

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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DATE ENTERED

JUL 30 1976

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORMSEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC .

A. P. Carter Birthplace

AND/OR COMMON

A. P. Carter Homeplace (Preferred)

2 LOCATION In Little Valley between Pine Ridge and North Fork Holston River; .7
mile north of North Fork Holston River; .9 mile east of Blue Springs Branch;
STREET & NUMBER .9 mile southeast of intersection of Routes 691 and 614.

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Maces Spring

VICINITY OF

Ninth (William C. Wampler)

STATE

Virginia

CODE

51

COUNTY

Scott

CODE

169

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

 DISTRICT
 BUILDING(S)
 STRUCTURE
 SITE
 OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

 PUBLIC
 PRIVATE
 BOTH
PUBLIC ACQUISITION
 IN PROCESS
 BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

 OCCUPIED
 UNOCCUPIED
 WORK IN PROGRESS
ACCESSIBLE
 YES: RESTRICTED
 YES: UNRESTRICTED
 NO

PRESENT USE

 AGRICULTURE
 COMMERCIAL
 EDUCATIONAL
 ENTERTAINMENT
 GOVERNMENT
 INDUSTRIAL
 MILITARY
 MUSEUM
 PARK
 PRIVATE RESIDENCE
 RELIGIOUS
 SCIENTIFIC
 TRANSPORTATION
 OTHER: None

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Mr. Ermine L. Carter

STREET & NUMBER

Route 1

CITY, TOWN

Hiltons

VICINITY OF

STATE

Virginia 24258

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Scott County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Gate City

STATE

Virginia

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Survey

DATE

1975

 FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission, 221 Governor Street

CITY, TOWN

Richmond

STATE

Virginia

DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

EXCELLENT
 GOOD
 FAIR

DETERIORATED
 RUINS
 UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

UNALTERED
 ALTERED

CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE
 MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The A. P. Carter Homeplace is a small cabin situated along a footpath in Scott County, just over a ridge from Poor Valley and Maces Spring. The 17-by-15 foot structure is a story-and-a-half, half-dovetailed log building with weatherboard gables and a tin roof. At the west end is a small rubble stone chimney with a brick stack. There are windows in the south and east walls, but none in the front (north) wall, which is pierced only by a three-batten door with vertical, beaded boards,

A frame lean-to with vertical board covering extends the length of the rear and protrudes about six feet farther to the east. There is an open shed at the east end.

The interior of the cabin is very plain; a closed stair rises in the northwest corner, and there is a small fireplace on the west gable wall. The joists are exposed, and some of the remnants of matchboard wainscoting survive. The house is presently abandoned.

A Log barn and another frame outbuilding survive on the rise to the north, and there are ruins of other farm structures around the house. Within a short distance of the cabin are the school where A. P. Carter was educated, a store he kept in later years, his grave, and the later home of his parents, as well as a modern house he occupied at the end of his life.

DIU

The A. P. Carter Homeplace is set on a 33-acre partially wooded tract, centered in Little Valley--the boundaries delineating all of the acreage that is associated with the log house and is in the possession of the present owner.

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 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 type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) Folklore
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The A. P. Carter Homeplace, hidden in Little Valley near Maces Spring in Scott County stands as an outstanding representative of the material and oral traditional culture of the Southern highlands. It is significant primarily as the birthplace and early home of a towering figure in the collection and performance of the regional folk music of Southwest Virginia and in the formation of a new regional popular music form. The house is interesting as a late example of a traditional type of small house introduced into America during the early years of English settlement and built and used by poorer people for almost 300 years afterward.

Carters had been living in this area for over 100 years when Alvin Pleasant Delaney "A.P." Carter (1891-1960) was born. Instructed in music by an uncle who kept one of the shape-note "singing schools" popular in rural areas of the South during the nineteenth century, Carter was a musician from his early years, singing in a family quartet and playing the fiddle. In June, 1915, he married Sara Dougherty (born 1898) of nearby Jopper Creek, who was also a musician. The couple performed locally for several years, and when Maybelle Addington (born 1909) joined the family through marriage to Carter's brother Ezra in 1926, the "Carter Family", as it became known to the public, was completed.

