the cornice. At the rear of the house, off of the central hall, a small porch has been enclosed with brick for the present-day kitchen.

The interior of Steephill was also dramatically altered in 1926-27. A large entrance hall extends the entire width of the original, three-bay section. The living room wing is to the left while the library wing is to the right. A dining room (in the original rear wing) extends toward the back of the house off the entrance hall. All four rooms feature oak floors, simple cornices, and a paneled effect created by wood moldings. A large wood and marble mantel is located in the living room wing. A

(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 checked="" 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/
<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 checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify) historiography

**Specific dates** 1877-78; remodeled 1926-27      **Builder/Architect** Sam Collins (1926-27 remodeling)

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

#### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Steephill's significance lies in three major areas: architecture, landscape architecture, and historiography. In terms of architecture, the house is an outstanding local example of Georgian Revival architecture as produced by architect Sam Collins of the prominent Staunton firm of T. J. Collins & Son. This remodeling of Victorian structures using the early twentieth century revival styles is common in Staunton. During the 1926-27 remodeling, the landscaping was redesigned to be more in keeping with Steephill's new look. The grounds were seen as an important extension of the house, and this new terracing was completed from Sam Collins' design. Steephill was the home of Col. John Lewis Peyton. A locally prominent individual, Peyton is best remembered for his History of Augusta County, Virginia and other works of local and regional history.

#### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Steephill was built in 1877-78 by Col. John Lewis Peyton, who lived from 1824 to 1896. Peyton was the son of John Howe Peyton (1778-1847), statesman and jurist, and his second wife, Ann Montgomery Lewis, a daughter of Augusta County's first settler John Lewis. John Lewis Peyton was born at Montgomery Hall, the estate his father built in 1822-24 about a mile southeast of Staunton.<sup>1</sup> The Peytons were a prominent Staunton family, and John Lewis Peyton had an illustrious career. Educated at Virginia Military Institute, he graduated in law from the University of Virginia in 1845. A prolific writer, he wrote numerous volumes on diverse subjects, but he is best remembered for his works on regional history. Peyton's best-known book is the History of Augusta County, Virginia (1882). Other works included The American Crisis, or, Pages From the Note Book of a State Agent During the Civil War in America (2 vols., 1866); Over the Alleghanies and Across the Prairies (1867 and 1870); Memoir of William Madison Peyton (1870); Adventures of My Grandfather (1871 and 1882); and Rambling Reminiscences of a Residence Abroad (1888). In 1855, he married Henrietta Washington of the distinguished Virginia family. They had one son, Lawrence Washington Howe Peyton, who inherited Steephill.

Built in 1877-78, Steephill was originally a 2½-story Gothic-style house. As was typical with Gothic structures, Steephill featured a steeply pitched gable roof, large brackets under the eaves, windows with pointed arches and a wooden porch. Lawrence Washington Howe Peyton, son of the original owner Col. John Lewis Peyton, commissioned Sam Collins to expand and remodel Steephill in 1926. Collins was the son of architect T. J. Collins, who designed or remodeled over 200 structures in Staunton. Sam Collins continued his father's practice, insuring that the Collins firm would leave an indelible mark on the community. Important Staunton buildings designed by the Collins firm include the Augusta County Courthouse (1901, National Register); St. Francis Catholic Church (1895, Gothic Revival); 210 N. New Street (ca. 1900, Chateausque, National Register); 215 Kalorama Street (1891, Richardsonian Romanesque, National Register); 305 E. Beverley Street (1912, Georgian Revival); 172 N. Coalter Street (1913, Colonial Revival); Valley National Bank - UVB (1903, Beaux Arts, National Register); and the buildings of the Staunton Military Academy.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Books: Peyton, John Lewis. History of Augusta County, Virginia. 2nd ed. Bridgewater, VA: C. J. Carrier Company, 1953; reprint ed., Harrisonburg, Virginia: C. J. Carrier Company, 1972 (original edition, 1882).

(See continuation sheet #2)

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 3.657

Quadrangle name Staunton, VA

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

### UMT References

A	<u>1</u> <u>1</u> <u>7</u>	<u>6</u> <u>6</u> <u>7</u> <u>5</u> <u>6</u> <u>0</u>	<u>4</u> <u>2</u> <u>2</u> <u>4</u> <u>6</u> <u>6</u> <u>0</u>	B			
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C				D			
E				F			
G				H			

**Verbal boundary description and justification** Beginning at the north corner of the intersection of Third Street and Park Boulevard, proceeding NE 346.24', thence NW 408.39'; thence SW 410'; thence SE 385', to the point of origin. This lot of 3.657 acres is the property described in deed book 237, page 780 - City of Staunton. (See continuation sheet #2)

### 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 David J. Brown, Executive Director  
Elizabeth B. McCue, Associate Director

organization Historic Staunton Foundation date October 28, 1983

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

city or town Staunton 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 H. Bryan Mitchell

title Executive Director date January 17, 1984

### 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  
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Continuation sheet #1 Steephill, Staunton, VA Item number 7,8 Page 1, 1

7. Description - Architectural Analysis

second mantel is found in the dining room, where the large, built-in hutch was added in 1981. The staircase in this hall extends up a side wall and features turned balusters and decorative molding on the side of the risers. The oak treads are covered with carpeting. A chair rail and the panel moldings are also used in the hall. The rear kitchen on the first floor dates from 1981.

