

VLR-2/26/79 NRHP-6/18/79

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED
DATE ENTERED JUN 18 1979

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

HISTOREC
Fort Egypt
AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

Southwest side of State Route 615; north of junction with U.S. Route
STREET & NUMBER 211.

CITY, TOWN Hamburg VICINITY OF 7th (J. Kenneth Robinson)
STATE Virginia CODE 51 COUNTY Page CODE 139
 NOT FOR PUBLICATION
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input checked="" 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	<input type="checkbox"/> ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input 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 type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME Mr. James B. Hoover
STREET & NUMBER 936 Oak Bill Drive
CITY, TOWN Harrisonburg VICINITY OF Virginia 22801 STATE

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Page County Courthouse
STREET & NUMBER
CITY, TOWN Luray STATE Virginia

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS (2) (See continuation Sheet #1)

TITLE (1) Historic American Buildings Survey Inventory
DATE 1.958 FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS Library of Congress
CITY, TOWN Washington STATE D.C.

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<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 DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Fort Egypt is one of a group of a dozen Germanic farmhouses situated along the banks of the Shenandoah River in Page County. Of that group, all of which were built in the second half of the 18th century, Fort Egypt is among the most important and may be one of the earliest. Although it appears on the exterior to have been extensively altered, it is in reality one of the least altered of this group of highly significant houses.

Fort Egypt is a large, nearly square, two-story, two-bay house built of logs secured by full-dovetail notching at the corners. The rear and two sides of the house have been covered with asbestos shingles, but the logs are exposed on the front, which is partly sheltered by a full-length, one-story porch of no particular style and indeterminate date. A one-story, glassed-in porch along the east side of the house replaces a small 19th-century frame wing visible in old photographs. All of the windows are lit by 6/6 sash set in frames possibly of early 19th-century date; these replace original horizontal windows, similar to ones found on other Page County German houses and whose scars can still be seen in the log walls inside and out. Fort Egypt is crowned by a low 19th-century hipped roof which replaces an original gable roof. The height of the old roof is perceptible in the division between finished and unfinished stonework on the original limestone chimney which projects above the present roof.

The house sits on a small knoll, facing south. The grade drops away roughly from the southwest to the northeast corners, exposing the limestone rubble basement at the rear (north) and at the east. At the north and east wall is an exterior entrance to the cellar.

Like most Continental farmhouses, Fort Egypt was built as a voluminous building whose interior spaces were fully utilized throughout the agricultural year for work, storage, and family life. Consequently each floor contains important features of plan and detail which illuminate the house's use.

The cellar contains two rooms, occupying about two-thirds of the ground space. Along the north side of the house is a long room entered from the outside at the east end and used for general storage. In order to keep it cool, the ceiling is insulated by "biscuits" of short stakes wrapped with straw and covered with clay. These were fastened between the joists and set perpendicular to them. A thin layer of plaster was then applied, flush with the surface of the joists, and the plaster and joists were whitewashed. This was a common method of wall infilling in Continental houses but is found only as cellar insulation in Virginia, since there are no frame Germanic houses here.

Set in the southwest corner perpendicular to the outer room and reached from it is a vaulted cooling cellar. Such cellars are commonly supposed to be defensive features but are actually traditional European features. The cooling and storage functions of the Fort Egypt Gewölbekeller are attested by the numerous wooden and iron hooks embedded in the vault.

On the first floor, the plan is a standard Continental one. The central chimney is flanked on the east by a narrow Kuche or kitchen with a stair in the southeast corner and with a smaller room partitioned off in the back of it. In many Germanic houses this was a pantry, but at Fort Egypt there is a small fireplace here as well as internal stairs to the cellar which appear to be an alteration. To the west of the chimney is a large Stube or formal parlor with a smaller Kammer or chamber behind it. In the northeast

(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 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 checked="" 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 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 type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES third quarter 18th century BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Fort Egypt, a large full-dovetailed log house near the Shenandoah River in the shadow of Massanutten Mountain, is one of the earliest and most complete of the small group of Continental farmhouses which recall the original settlement of the Massanutten region by Swiss settlers coming from Pennsylvania in the second quarter of the 18th century. Owned through most of its early existence by the Strickler and Stover families and still in the hands of Strickler descendants, Fort Egypt is important both as an outstanding example of a European house type rare in Virginia and as a familiar and well-loved local landmark.

