

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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**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 Preston House (Preferred)

Destroyed c. 1978

AND/OR COMMON
Palmer House

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER 1 mile east of Smyth/Washington County line; .3 mile west of State Route 107; 1.8 miles northwest of intersection of State Routes 107 and 610.

CITY, TOWN Saltville VICINITY OF Ninth (William C. Wampler)
STATE Virginia CODE 51 COUNTY Smyth CODE 173

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input checked="" 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	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER: none

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME Mr. James A. Hatfield

STREET & NUMBER
Box 789

CITY, TOWN Saltville VICINITY OF STATE Virginia 24370

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Smyth County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN Marion STATE Virginia

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Survey

DATE 1972; 1976 FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission, 221 Governor Street

CITY, TOWN Richmond STATE Virginia

DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Preston House is a large, rambling building situated on a knoll overlooking the town of Saltville in Smyth County. The dismantling of the house had begun in January, 1976, when investigation of its history and significance was undertaken by local citizens. The upper stories of the house's later wings had been removed, along with all of the original sash and most of the woodwork in the oldest portions of the house. Arrangements to preserve the building were subsequently made, and the removed woodwork will be returned to its former location. At the time of the architectural examination, however, the woodwork was in storage and unavailable for inspection.

The Preston House is a two-story, gable-roofed, double-pile frame structure covered with beaded weatherboards. It incorporates a central, two-story, five-bay "I-house" built in two stages and having exterior end chimneys constructed of limestone. Flanking this section are lower, two-story, three-bay wings which, like the main block, are one-room deep and which were built during the second quarter of the nineteenth century. At the east end of the house, an early one-story structure, originally freestanding, was attached to the main house by the construction of the wings. A nineteenth-century print entitled "Preston Home, 1860," shows the house in this form, with a one-story porch extending across the front of the main block and its wings. A door in the central bay of the second floor led onto the roof of the central portion of the porch.

Early in the twentieth century, an enclosed porch chamber covering the three central bays of the second-story facade was built. At the same time, the one-story east room was raised to two stories and extensively remodeled. A two-story gallery across the rear of the house was enclosed for rooms, and other rooms were built onto the rear of the west wing. This remodeling was undertaken in order to convert the building into an apartment house.

The central portion of the Preston House consists of two rooms separated by a central passage, the west room and passage being the earliest portion. The chimney here has a full-height chimney breast, now removed and in storage, and to the right of it, an arched opening once provided access to a closet but now serves as the entrance to the west wing. This opening is flanked by pilasters and has a molded architrave and key-stone. A modillion-and-dentil cornice remains in place, as does the flush wainscoting which encircles the room. Sections of the wall stripped of plaster reveal that this portion of the house is supported on massive L-shaped corner posts.

The passage has been divided into a small entrance vestibule and a larger stair hall by a twentieth-century partition. It also is decorated with flush wainscoting and has a closed-string, L-plan stair with a square newel, molded rail, and turned balusters.

The east room of the central block was added early in the nineteenth century. It is encircled by a pedestal-type chair rail. A twentieth-century Georgian Revival stair with an open string, turned balusters, and a paneled newel, added when the building was divided into apartments, rises in the southwest corner of the room. One early nine-light sash remains in place.

The mid-nineteenth-century wings are absolutely plain, with no decoration of any sort. The easternmost room has been stripped to its frame. Of interest here are the diagonal

(See continuation sheet #1)

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

SPECIFIC DATES circa 1795, 19th c. BUILDER/ARCHITECT Francis Irby, builder; Jesse Dungan, mason

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Preston House is the principal historic landmark of the southwestern Virginia town of Saltville. Situated on a knoll with a commanding view of the community, the house is reported to be the first frame dwelling erected in the town and stands as an unusually fine specimen of Early Republican building for its time and place. Historically, the house is associated with the Preston and Campbell families, prominent names in the early history of the region.

The land upon which the Preston House stands was a part of a 330-acre tract originally granted to Colonel Charles Campbell in 1753. It descended ultimately to his granddaughter Sarah Buchanan Campbell, daughter of General William Campbell, commander of the Continental troops at the 1780 Battle of King's Mountain, and of Elizabeth Henry, the sister of Patrick Henry. During Sarah's minority, the property was managed for her by her guardian Thomas Madison, a relative of the future president. Madison opened a small salt works for her benefit and built a log house on the property, both around 1790. This log building was believed to have been incorporated into the present house, but the recent partial disassembly of the building has disproved the notion.

Sarah B. Campbell married Francis Preston (1765-1835), son of William Preston, an early explorer of Southwest Virginia, in 1793. Preston had been a law student of George Wythe and, in the year of his marriage, was elected to his first of two consecutive terms in the U. S. House of Representatives. He served as a colonel in the War of 1812 and later became a general in the militia. In later life, after having moved from "the Salt-works," as Saltville was then known, Preston served several terms in both houses of the Virginia General Assembly.

It was in 1795, during his residence at the Salt-works and his term in Congress, that Preston built the earliest section of the Preston House. Francis Irby is remembered as the carpenter, and Jesse Dungan as the stone mason. A slave named Cyrus is recorded as having made the wrought nails used in the house.

Two noteworthy incidents occurred during Preston's tenure. The first was the discovery, during the digging of a well in the front yard around 1798, of a number of mastodon bones. Such bones continued to be unearthed in the area throughout the nineteenth century. The second was the visit, in 1808, of James Madison, then Democratic-Republican candidate for President of the United States.

