

VLR-1/16/73 NRHP-4/11/73

Form 10-300
(July 1969)UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICENATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

| | |
|-------------------------|------|
| STATE: Virginia | |
| COUNTY: Rappahannock | |
| FOR NPS USE ONLY | |
| ENTRY NUMBER | DATE |

1. NAME

COMMON:

Montpelier

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:

.2 mi. SE of Rt. 231, 1.5 mi. S of intersection with Rt. 707.

CITY OR TOWN:

Seventh District

Sperryville vicinity (Congressman James Kenneth Robinson)

STATE

CODE

COUNTY:

CODE

Virginia

51

Rappahannock

157

3. CLASSIFICATION

| CATEGORY (Check One) | | OWNERSHIP | | STATUS | ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC |
|--|--|---|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> District | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building | <input type="checkbox"/> Public | Public Acquisition: | <input type="checkbox"/> Occupied | Yes: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Site | <input type="checkbox"/> Structure | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private | In Process | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied | Restricted |
| | Object | <input type="checkbox"/> Both | <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered | <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress | <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"/> Transportation | <input type="checkbox"/> Comments | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial | <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial | <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Educational | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Religious | vacant | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment | <input type="checkbox"/> Museum | <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific | | | |

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME

Mr. and Mrs. James William Fletcher

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:

Sperryville

STATE:

Virginia

CODE

51

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:

Rappahannock County Court House

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:

Washington

STATE

Virginia

CODE

51

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:

Historic American Buildings Survey Inventory

DATE OF SURVEY:

1958

☒ Federal☐ State☐ County☐ Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

Library of Congress

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:

Washington

STATE:

D.C.

CODE

11

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

| | |
|--------------|--------------|
| STATE: | Virginia |
| COUNTY: | Rappahannock |
| ENTRY NUMBER | |
| DATE | |

FOR NPS USE ONLY

7. DESCRIPTION

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

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

I. General Statement:

A. Architectural character: Montpelier is an unusually large and imposing plantation house for the area with an eighteenth century core and additions from several later periods. The evolutionary nature of the house gives it its principal architectural interest.

B. Condition of fabric: Structurally sound but not well maintained.

II. Description of the Exterior:

A. Overall dimensions: The two-story house is eleven-bays (110 ft.) long on the east side. From the west, it becomes apparent that the house structure is made up of a five-bay main block with north and south three-bay wings. The slope of the hill creates a high English basement on the east side. At one time the wings were apparently one-story; a brick second story was added.

B. Foundations: Uncoursed rubble limestone.

C. Wall construction: Stone and brick are covered with a coat of smooth tan-yellow scored stucco to resemble ashlar. Elements such as keystones are also delineated.

D. Porches: On the west, a three-bay porch with a bracketed cornice is supported by four piers. On the east, the dominant feature is a two-story verandah stretching the entire length of the house with eight large stuccoed provincial Tuscan columns. The verandah flooring is supported by eight brick piers, one located under each column.

E. Chimneys: There is an interior-end chimney at each end of the main block, and one at the end of each wing. All have brick stacks and corbelled caps.

F. Openings:

1. Doorways and doors: The doorways in the central bay opening into the hall have rectangular transoms with geometric designs and double doors. The doorways opening from the wings onto the verandah have rectangular transoms with two rows of three lights. The south doorway has no transom. The center-bay doorway in the English basement has double doors and a transom made up of two rows of five lights.

2. Windows: Some of the windows on the east side retain their early nine-over-nine or six-over-nine wooden double hung sashes. Others, and all of those on the west side, have had the sashes changed to two-over-two lights in the early twentieth century.

G. Roof: The gable roof covering the central block has a cross gable on the east and the west slope. The gable roof system is complicated by the lower ridge line and western slope of the wings, although the eastern roof slope appears to be uniform as it extends over the verandah.

III. Description of the Interior:

A. Floor plan: The house is only one room deep. In the

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(Continuation Sheet)

| | |
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| | |

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description -2-

basement a series of rooms stretch along the length. On the first floor the main block is an example of a central hall two-over-two plan. A small hall opens off the north and south rooms and leads to a narrow stair. From that point, another room opens in the end of each wing. A similar plan is followed on the second floor.

B. Stairways: The main stair is a two-run, open-string stair with rectangular balusters and a molded handrail. There is an ornamental bracket work and a quarter fan design on each riser spandrel. The secondary stairs in each wing are enclosed, one-run stairs.

C. Wall and ceiling finish: The ceilings are plaster. In many rooms the paper is peeling, revealing nineteenth century geometric designs painted on the walls. The north room in the main block is finished with circa 1800 style panelling.