The Carter Family repertoire comprised a conglomerate of songs traditional in the family, songs composed by A. P. Carter and to a lesser extent by Sara and Maybelle Carter, and songs actively collected by A. P. Carter and performed verbatim or reworked by him. At a crucial period in mountain musical culture, when outside influences were beginning to overwhelm traditional local strains, the Family's corpus of about 250 songs recorded between 1927 and 1941 preserved a valuable body of Southwest Virginia's folk music. Academic folklorists such as Cecil Sharp and the collectors of the Virginia Folklore Society, beginning to work the Virginia mountains just as A. P. Carter's career began, tended to collect along narrower and more restricted lines, limiting themselves to ballads thought to have been inherited from English tradition or, in a few cases, to those American-born ballads which complied with their literary definitions. The Carters' working collection of old ballads, occupational songs, gospel music, Victorian parlor songs and other sentimental pieces, and black-inspired blues probably represented a truer cross-section of mountain tastes and culture of the early twentieth century than any academic collection before or since.

The Carter Family were not the first folk musicians to be recorded commercially when they began to perform for the Victor Talking Machine Corporation in Bristol, Tennessee-Virginia, in 1927. However, their recording career, like A. P. Carter's collecting, came at a formative time in the hillbilly music industry, as it was building a new regional popular music on a folk base. The Carters quickly became favorite performers and, in the words of one scholar, maintained "tremendous influence on American folk music for three decades..."

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8. SIGNIFICANCE

CONTINUATION SHEET

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They perpetuated a particular rhythmic beat in country music
and preserved instrumental patterns developed to
complement vocal sounds of traditional music previously sung
unaccompanied...." The Carter Family, under A. P. Carter's leadership, were
instrumental in the transition of their form of Virginia folk music from a
localized phenomenon into a regional one.

The small cabin in Little Valley is an excellent example of the traditional
"square" or English cabin (with a single room of approximately square plan,
a closed stair in a corner near the fireplace, and a gable-end chimney) in
the usual story-and-a-half log mountain form. A building type recovered
archaeologically from the earliest periods of settlement and surviving in a
few seventeenth-century examples, it continued to be used both for outbuild-
ings among the wealthier planters and among the poorer classes of people for
housing until the present century. Its smaller chimney and matchboard wain-
scoting are among the few concessions the A. P. Carter Homeplace makes to the
period of its building; otherwise it is strictly traditional. As such, it is
a striking representative of the small, unglamorous house so often overlooked
by historians but which probably formed a major part of the landscape through
most of its period of use.

The cabin, which is presently unused, lies within a short distance of several
other sites associated with the Carter Family, including A. P. Carter's grave,
the store he kept late in his life, and Clinch Mountain, the subject of
several of their songs. The property, not in use at this time, is still owned
by Carters.

DTU

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Anglo-American Folk Song Scholarship Since 1898. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1959.
- Atkins, John. "The Carter Family," in Bill C. Malone and Judith McCulloch, eds. Stars of Country Music. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1975.
- Glassie, Henry. "Types of the Southern Mountain Cabin," in Jan H. Brunvand, ed. The Study of American Folklore. 1968. (see Continuation Sheet #2)

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 33 acres

UTM REFERENCES

A	17	375660	4058920	B	17	375650	4058310
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C	17	375140	4058320	D	17	375140	4058930

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The acreage comprising the A. P. Carter Homeplace is bounded by a line beginning at a point .6 mile southwest of Jett Gap; thence running 1800 feet north northwestward in a straight line; thence extending 1000 feet west southwestward in a straight line following the ridge of Pine Ridge Mountain; then running 1700 feet south southeastward in a straight line; thence extending 1100 feet slightly east northeastward in a straight line 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

Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission

DATE

December 1975

STREET & NUMBER

221 Governor Street

TELEPHONE

804-786-3143

CITY OR TOWN

Richmond

STATE

Virginia

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL X

STATE X

LOCAL X

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

Virginia Landmarks Register

TITLE

Julius R. Fishburne, Jr., Executive Director
Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission

DATE

DEC 16 1975

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DATE

JUL 30 1976

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION
ATTEST:

DATE

JUL 30 1976

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

National Register of Historic Places

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CONTINUATION SHEET

#2

ITEM NUMBER

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PAGE

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9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Green, Archie. "The Carter Family's 'Coal Miner's Blues,'" Southern Folklore Quarterly, No. 25, 1961.

Interviews with Janette Carter Kelly, Hiltons, Va.; June and November, 1975.

Malone, Bill C. Country Music U.S.A. Austin: American Folklore Society, 1967.

Summers, Lewis P. History of Southwest Virginia. Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1966.

USGS 7.5' quadrangle (scale: 1:24000)
Hilton, Va. 1938 (PR 1968)

A. P. CARTER HOMEPLACE, SCOTT COUNTY, VA.
UTM References:

- A - 17/375660/4058920
- B - 17/375650/4058310
- C - 17/375140/4058320
- D - 17/375140/4058930