The tract on which Fort Egypt stands, a fertile piece of lowland nestled in a turn of the Shenandoah River long known as Egypt Bend, was part of a 1000-acre tract obtained by Abraham Strickler from Jacob Stover, the Pennsylvania land promoter responsible for the first settlement of this part of the Shenandoah Valley. Because of legal difficulties with Stover's title, the Strickler holdings had to be regranted and confirmed several times in the 30 years after settlement.

Strickler died in 1746. His inventory, one of the few early ones for German-speaking settlers, reveals his ethnicity--it includes "6 Dutchs sithes" and three stove plates--and his apparent vocation (in addition to farming), for he owned "a parcell of Turners Tools" and "the rest of the Tools belonging to the Turners lathe," possessions which suggest that he made furniture.

Jacob Strickler Abraham's son, inherited one-fifth (208 acres) of his father's tract. The younger Strickler, a well-known Mennonite preacher, built Fort Egypt. He chose a house plan common to the Rhineland of Germany and Switzerland, a central-chimney building with a narrow kitchen to one side and a large formal parlor and smaller chamber on the other. Beneath it are two cellars, including a vaulted one which was used to keep perishable foods cool. Iron and wooden hooks survive to recall its original function.

After Jacob Strickler's death, ca. 1784, his son John inherited the property. But, probably because of the family's Mennonite connections (the church teaches that its members should care for each other's well-being), John and his step-mother agreed that he would take an equal share of the farm with his siblings and that she would get the customary widow's thirds. After 1787, when his step-mother remarried (to Abraham Heiston, owner of the nearby Heiston-Strickler House, another of the Page County Continental houses), John Strickler occupied his father's tract. At his death in 1802, the property was divided among his siblings, who had been minors at the time of Jacob Strickler's death. Daniel Stover, a relative of the builder of Fort Stover, yet another of the nearby Page County Germanic houses, bought the 208-acre Fort Egypt tract in the ensuing years after John Strickler's estate was settled. The Stovers held the property until 1852, when it was sold to Jacob Shenk, who owned it until Jacob C. Bowers bought it in 1895. Bowers sold it a year later to Jacob C. Burner. After Burner's death in 1926, the Fort Egypt tract was sold to S. Berry Hoover, whose heirs still own it. It is worth mentioning that through all of these

(See Continuation Sheet #2)

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Augusta County Will Book 1.
 Chappell, Edward, "Cultural Change in the Shenandoah Valley: Northern Augusta County Houses Before 1861" (unpub. M.A. thesis, University of Virginia, 1977).
 . "Houses of the Massanutten Settlement" (forthcoming).
 Northern Neck Grants H.
 Orange County Deed Book 1.
 Page County Land Tax Books 1821-1850: 1896. (See Continuation Sheet #2)

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 10 acres

QUADRANGLE NAME Hamburg, Va.

UTM REFERENCES

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24000

A 17 | 715010 | 4282130
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B 17 | 715070 | 4281910
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C 17 | 7114810 | 4281890

D 17 | 7114810 | 4282060

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Beginning at a point on E side of private drive (extending SE from Route 615) approximately 1.6 miles NE of intersection of said route with U.S. 211; thence extending about 300' NE along fence line; thence extending about 700' SE to 750' contour; thence following about 800' W along said contour; thence extending about 500' NNW; thence extending about 400' NE to point of origin.

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Staff

ORGANIZATION

DATE

Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission

January 1979

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

221 Governor Street

(804) 786-3144

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Richmond

Virginia 23219

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE X

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

TITLE Tucker Hill, Executive Director
Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission

DATE FEB 26 1979

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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Fort Egypt, Page County, Virginia

CONTINUATION SHEET #1

ITEM NUMBER 6,7

PAGE 1

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

- (2) Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Survey
1977, 1978 State
Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission
221 Governor Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219

7. DESCRIPTION

corner of the Kammer rises a second stair to the upper level. Fort Egypt is thus a Kreuzhaus (cross house) variant of the Continental three-room Flurkuchenhaus (hall-kitchen house) plan found in many of the smaller Germanic houses of the Massanutten settlement.

The first-floor detailing is remarkable. As was common in Germanic houses, all of the partitions are vertical boards, but they are varied. The plainest are standard vertical beaded boards, but that between the Kammer and the pantry consists of vertical boards joined by narrow battens with cyma molds on the edges. The ceilings in all rooms except the Kuche are also sheathed with beaded boards. The original doors are of two sorts. Some have vertical beaded boards and tapered dovetailed battens while others have central, rabbeted vertical rails joining beaded vertical boards on either side, the whole secured by battens with cyma edges. On these doors is a remarkable collection of original hardware, among the few examples of surviving elaborate hardware in Virginia. All of the latches are the Suffolk type, but their nailing plates are highly wrought. The exterior cellar door latch has a very large "bean" top plate and a small elliptical bottom one. The doors from Kuche to pantry and from pantry to Kammer have elongated bean-leaf plates, while the door from Stube to Kammer has a latch with triangular plates extended by terminating lobes.

The second-floor plan is similar to the first. Stairs rise to the attic in the southeast corner of the Kuche chamber, which has a small fireplace raised about two feet from the floor. A stokehole in the back of this fireplace, which served a plate stove in the Stube chamber, has been closed. The hardware on the second floor is also noteworthy; oval-plated latches and long strap hinges with double end lobes are the rule on this floor.

A notable relic in the front yard of Fort Egypt is a large stone basin, two and one-half feet across, thirteen inches high, and ten inches deep. At the bottom in one side is a small drain. This stone may have been a mortar or some sort of basin for pressing fruit juices. At any rate, it has been in the yard for many years and is a popular object of comment in local histories.

A complete complex of 20th-century farm buildings flanks Fort Egypt on the south and east. Proceeding from southwest to northeast, they are a frame crib, a large frame bank barn with a gambrel roof and forebay, a frame tractor and hay shed, a frame chicken coop, and a long concrete-block equipment shed. There is also a small block storage shed or office in the front yard.

DU

(See Continuation Sheet #2)

GPO 892 455

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

Fort Egypt, Page County, Virginia

CONTINUATION SHEET #2

ITEM NUMBER 7,8,9 PAGE 2

7. DESCRIPTION

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The bounds of Fort Egypt have been drawn to include the house and its farmstead. The north boundary follows a fence line, and the south line follows the 750' contour.

