

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE:
Virginia
COUNTY:
Albemarle
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE

JUL 18 1974

1. NAME
COMMON:
Cobham Park
AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION
STREET AND NUMBER:
South of Route 22
CITY OR TOWN:
Cobham vicinity
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:
Seventh (J. Kenneth Robinson)
STATE
Virginia
CODE
51
COUNTY:
Albemarle
CODE
003

3. CLASSIFICATION
CATEGORY (Check One)
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object
OWNERSHIP
<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both
Public Acquisition:
<input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered
STATUS
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment <input type="checkbox"/> Museum <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific
<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Comments <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)



4. OWNER OF PROPERTY
OWNER'S NAME:
Mrs. G. Freeland Peter, Sr.
STREET AND NUMBER:
Cobham Park
CITY OR TOWN:
Cobham
STATE:
Virginia
CODE
51

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:
Albemarle County Court House
STREET AND NUMBER:
CITY OR TOWN:
Charlottesville
STATE
Virginia
CODE
51

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS
TITLE OF SURVEY:
Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Survey
DATE OF SURVEY: 1970
<input type="checkbox"/> Federal <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State <input type="checkbox"/> County <input type="checkbox"/> Local
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission
STREET AND NUMBER:
221 Governor Street
CITY OR TOWN:
Richmond
STATE:
Virginia
CODE
51

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE:
Virginia
COUNTY:
Albemarle
ENTRY NUMBER
DATE
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## 7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Cobham Park is an extensive ante-bellum estate located in the rolling Piedmont countryside to the east of the Southwest Mountains. It is composed of grazing fields and woodlands centered around a landscaped park which forms a setting for the estate's mansion. Laid out in the manner of the grounds of an English eighteenth century country house, the park features broad sloping lawns bordered by clumps of shrubbery and fine trees. Cut through the woods are vistas to various peaks of the Southwest Mountains. Behind the mansion, on the more level part of the grounds, is a formal garden containing walks and beds bordered by English boxwood. Several early outbuildings remain including two smokehouses, one brick and one frame, and a frame dependency just to the north of the mansion. A simple two-story frame dwelling is located on a ridge several hundred yards to the north. Numerous more modern farm and service buildings are also located on the grounds.

The mansion, erected around 1856, is an unusual example of ante-bellum period Georgian style architecture. The rectangular two-and-a-half-story structure is covered by a hipped roof with three hipped roof dormers on each of the main slopes, and one dormer on each end. Each dormer has scrolled volutes on the sides similar to high-style Georgian townhouses of Philadelphia. Projecting from the roof are two pedestal form chimney stacks, and around its eaves is a modillion cornice featuring thin elongated modillions.

Both front and rear elevations are five bays long. The windows throughout contain unusual but original four-over-four double-hung sash. The first floor windows are topped by molded cornices and the second floor sills are supported on simple scrolled brackets. All the windows are hung with dark green louvred shutters. Sheltering both the front and rear entrances are simple Doric porches supported on square Doric columns. Extending from either side of the front porch is a wooden gallery supported by Doric piers with open shafts. A Chinese lattice rail is employed on top of the front porch and on the sides of the rear. The front door is framed by a three-part frontispiece with modillion cornice. The house's walls are laid in excellently preserved brick veneer which preserves much of the original penciling of the mortar joints.

Cobham Park's plan is double-pile with an entrance hall and stair hall in the center. The main feature of the interior is the graceful flying spiral stair with turned balusters, molded handrail and scrolled brackets. The rest of the trim throughout is restrained. Heavy unornamented molded cornices are found in the principal rooms and simple architrave trim surrounds the windows and doorways. The unusually wide mantels in the principal rooms are decorated only with panels. A handsome arch supported on fluted pilasters connects the entrance hall with the stair hall, and is repeated on the second floor. The house is maintained in excellent condition with no significant alterations or loss of original fabric.

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SEE INSTRUCTIONS

## 8. SIGNIFICANCE

## PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- ☐ Pre-Columbian    ☐ 16th Century    ☐ 18th Century    ☐ 20th Century  
☐ 15th Century    ☐ 17th Century    ☒ 19th Century

## SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

## AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |   |   |  |
|--|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal              | <input type="checkbox"/> Education            | <input type="checkbox"/> Political      | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric             | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering          | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Phi-  | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic                | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry             | losophy                                 | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture             | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention            | <input type="checkbox"/> Science        | _____                                    |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Landscape | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture      | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art                     | Architecture                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Human-  | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce                | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature           | itarian                                 | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications          | <input type="checkbox"/> Military             | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater        | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation            | <input type="checkbox"/> Music                | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____                                    |

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Established in the 1850's on land that was part of the Castle Hill estate, Cobham Park remains one of the best preserved and most beautifully sited ante-bellum estates in Virginia. Particularly noteworthy are the handsome grounds which are a fine example of nineteenth century landscaping.