Rooms on the upper floors are much less ornate, with fewer changes dating from the 1920s remodeling. There is some pine flooring, but most of the area is carpeted. Smaller fireplaces are used on the upper floor, however the guest bedroom mantel does include decorative trim and a paneled mantel is located in the original master bedroom. Cornices and trim on the upper floors are very simple in style. Much of the top half-story attic is covered with modern paneling.

The grounds of Steephill are finely landscaped. During the 1926-27 remodeling, the front garden was terraced to be more in keeping with the new look of the house. Off the library wing is a boxwood maze, also dating from the 1920s remodeling. Later, gardens and walks were added to the rear of the house.

Three frame outbuildings are shown on the maps from the 1920s, and were not, apparently, removed during the remodeling. All were located to the rear of the main house and consisted of: a small, square structure, possibly a root cellar or smoke-house; a long, rectangular building, possibly a stable; and another rectangular structure, labeled "shed." The foundations of the first two are still visible, that of the shed is not. A 1½-story brick cottage to the left of the main house was moved here from the Montgomery Hall estate ca. 1935. An ice house, no longer on the Steephill property, remains near what is now the Gypsy Hill Park golf course.

8. Significance - Historical Background

During 1926 and 1927, Sam Collins transformed Steephill into an outstanding local example of Georgian Revival architecture. Extending the original house, Collins produced a very formal and stately residence that suited its prominent location. Most of the Georgian features and details were incorporated into the facade and first floor interior space, while the rear of the house and the upper floors remained decidedly Victorian in nature. This juxtaposition in styles is an important feature of the house, as it visually displays the developmental history of the residence. During the early twentieth century, this renovation of earlier homes was common in Staunton, with many of these remodelings executed by the Collins firm.

The concern with landscaping is also a significant element in the history of Steephill. The name was derived from the location of the house against a high hill in Staunton. In an effort to enhance the new facade, Collins designed a scheme to terrace the front grounds. This produced a much more dramatic effect, heightening the prominence of the house. A boxwood maze was also developed off the library wing. Both landscape features remain today in an essentially unaltered form. This type of landscape scheme is found with other major homes in Staunton, as designers used the city's hilly topography to good advantage. Formal gardens are especially prevalent in Staunton's Gospel Hill historic district.

(See continuation sheet #2)

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VA

Continuation sheet #2 Steephill, Staunton, Item number 8, 9, 10

Page 2, 1, 1

8. Significance - Historical Background

The house remained with the Peyton family until 1964. Since that time it has been owned by the City of Staunton (1964-1965), Donald and Patricia Bosserman (1965-1966), Marion G. Coey (1966-1979), Frederick and Christiana Hays (1979-1981), and Fred T. McCann and Charles F. Domiter (1981-Present).

<sup>1</sup>Montgomery Hall was built in the 1820s on several hundred acres southwest of Staunton by John Howe Peyton, a prominent Virginia lawyer, mayor of Staunton, and a member of the House of Delegates and the Senate of Virginia. The estate was named for his second wife, Ann Montgomery Lewis, great-granddaughter of Augusta County's first settler, John Lewis. The original mansion burned ca. 1906 and was rebuilt from a design by architect T. J. Collins. In 1946, the City of Staunton purchased the mansion and 148 acres for use as a municipal park. The mansion was remodeled for the Department of Parks and Recreation offices in 1980.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Books:

Waddell, Joseph A. Annals of Augusta County, Virginia. 2nd ed. n.p.: C. Russell Caldwell, 1901; reprint ed., Harrisonburg, Virginia: C. J. Carrier Company, 1979.

Wayland, John D. Historic Homes of Northern Virginia. Staunton: The McClure Company, 1937.

Maps:

Chace, Jacob, Topographical Engineer. Gray's New Map of Staunton. Philadelphia: O. W. Gray & Son, 1877.

Hotchkiss, J. & Waddell, J. Historical Atlas of Augusta County, Virginia. Chicago: Waterman, Watkins & Company, 1885.

Sanborn Insurance Maps. New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1921 & 1929.

Illustration:

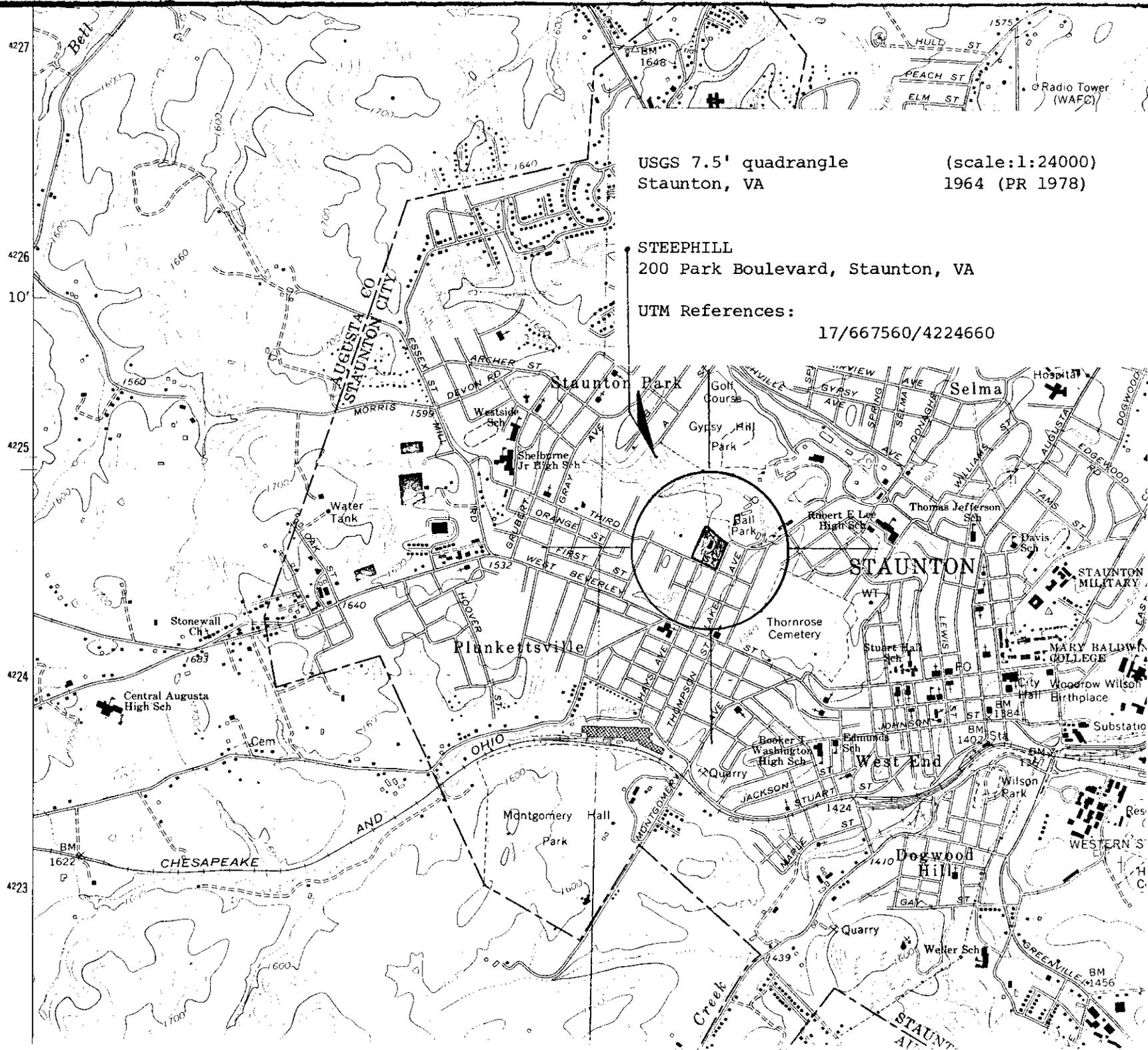
Gordon, Armistead C. Staunton, Virginia: Its Past Present and Future. New York: The South Publishing Company, no date (ca. 1893) (for engraving of Steephill).

Other:

Architectural records of T. J. Collins & Son, 4 N. Madison Street, Staunton, VA  
City of Staunton and County of Augusta Deed and Tax Records.

10. Boundary Justification

The nominated property is the remaining land associated with the Steephill estate. The remainder of the original estate has been subdivided.



USGS 7.5' quadrangle (scale:1:24000)  
Staunton, VA 1964 (PR 1978)

STEEPHILL  
200 Park Boulevard, Staunton, VA

UTM References:  
17/667560/4224660

4227  
4226  
10'  
4225  
4224  
4223

Radio Tower (WAFB)

STAUNTON

MARY BALDWIN COLLEGE

City of Woodrow Wilson Birthplace

WESTERN'S

BM 1456