The Prestons controlled large portions of the salt-producing lands from which the town derived its name and principal livelihood. They operated the works themselves at times, and sometimes leased the rights to other persons, men such as William King or Colonel James White, who were among the operators in the early nineteenth century. The family took over the works again in 1829 and operated them until 1862, when Thomas L. Preston, (See continuation sheet #2)

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CONTINUATION SHEET #1

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 1

DESCRIPTION

exterior sheathing and subflooring, installed when the wing was rebuilt, and the use of beaded weatherboards as interior sheathing and as a base for lath.

No early outbuildings remain.

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CONTINUATION SHEET #2

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 1

SIGNIFICANCE

the last of the family to own the property, sold the house and the works and left the village.

From 1862-1903, George W. Palmer owned the Preston House. In the twentieth century, it has had several owners and has served primarily as apartments. Demolition of the house by the present owner, James A. Hatfield, was begun in January, 1976, but local interest resulted in arrangements being made for its preservation and ultimate rehabilitation.

DTU

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Archives.

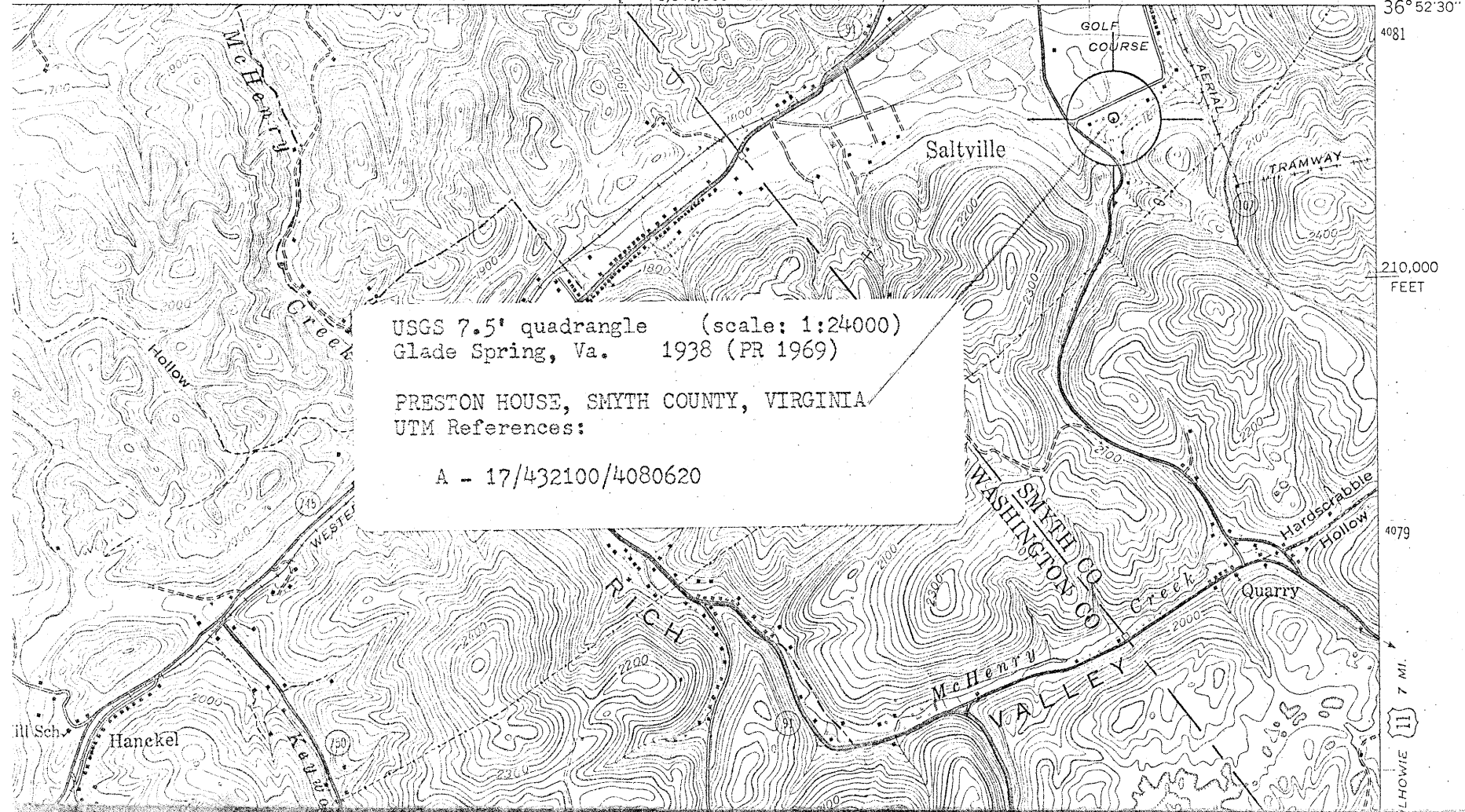
Wilson, Goodridge, "Saltville's Madison House Has Historic Background," Roanoke Times, Roanoke, Va., June 26, 1976.

STATES
BUREAU OF LAND
MANAGEMENT
DIVISION

VIRGINIA
GLADE SPRING QUADRANGLE
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)

46571 NW
(Broadford 218-NW)

428 429 47'30" 430 1,040,000 FEET 431 NORTH HOLSTON 4 MI. 432 81°45' 36°52'30"



USGS 7.5' quadrangle (scale: 1:24000)
Glade Spring, Va. 1938 (PR 1969)

PRESTON HOUSE, SMYTH COUNTY, VIRGINIA
UTM References:

A - 17/432100/4080620

210,000
FEET

4079

7 MI.

HOWIE 11