Cobham Park served as the summer home of William Cabell Rives, Jr. (1825-1890), second son of the noted United States senator and minister to France. Rives, born and raised at his family home, Castle Hill, obtained his law degree from the University of Virginia and established his practice in Newport, Rhode Island. In 1849 he was married to Grace Winthrop Sears, member of a prominent Boston family.

Rives laid out his Virginia estate around a virgin forest containing large oaks and pines. He deliberately patterned the grounds after the landscaped parks of English country houses; he opened vistas and formed broad sloping lawns, but preserved large individual trees and clumps of woodland at strategic visual points. The pastoral quality was made complete by his herds of fine horses, cattle, and sheep grazing in the lowland fields.

The mansion Rives had built as the focal point of the estate is unusual for its period. Being in the style of Virginia plantation houses a hundred years earlier it is one of the first examples of Georgian Revival architecture in the country. No architect has been associated with the house, but the woodwork is known to have been executed by an English master carpenter named McSparren, brought from the North by Rives's mother to complete the interior of William Strickland's Grace Church in nearby Cismont. McSparren's chef-d'oeuvre at Cobham Park is the flying spiral stair which is similar to the Montmorenci stair at the Henry Francis duPont Winterthur Museum.

Cobham Park remained the summer home of Rives's widow following his death. It was acquired in the early part of this century by the Peter family of Tudor Place, Washington, D.C., and is owned today by Mrs. G. Freeland Peter.

CL

# 9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Mead, Edward C., Historic Homes of the South-West Mountains Virginia, Bridgewater, Virginia; C.J. Carrier Company, 1962.

# 10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
NW	Degrees Minutes Seconds 38° 03' 59"	Degrees Minutes Seconds 78° 16' 48"		Degrees Minutes Seconds ° ' "	Degrees Minutes Seconds ° ' "	
NE	38° 03' 59"	78° 15' 15"				
SE	38° 02' 23"	78° 15' 15"				
SW	38° 02' 23"	78° 16' 48"				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 692 1/2 acres.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
<u>Virginia</u>	<u>51</u>	<u>Louisa</u>	<u>109</u>
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

# 11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:  
Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Staff

ORGANIZATION: Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission DATE: December, 1973

STREET AND NUMBER:  
221 Governor Street

CITY OR TOWN: Richmond STATE: Virginia CODE: 51

# 12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

# NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National ☐ State ☒ Local ☐

Name Junius R. Fishburne, Jr., Director  
Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Keeper of The National Register

Date \_\_\_\_\_

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
PROPERTY MAP FORM**

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with map)

STATE Virginia	
COUNTY Albemarle	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

<b>1. NAME</b>			
COMMON: Cobham Park			
AND/OR HISTORIC:			
<b>2. LOCATION</b>			
STREET AND NUMBER: South of Route 22			
CITY OR TOWN: Cobham vicinity			
STATE: Virginia	CODE 51	COUNTY: Albemarle	CODE 003
<b>3. MAP REFERENCE</b>			
SOURCE: U.S.G.S. 7 1/2' quadrangle Keswick, Virginia			
SCALE: 1:24000			
DATE: 1964			
<b>4. REQUIREMENTS</b>			
TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS			
1. Property boundaries where required.			
2. North arrow.			
3. Latitude and longitude reference.			

☆ U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE : 1973-729-148/1441 3-1

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM**

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with photograph)

STATE Virginia	
COUNTY Albemarle	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

<b>1. NAME</b>			
COMMON: Cobham Park			
AND/OR HISTORIC:			
<b>2. LOCATION</b>			
STREET AND NUMBER: South of Route 22			
CITY OR TOWN: Cobham vicinity			
STATE: Virginia	CODE 51	COUNTY: Albemarle	CODE 003
<b>3. PHOTO REFERENCE</b>			
PHOTO CREDIT: Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission			
DATE OF PHOTO: 1973			
NEGATIVE FILED AT: Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission; Richmond, Virginia			
<b>4. IDENTIFICATION</b>			
DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.  View of west front.			



UTM  
NE 17/740140  
4216 480  
SE 17/740 830  
4215 720  
SW 17/739360  
4213 550  
NW 17/738 690  
4214 160  
CD

WALDROP 3 MI. LOUISA (U.S. 33) 14 MI.  
(BOSWELL'S TAVERN) 5360 II SW

COBHAM PARK

LATITUDE	LONGITUDE
NW38°03'59"	78°16'48"
NE38°03'59"	78°15'15"
SE38°02'23"	78°15'15"
SW38°02'23"	78°16'48"