D. Doorways and doors: Six-panelled wooden doors have doorways with architrave trim. Panelled double doors with a cross bar lead to the exterior from the hall.

E. Trim: There is a crown molding cornice and a molded chair rail in all of the rooms except the second floor wing rooms. The most elaborate room in the house, the northern room of the main block is fully panelled. A wide entablature with a molded cornice, Wall-of-Troy dentil and a frieze with metope and triglyph encircles the room. Two fluted pilasters flank a wide panel above the mantel. The windows have architrave trim and are deep set in all the rooms, except in those in the second floor wing rooms.

F. Heating: Fireplaces in every room provide the only heating arrangement in the house. The most elaborate mantel, in the panelled room, has an entablature with a molded cornice, Wall-of-Troy dentil, stylized metope and triglyph frieze and panelled pilasters. Other features of the mantels are wide shelves, panelled and fluted pilasters, dentils, quarter fan designs and a marbleized finish. In the second floor wing rooms, the mantel shelves are shallower and the frieze is not as deep as in the other mantels.

IV. Site:

A. General setting and orientation: Montpelier is situated on a hill in the F.T. Valley. The west facade looks out to the Blue Ridge Mountains, and the east across the former terraces and fields to the Hazel River.

B. Outbuildings: Square white frame buildings with pyramidal roofs, one a smoke house and the other a storage house, sit to the north and south of the house. When the original foundations deteriorated, these buildings were raised and put on cinder block foundations. A frame, gable roofed, two-story cabin with an exterior end chimney is located south of the house and outbuildings. Several late nineteenth century or early twentieth century barns and sheds are clustered to the south, and a picturesque mid-nineteenth century barn surrounded by a rail fence

3. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | losophy | <u>local history</u> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input 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

Montpelier is the most historically noted and architecturally imposing early plantation house remaining in Rappahannock County. Dramatically situated on a steep hill, it has long been a focal point for the surrounding F.T. (Francis Thornton) Valley stretching from Sperryville to the Rappahannock, Culpeper and Madison county lines.

Francis Thornton obtained a grant of many thousands of acres in present day Rappahannock including the F.T. Valley. He and his children, William, John and Mary, came to this wilderness area about 1740, in part to escape the menace of malaria-bearing mosquitos in the lowlands. Francis Thornton built Montpelier for William, and another house, Thornton Hill, at the head of the valley for John. George Washington was a cousin of the Thorntons and was a frequent visitor at Montpelier.

Montpelier was inherited by Dr. Philip Thornton, son of William, and his French wife, Caroline Homassel, who, it is said, entertained Louis Philippe of France there. The property remained in the Thornton family until the death of Caroline Homassel in 1876, when it was purchased by Zechariah Hudson Shackelford. The Shackelfords kept the house until the late 1960's, when it became the property of James W. Fletcher and his wife Mildred Thornton, a descendant of Francis Thornton.

Although the house has undergone alterations and enlargement on the exterior, it retains much fine early woodwork, and is important as one of the principle seats of the Thorntons. Presently unoccupied, Montpelier remains one of the major landmarks of piedmont Virginia.

G.H.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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description -3-

stands at the bottom of the hill to the east.

G.P.H.

9. MAJOR BIOGEOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Files of Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission

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 | | | |
| | Degrees | Minutes | Seconds | | Degrees | Minutes | Seconds | |
| NW | 38° | 35' | 45" | 78° | 14' | 24" | | |
| NE | 38° | 35' | 45" | 78° | 13' | 15" | | |
| SE | 38° | 34' | 45" | 79° | 15' | 25" | | |
| SW | 38° | 34' | 45" | 78° | 14' | 24" | | |

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 400 acres

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

| STATE: | CODE | COUNTY | CODE |
|--------|------|---------|------|
| | | | |
| 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

DATE

Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission

November 1972

STREET AND NUMBER:

Room 1116 Ninth Street State Office Building

CITY OR TOWN:

STATE

CODE

Richmond

Virginia

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

J.R. Fishburne, Director

Title

Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission

Date

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

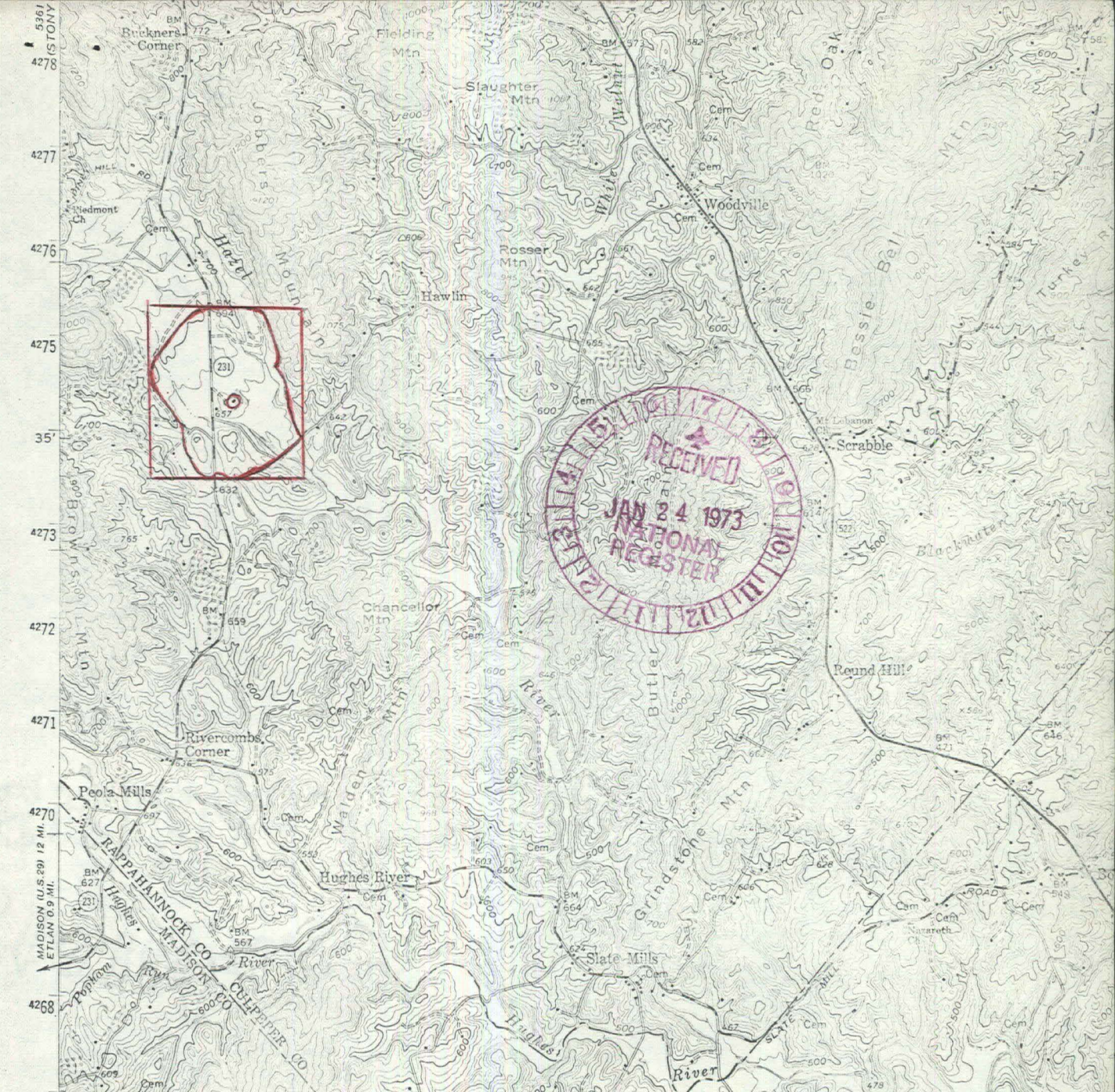
Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date

ATTEST:

Keeper of The National Register

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



4278
 4277
 4276
 4275
 35'
 4273
 4272
 4271
 4270
 4268
 4267
 310 000
 FEET
 4266
 4265
 38°30'
 78°15'40"

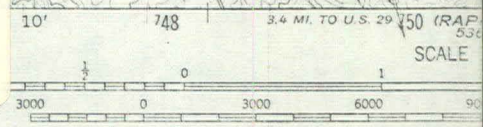
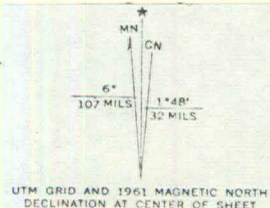
U.S.G.S. 15' quadrangle Sperryville, Va.
 scale: 1:62500 1961

MONTPELIER
 latitude longitude
 NW38°35'45" 78°14'24"
 NE38°35'45" 78°13'15"
 SE38°34'45" 78°13'15"
 SW38°34'45" 78°14'24"

*Woodwell
Old Raynd.*

(MADISON)
5360 IV

Mapped, ed
 Control by U
 Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial
 photographs taken 1959. Field checked 1961
 Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
 10,000-foot grid based on Virginia coordinate system, north zone
 1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,
 zone 17, shown in blue
 Areas covered by dashed light-blue pattern
 are subject to controlled inundation to 459.5 feet



CONTOUR INTER
 DATUM IS ME
 THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATION
 FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL S
 AND VIRGINIA DIVISION OF MINERAL R
 A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS