NRHP- 5 AVG 1999 VLR- 6/16/99

NPS form 10-900 (Rev. 10-90) OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16.4). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items

1. Name of Property	
historic m e Lessland	
other names/site numberDHR File # 68-131	
2. Location	
smet & number 4256 Bushy Mountain Road	not for publication <u>N/A</u>
city or town <u>Culpeper</u>	vicinity X
state <u>Virginia</u> code <u>VA</u> county <u>Orange</u> co	bde <u>137</u> Zip <u>22701</u>
2. Shate / Techanal Assume Contification	

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination ______ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property __X_meets _____ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant n a tionally _____ statewide _X_locally. (____ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

6/30/99 Cattern a usse

Signature of certifying official Date Virginia Department of Historic Resources State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion. the property _____ meets ____ does not meet the National Register criteria. (____ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting α other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

_____ entered in the National Register

____ See continuation sheet.

- _____ determined eligible for the
- National Register
- ____ See continuation sheet.
- _____ determined not eligible for the National Register
- ____ removed from the National Register

____ other (explain): _____

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OMB No. 1024-4018

Lessland Orange County, Virginia

Signature of Keeper

Date of Action _____

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Lessland Orange County, Virginia

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

- _X_ private
- ____ public-local
- ____ public-State
- ____ public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

- _X_ building(s)
- ____ district
- site
- structure
- ____ object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing Noncontributing

_4	2 buildings
0	0 si tes
_0	0structures
0	0 objects
_4	

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register _ 0__

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

<u>N/A</u>

.

6. Function or Use			
Historic Functions (Enter categories fr	om instru	ictions)	
Cat: _DOMESTIC DOMESTIC AGRICULTURAL	Sub: _		
Current Functions (Enter categories fi Cat: DOMESTIC		uctions) Single dwelling	
DOMESTIC		Secondary structure	
_AGRICULTURAL		Not in use	
	·		

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Lessland Orange County, Virginia

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions) LATE VICTORIAN: Italianate

Materials (Enter categories from instructions) foundation __Brick_____ roof _____Metal_____ walls ____Brick______ other _____

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- ____ A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ____B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- X_C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ____ D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- _____A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ____B removed from its original location.
- ____ C a birthplace or a grave.
- ____ D a cemetery.
- ____ E a reconstructed building, object or structure.
- ____F a commemorative property.
- ____ G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

____Architecture_____

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Period of Signific	ance ca. 1870 to ca. 1900
Significant Dates	_ 1871
Significant Perso	n (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)
	N/A
Cultural Affiliati	овN/A
Architect/Builder	J. J. Halsey and Samuel S. Proctor (design)
	_James W. Inskeep (mason) _Lee & Jones (carpenters)
Narrative Statem	tent of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)
9. Major Bibliog	raphical References
Bibliography	
	ticles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)
	ntation on file (NPS)
requested.	etermination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been
	ted in the National Register
previously de	termined eligible by the National Register
designated a l	National Historic Landmark
recorded by H	Istoric American Buildings Survey #
	listoric American Engineering Record #
Primary Location	n of Additional Data
X State Historic	Preservation Office
Other State ag	
Federal agence	τ y
Local governi	ment
University	
Other	y:Virginia Dept. of Historic Resources
	yvirginia Dept. of Historic Resources
10. Geographical	
Acreage of Prope	erty3.5 acres
	(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)
	asting Northing Zone Easting Northing
1 <u>18 24</u>	0211 4247921 2
3	4

____ See continuation sheet.

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Lessland Orange County, Virginia

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By	
name/title: Ann L. Miller	
Organization:Consultant	date_March 4, 1999
street & number:P.O. Box 29	telephone_540-923-5079
city or townSomerset	

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location. A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.) name __Mr. and Mrs. Edward F. Tyner_____

street & number	4256 Bushy Mountain Road		
telephone_540-423	-1713		
city or town_Culp	eper	state_VA	_ zip code _22701

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.0. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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7. Summary Description:

Summary Introduction

Lessland is a brick Italianate style dwelling situated on a plateau about 1/4 mile south of the Rapidan River in north-central Orange County, Virginia. The present house was built in 1871 on the site of an earlier residence which had burned, and incorporates some elements of the previous structure. This dwelling, which stands two stories high over an English basement, consists of a double-pile main block, along with a rear ell, constructed at the same time as the front section. The original plans for the house survive. The property contains a number of nineteenth-century outbuildings: a law office, an icehouse, and a meathouse, which contribute to the significance of the property. A tool shed and a pumphouse, both dating from the mid-twentieth century, are non-contributing.

Architectural Description

Built on a center-passage plan, the main block of Lessland is a three-bay, gable-roofed structure. Measuring 48 feet by 32 feet, this section of the house stands two stories high over an English basement. The brick ell, also standing two stories high over an English basement, and also featuring a gable roof, projects from the rear (south) of the main block. Measuring 20 feet by 22 feet, it is of slightly more modest scale than the front portion of the house. The brick is laid in an irregular bond, with more than twenty rows of stretchers between a row of headers. Brick quoins embellish the four corners of the main section, but are absent from the corners of the ell. Five brick chimneys, all featuring decorative brick corbeling and recessed stucco plaques, serve the fifteen fireplaces in the house.

The gable roofs, which are covered with standing-seam metal, flare slightly at the eaves. Under the edge of the eaves is a wide wooden cornice decorated with wooden brackets. The front facade features a portico with four two-story Ionic columns and a shallow pediment over the central bay; here the cornice is further embellished with dentils as well as brackets. Over the central entrance door on the front facade, as well as over the second floor window directly above the front door, and over the west porch door, are keystones in the shape of a leaf. All windows are double-hung. The basement windows are three-over-three double-sash; these windows are topped with plain brick jack arches. The windows on the main and second stories are six-over-six double-sash; these sash have elliptical heads, which correspond to the brick elliptical arches above the windows. At one time there were shutters on all the windows; these are now stored in the basement pending repair and repainting.

The rear ell, built at the same time as the rest of the house, is shown on the original plans. On the southwest side of this wing is a wooden, one-story shed-roofed porch which is also original to the house.

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Like the roofs of the main block and the ell of the house, this roof is covered with standing-seam metal. Attached to the south side of this porch is a brick bulkhead that serves as the entrance to the basement. The bulkhead has a semi-circular metal roof with flattened and soldered seams rather than the more common standing seams.

In the main block of the house, the front door opens from the portico into the wide central stair passage which runs the depth of this section and serves all of the main floor rooms in this section. These rooms have twelve-foot-high ceilings, with heavily molded baseboards, doors, doorframes and window surrounds throughout; crown molding is absent. The ceilings of the center passage and the parlors on the southeast side of the house are embellished with plaster ceiling medallions. All mantels in the main floor rooms of this section are of slate, *faux*-painted to resemble marble. The mantels in the double parlors, which occupy the southeast side of the house, are the most elaborate. The east front room (the front parlor) has the

most ornate mantel: embellished with Gothic Revival elements such as quatrefoils and trefoil arches, this mantel is painted to represent black marble with red and gold marble insets and moldings. Double pocket doors separate this room from the rear (south) parlor, where an elaborate Classical mantel, with decorative elements that include Gothic arches and a central bullseye molding, is painted to represent black marble with red and gold veining. On the other side of the passage, the north (front) room and the rear (west) room have plainer Classical mantels, painted to represent black marble with red and green veining.

At the rear of the stair passage, two doors provide access to a number of exterior and interior spaces. The left (south) door leads directly to the rear porch. The right (north) door is a single pocket door that leads to a small passageway in the main level of the ell. This passageway contains the cluster of service doors that originally allowed for free circulation of family and servants throughout the house. The southeast door communicates with the rear porch. Two doors in the northwest wall lead to separate portions of the service stair: one door leads to the stair ascending to the upper floor, the second leads to the stair descending to the basement. The southwest door leads to the main room in the ell (originally a winter law office, now used as the kitchen). The plaster walls of this room are now covered with paneling, but the original scalloped wooden cornices are still in place over the windows. This room originally boasted a white marble mantel: later broken and its fragments consigned to the icehouse for many years, the mantel will be restored and returned to its original location at a future date. A storeroom in the north corner of the ell has been converted into a bathroom.

In the central passage, the stair features a heavy, turned newel post and tapering, turned balusters. This stair rises to a landing on the rear (southwest) wall, and thence to the central passage on the second floor. In addition to the two rooms on either side of the central passage, a small-unheated chamber (known as the "box room") is located at the front (northeast) end of the passage and contains the hatch to the attic. The decorative woodwork in the second floor rooms (baseboards, door and window surrounds,

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and door moldings) is similar but slightly less elaborate than that on the first floor. The fireplaces on the second floor have simple wooden Classical mantels instead of the *faux*-painted slate mantels seen downstairs.

At the south end of the stair landing is a door leading to a subsidiary passageway that provides access to the second floor of the rear ell. The master bedroom occupies the majority of this space in the ell. This room is embellished by a white marble mantel, in contrast to the other second floor chambers which have simple wooden mantels. A storage area adjoining the master bedroom was converted into a bathroom in the early 20th century. This bathroom is accessible both the master bedroom and (via a doorway added when the bathroom was installed) from the passageway. The service stairs also enter this level here in this passageway.

On the main floor and second floor, the main block of the Lessland house has two rooms on either side of the central stair passage. The basement is the exception to this plan: there are two rooms on the southeast side of the stair passage, but on the northwest side of the passage is a single room, running the entire depth of the main block of the house and heated by two fireplaces. Shown in this configuration on the original plans, this room was originally the dining room. The basement walls are covered with plaster, and all basement rooms have brick fireplaces with plain wooden surrounds. The staircase from the central hall of the basement to the first floor has a simple turned newel and plain round balusters. Basement floors in the main block were originally wood, but were replaced with concrete in the 1950s.

To the rear of the main block is the basement level of the ell. The service stairs and several storage closets are located in a narrow passageway directly to the southwest of the main block of the house. Beyond this is a room which originally served as a kitchen, and which communicates directly with the bulkhead passage, which lies underneath the rear porch. The floor of the ell retains its original brick pavers.

A number of outbuildings are associated with the Lessland property. In addition to the main house, contributing buildings are the law office, ice house, and meat house. A concrete block pump house and a hen house (now converted into a tool shed) are non-contributing buildings. With the exception of the law office, all of these buildings are located in a roughly linear arrangement to the rear of the main house.

The law office, constructed by Joseph J. Halsey in the mid-1850s, is a one-story, single-roomed, temple-form building, measuring 16 feet by 16 feet. Located on the front lawn east of the main house, it is a contributing building, and is the only surviving building in the style of the Classical structures built and remodeled at Lessland by J. J. Halsey in the mid and late 1850s. The frame of the law office is a heavy wooden lattice: exterior stucco is applied directly to this framework, which also serves to support the lath

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for the interior wall plaster. The building, including the stucco, which was scored to imitate ashlar masonry, was restored in the early 1990s. A notable feature of this building is the distyle portico with square wooden columns, decorated with simple Doric caps and recessed panels; Doric pilasters embellish the four corners of the building. The law office is covered by a standing-seam metal roof and rests on a uncoursed rubble foundation. Originally a stove chimney extended from the roof: the ceiling joists, allowing the stove and stovepipe to be removed in warm weather to provide additional interior space supported the chimney base. The chimney was removed in the most recent renovation due to severe deterioration and leakage problems. The cornice and the pediment are decorated with decorative scalloped trim boards. The Gothic Revival door is decorated with Gothic arches recessed into the top two panels and crosses in the bottom two panels. A shallow wooden pediment supported by pilaster frames the door. There are six-over-six double hung windows in each of the sidewalls.

The icehouse and meathouse, both contributing buildings, are located south of the main house. Measuring 18 feet by 18 feet, the icehouse is a gable-roofed building constructed of logs clad with boardand-batten siding. A wooden floor is laid over the stone-lined pit that was once used for ice storage. The ice pit probably dates from the 1850s; the top portion of the structure was rebuilt in the 1880s, when the present

standing-seam metal roof was installed. The meat house measures 10 feet by 10 feet; like the ice house, it is constructed of logs covered with board and batten siding and has a gable roof covered with standing-seam metal.

To the southwest of the meat house is mid-20th century frame hen house (now converted into a tool shed), a non-contributing building. A second non-contributing building, a concrete block pump house dating from the 1950s, is located to the southeast of the main house. Located off the west corner of the property is a graveyard to which the owners have retained a 15 foot by 112 foot right-of-way. Several family members are buried there, beginning with an infant great-granddaughter of J. J. and Mildred Halsey in 1907.

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8. Statement of Significance

Lessland, situated in north-central Orange County, is an excellent example of a post-bellum Italianate plantation house. Built in 1871 by Joseph J. Halsey, a New Jersey-born lawyer who had settled in central Virginia in the 1840s and married into a prominent local family, the present Lessland dwelling replaced an earlier house on the site which burned. Still in the ownership of Halsey's descendants. Lessland also boasts a complement of domestic and agricultural buildings, ranging in date from the 1850s to the mid-20th century. In a rare survival among buildings of this period and location, the construction records and materials lists still exist for the house, as do the original plans, drawn by Samuel S. Proctor and built by brickmason James Inskeep and the firm of Lee & Jones, who identified themselves as "Architects & Housebuilders of Culpeper." Virtually unaltered since its completion in 1871, Lessland is eligible for listing in the National Register under Criteria C as an unusually intact and well-preserved rural example of the Italianate style.

Historical Background

The present Lessland house was built in 1871 by Joseph Jackson Halsey on property that he had purchased from his father-in-law Jeremiah Morton in 1854. A large landowner and important political figure in the region, Morton lived at his nearby plantation The Hall (locally known as Morton Hall). He had acquired the Lessland house tract from John Porter, Jr. in 1848.¹ According to family tradition. Morton christened the 441-acre tract Lessland because it contained "less land" than his other properties Moreland and Stillmore.

A New Jersey native and an 1842 graduate of Princeton University, J. J. Halsey came south to accept a teaching position in Fredericksburg at the Classical and Scientific Athenaeum and taught and lived at the Farmers Hotel. He married Jeremiah Morton's daughter, Mildred, on Sept. 3, 1846, was admitted to the bar in 1847, and moved to Lessland, where he managed the farm as well as practiced law.

There was a one story wooden dwelling house on the property when Jeremiah Morton purchased it from John Porter in 1848. By 1860, J. J. Halsey had remodeled and enlarged this house into a two story stuccoed frame structure and had added further improvements, including a full range of outbuildings and the Gothic Revival style law office which still stands on the front lawn at Lessland.²

J. J. Halsey adopted the lifestyle of the Morton family, and supported the Confederacy during the Civil War. During the conflict, he was a Captain in the 6th Virginia Cavalry, Company I (the Orange Rangers).³ His father-in-law Jeremiah Morton was a member of Congress from 1848 to 1850 and a delegate to the Virginia Secession Convention of 1861. An ardent secessionist, Morton sold a large portion of his landholdings during the war and invested the money in Confederate bonds. Left in greatly reduced economic

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reduced economic
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circumstances after the defeat of the Confederacy, he and his wife came to live with the Halseys at Lessland, where Jeremiah Morton died in 1878. In a letter written in the late 1860s, he sketched a poignant portrait contrasting his antebellum position with his later life:

I was surrounded by every comfort the world could afford -- a delightful home and happy family of whites and blacks, an annual income of \$30,000 with a prospect of yearly increase. The scourge of war has swept all from me, and at the age of 68, I stand a blasted stump in the wilderness of life.⁴

Halsey managed to hold on to the Lessland property, although by the end of the war he too was in financial straits. By the early 1870s, through careful management of his agricultural operations and his law practice, he had sufficiently reconstituted his finances to allow the building of the present Lessland house after the original was destroyed by fire on January 3, 1870.

The present house was built incorporating the brick basement walls and foundations of the destroyed dwelling. The contract and original plans for the house still survive, as do the estimates, materials list, and J. J. Halsey's daybook recording stages in the construction of the house. According to these records, the "plans and specifications" of the house were made by J. J. Halsey and Samuel S. Proctor, with plans drawn by Proctor. James W. Inskeep is cited as the brickmason, and the firm of "Lee & Jones, Architects and Housebuilders of Culpeper" contracted to undertake the carpentry work.⁵

The house was completed in December of 1871. The house as built is substantially as represented in the plans, with the exception of a reduction in size of the basement windows, the lowering of the attic level by several feet, and most notably a major redesign of the porch. The original plans show an Italianate style porch, which was never built (the construction contract between Halsey and Lee & Jones specifies the lowering of the attic level and the change in the porch design as alterations in the plan drawn by Proctor). Family tradition relates that J. J. Halsey wanted to reuse the two columns that survived the fire, and this occasioned the substitution of the present two-story Ionic portico for the one-story porch shown on the plans.⁶

Following the deaths of Mildred Morton Halsey in April 1906 and Joseph J. Halsey in February 1907, their grandson Franklin Stearns Halsey purchased Lessland from other family members in May, 1907. Lessland continued as a working farm until 1960, when Franklin S. Halsey's widow, Fannie, and their children Glassell M. Halsey, Frances Halsey Towe and Harriet Halsey Bartlett, sold all but the house and 3.5 acres surrounding it. After Fannie Halsey's death in 1963, the Lessland house became the residence of her daughter Harriet H. Bartlett. Between 1980 and 1984, Mildred Tyner, daughter of Frances Halsey Towe, acquired her mother's and cousins' interests in Lessland.⁷ These acquisitions brought the ownership of the 3.5 acres that had been retained by the family back under the control of one

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family member. Mr. and Mrs. Tyner moved to Lessland in 1986 and have embarked on a long-term program of carefully maintaining, stabilizing and restoring Lessland's dwelling and major outbuildings since that time.

NOTES

1. For the deed from John Porter, Jr. to Jeremiah Morton, see Orange County Deed Book 41, p.59, 21 October 1848. For the deed from Jeremiah Morton to Joseph J. Halsey, see Orange County Deed Book 43, p.380, dated 9 March 1854.

2. Insurance policies on Lessland; Morton/Halsey Papers, Manuscript Department, University of Virginia Library, Charlottesville, Virginia, Accession #3995. The 1855 Orange County Land Tax Book shows a valuation of \$1000 for buildings at Lessland; the 1859 Land Book records that the valuation had increased to \$1500, and to \$4500 in the 1861 Land Book.

3. Michael P. Musick, 6th Virginia Calvary, (H. E. Howard, Inc., Lynchburg, Virginia, 1990), p.120.

4. Ann L. Miller, Antebellum Orange, (Orange County Historical Society, Orange, Virginia, 1988), p.139.

5. The insurance policy on the house states that the fire resulted either from a spark falling between the shingles or from a rat carrying a match to its nest; Morton/Halsey Papers, Manuscript Department, University of Virginia Library, Charlottesville, Virginia, Accession #3995. In ca. 1871-73, Samuel S. Proctor also designed and built a new Culpeper County courthouse; see John E. Wells and Robert E. Dalton, *The Virginia Architects 1835-1955: A Biographical Dictionary* (Richmond: 1997), pp. 231, 366.

6. Personal communication, Mrs. Mildred Tyner, Lessland, 1998.

7. For Franklin Halsey's acquisition of Lessland, see Orange County Deed Book, 65, p. 243, 10 May 1907. For Fannie Halsey's sale of the farmland, see Orange County Deed Book, 187, p. 219, 12 January 1960. For Mr. and Mrs. Tyner's acquisition of the interests in the Lessland tract, see Orange County Deed Book 327, p. 737, 10 July 1980; Orange County Deed Book 327, p. 739, 25 July 1980; and Orange County Deed Book, 359, p. 830, 1 August 1984.

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9. **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

Miller, Ann L. Antebellum Orange. Orange County Historical Society, Orange, Virginia. 1988.

Morton/Halsey Papers. Manuscript Department, University of Virginia Library, Charlottesville, Virginia. Accession Number 3995.

Musick, Michael P. 6th Virginia Cavalry. H. E. Howard, Inc. Lynchburg, Virginia. 1990.

Orange County, Virginia, Deed Books. Circuit Court Clerk's Office, Orange, Virginia.

Orange County, Virginia, Land Tax Books. Circuit Court Clerk's Office, Orange, Virginia.

Tyner, Mildred E. A Brief History of Lessland, Orange County, Virginia. Unpublished manuscript 1988.

Wells, John E. and Robert E. Dalton, The Virginia Architects 1835-1955: A Biographical Dictionary (Richmond: 1997)

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA (continued)

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The nominated property is identical to the 3.5 acres described in a survey made by J. I. Covell dated 5 January 1960 and recorded in Orange County Deed Book 187, p.222, and also described in a subsequent survey (as 3.538 acres) by Stearns L. Coleman dated 24 July 1984 and recorded in Orange County Plat Cabinet A, No. 179.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

These boundaries enclose the 3.5 acres retained by the family when the property was detached from the original acreage comprising 441 acres. The boundaries enclose the dwelling house and domestic secondary structures.

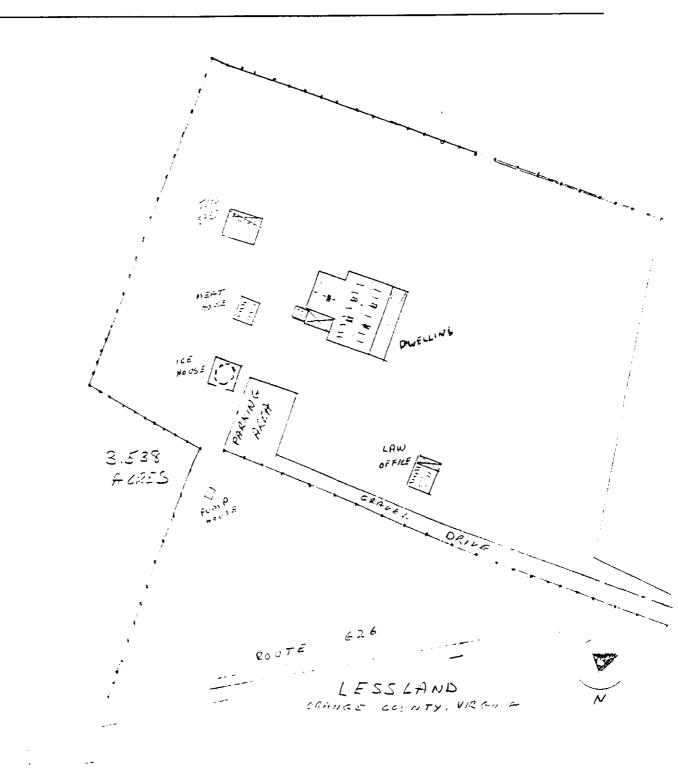
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