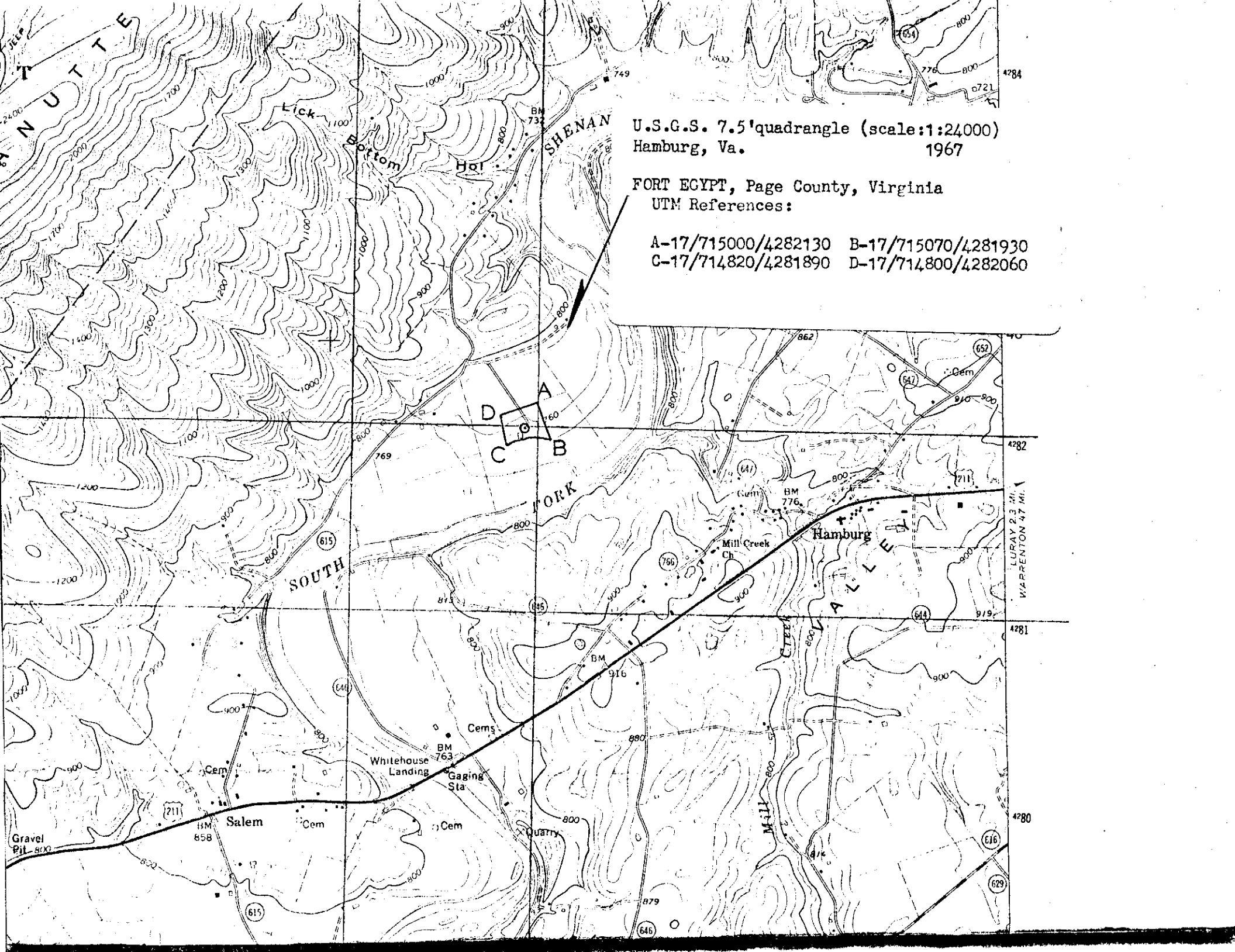
8. SIGNIFICANCE

sales and changes in surname, the property has remained in the hands of the builder's descendants.

VDS/DU

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

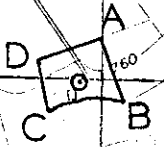
- Deed Book H.
Patents, Book 15.
Shenandoah County Land Tax Books 1782-1829.
Will Books B, D, F.
Strickler, Harry M. Forerunners. Dayton, Va., 1925.
Weiss, Richard. Hauser und Landschaften der Schweiz. Zurich, 1973.



U.S.G.S. 7.5' quadrangle (scale:1:24000)
Hamburg, Va. 1967

FORT EGYPT, Page County, Virginia
UTM References:

- A-17/715000/4282130
- B-17/715070/4281930
- C-17/714820/4281890
- D-17/714800/4282060



LURAY 2.3 MI.
WARRENTON 4.7 MI.